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 300/01)

Treść Strona

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012748/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Competences of Member States' embassies and consulates

Could the High Representative for Foreign Affairs explain in which areas her office will replace the traditional competences of Member States' embassies and consulates?

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

The EU Delegations, which operate under the authority of the HR/VP, have not taken over any of the competences of the Member States' embassies and consulates. Pursuant to the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU Delegations have taken on the responsibilities of local coordination with the diplomatic missions of Member States and external representation of the EU in third countries and at multilateral organisations. Member States remain fully competent for consular protection of their citizens. However, pursuant to Article 35 TEU and in line with Article 5 (10) of the EEAS Decision, EU Delegations cooperate with diplomatic and consular missions of Member States and may contribute in matters of consular protection of EU citizens in third States if so requested by Member States. The Council is currently discussing a proposal of the Commission for a directive pursuant to Article 23 TFEU. As reflected in the Council Conclusions of December 2013 on the EEAS Review, the Council has agreed, within the existing legal framework, to further explore possibilities for developing the role of EU Delegations in facilitating and supporting coordination between Member States in their role of providing consular protection to citizens of the Union in third countries.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013656/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Caso Snowden en Francia e interceptación de comunicaciones del Consejo

El Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores del Gobierno de Francia, Laurent Fabius, ha anunciado que convocará al Embajador de los EE.UU. en Francia, Charles Rivkin, para pedir explicaciones por la información publicada por el periódico Le Monde, que sostiene que, según los datos en poder de Edward Snowden, Francia fue espiada, habiéndose interceptado más de 70 millones de llamadas telefónicas en un mes.

El Gobierno francés ha sido el primer gobierno europeo que exige la comparecencia de un embajador de los EE.UU. para tratar exclusivamente los temas relacionados con las informaciones filtradas por el exanalista de la NSA. Es intolerable la actitud de los Gobiernos de los EE.UU. y el Reino Unido, que espían sistemáticamente a la práctica totalidad de la población de un país como Francia, que, como demanda la lógica y el derecho de sus ciudadanos, exige ahora la comparecencia de los EE.UU.

A las diferentes preguntas que he formulado a la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de la Unión Europea, la Sra. Ashton ha respondido que no piensa hacer declaraciones en lo concerniente al Caso Snowden. Dicha representante actúa ridiculizando la imagen internacional de la Unión Europea al no haber exigido rendición de cuentas alguna a la administración de los EE.UU., pese a que dicho país ha violado el derecho a la intimidad de millones de ciudadanos así como de instituciones de carácter estratégico.

El Consejo de la Unión Europea ha sido la institución europea cuyas comunicaciones han sido las más intervenidas por la NSA y, sin embargo, no se ha producido reacción alguna por su parte que dé muestras de un mínimo resto de soberanía en Europa. Resulta obligado tratar estos temas de máxima pertinencia debido a las millones de violaciones de derechos así como a sus implicaciones políticas, aunque no se están tratando en modo alguno.

¿Conoce el Consejo la convocatoria por parte de Francia del embajador de los EE.UU.? ¿Ha convocado oficialmente al embajador de los EE.UU. ante la UE para tratar el caso de la escuchas a las oficinas del Consejo de la Unión Europea? ¿Piensa llevar a cabo convocatorias conjuntas con el Gobierno de Francia para establecer una posición común entre todos los Gobiernos de la UE? ¿Está solicitando información o investigando el número exacto de violaciones que han cometido las autoridades estadounidenses en contra de los derechos y los intereses de los ciudadanos europeos? ¿Piensa congelar las negociaciones del Acuerdo Transatlántico de Comercio e Inversiones para garantizar que el espionaje no perjudique los intereses europeos en dicho Acuerdo?

Respuesta
(23 de junio de 2014)

La UE se toma muy en serio los informes sobre la vigilancia a que Estados Unidos somete a ciudadanos e instituciones de la UE y ya desde el mismo momento en que aparecieron tales revelaciones se apresuró a manifestar sus inquietudes y a pedir aclaraciones al respecto a las autoridades estadounidenses. La UE ha mantenido permanentemente la cuestión en el orden del día de sus reuniones con sus correspondientes interlocutores estadounidenses y ha seguido pidiendo aclaraciones y garantías de Estados Unidos a través de los cauces adecuados.

En julio de 2013 se creó un grupo ad hoc UE-EE.UU. para que examinase estas cuestiones. El informe sobre las conclusiones a que llegaron los copresidentes de la UE en dicho grupo ad hoc ([1]) contienen aclaraciones e información adicional proporcionada por los Estados Unidos, al tiempo que arroja más luz sobre el marco jurídico de este país al respecto. El 27 de noviembre de 2013, la Comisión emitió un comunicado titulado «Restablecer la confianza en los flujos de datos entre la UE y los EE.UU.» ([2]), en el que se detalla la posición de la Comisión y sus expectativas con el fin de que pueda restablecerse la confianza a ambos lados del Atlántico a efectos de la circulación de datos.

En la sesión del Consejo Europeo de los días 24 y 25 de octubre de 2013, los Jefes de Estado o de Gobierno tomaron nota de la intención de Francia y Alemania de entablar conversaciones bilaterales con los Estados Unidos para llegar a un acuerdo sobre las relaciones mutuas en el ámbito de la obtención de información.

El 6 de diciembre, el Consejo y los Estados miembros acordaron una contribución de la UE y sus Estados miembros en el contexto de la revisión de la inteligencia de señales que presentó con motivo del discurso del Presidente Obama de 17 de enero de 2014. La Delegación UE en Washington transmitió y explicó las inquietudes de los ciudadanos e instituciones de la UE a diversos interlocutores estadounidenses.

([1]) 16897/13 JAI 1 078 USA 61 Dataprotect 184 COTER 151 Enfopol 394.
Disponible en: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2016987 %202013 %20INIT

([2]) COM(2013) 846.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013656/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2013)

Subject: Implications of Snowdon affair in France and intercepting of Council communications

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius has announced his intention of summoning Charles Rivkin, US ambassador to France, to seek an explanation regarding allegations by Edward Snowdon published in '*Le Monde*' to the effect that France has been targeted by spying operations, with over 70 million telephone calls intercepted in just one month.

The French Government is the first in Europe to summon a US ambassador for discussions relating solely to leaks by the former NSA analyst. The actions of the US and UK in systematically spying on almost the entire population of a country such as France are totally inadmissible. It is therefore only reasonable for France to hold the US to account and for individual rights to be upheld.

In reply to my questions regarding this matter, the Vice-President/High Representative of the European Union, Baroness Ashton, has consistently indicated that she intends to issue no statements concerning the Snowdon affair. Her failure to call the US administration to account in any way, despite the fact that it has breached the privacy of millions of citizens and a number of strategic organisations, is making the European Union appear ridiculous at international level.

Although the Council of the European Union has had more communications intercepted by the NSA than any other European institution, it has failed to make any attempt to salvage what remains of European sovereignty. Nothing whatsoever is being done, despite the urgent need for action in response to the millions of breaches committed and the serious political implications thereof.

Is the Council aware that France has summoned the US ambassador? Has it officially summoned the US ambassador to the EU to discuss the interception of communications from Council offices? Does it intend to act jointly with the French Government on this matter and establish a common position to be adopted by all the EU governments? Is it seeking information or investigating the precise number of infringements committed by the US authorities in breaching the rights and interests of European citizens? Is it envisaging a suspension of negotiations regarding the transatlantic trade and investment agreement with a view to guaranteeing that European interests in this connection are not undermined by acts of espionage?

Reply
(23 June 2014)

The EU takes very seriously reports of US surveillance of EU citizens and institutions and moved swiftly to raise concerns and seek clarifications from the US authorities when these revelations were first made. The EU has consistently kept the issue on the agenda at meetings with relevant US counterparts and has continued to seek clarifications and assurances from the US through appropriate channels.

In July 2013 an ad hoc EU-US Working Group was set up to examine these issues. The report on the findings by the EU Co-chairs of this working group ([1]) contains clarifications and further information given by the US, while shedding light on the US legal framework in this field. On 27 November 2013 the Commission issued a communication entitled Rebuilding Trust in EU-US Data Flows ([2]), which outlines the Commission's position and expectations in a bid to restore trust in transatlantic data flows.

At the meeting of the European Council of 24-25 October 2013, the Heads of State or Government took note of the intention of France and Germany to seek bilateral talks with the USA with the aim of finding an understanding on mutual relations in the field of intelligence gathering.

On 6 December the Council and the Member States agreed on a contribution of the EU and its Member States in the context of the review of signals intelligence that led to President Obama's speech of 17 January 2014. The EU Delegation in Washington conveyed and explained these concerns of EU citizens and institutions to various US stakeholders.

([1]) 16897/13 JAI 1078 USA 61 Dataprotect 184 Coter 151 Enfopol 394. Available at: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2016987%202013%20INIT

([2]) COM(2013) 846.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013847/13
an den Rat
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Bankenunion — Abwicklungsbehörde und Notfallfonds

Mit der Bankenunion soll es künftig in der EU gemeinsame Regeln zur Schließung oder Rettung maroder Banken geben. Die sogenannte zweite Säule der Bankenunion bildet dabei eine Bankenabwicklungsbehörde inklusive eines entsprechenden Fonds, in welchen die Banken einzahlen und der im Notfall einspringen soll.

1. Wer soll in der EU konkret die Entscheidung darüber treffen, ob eine Bank mit dem gemeinsamen Instrument saniert oder abgewickelt werden soll? Binnenmarktkommissar Michel Barnier hatte vorgeschlagen, dass die Kommission diese Entscheidung treffen solle. Ist dies so geplant?

2. Wenn nicht, soll den Mitgliedstaaten oder der EZB die Entscheidung überlassen werden? Wie würden/könnten die diesbezüglichen Abstimmungsregeln aussehen?

3. Würde über Abwicklung und Kostenübernahme im selben Gremium oder in unterschiedlicher Zusammensetzung entschieden?

4. Wie kann man die gegenseitige Abhängigkeit von Bankbilanzen und Staatsfinanzen langfristig im Rahmen der Bankenunion verhindern?

Antwort
(31. März 2014)

Der Standpunkt des Rates zum einheitlichen Abwicklungsmechanismus ist in der allgemeinen Ausrichtung wiedergegeben, die der Rat am 18. Dezember 2013 festgelegt hat ([1]).

Die Verhandlungen mit dem Europäischen Parlament, einschließlich über das Beschlussfassungsverfahren, sind noch nicht abgeschlossen.

([1]) Dok. 18070/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013847/13
to the Council
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Banking union — resolution authority and emergency fund

With the banking union, there are in future to be common rules in the EU for the closure or rescue of ailing banks. The 'second pillar' of the banking union is therefore a bank resolution authority, including a corresponding fund, intended to provide assistance in the event of an emergency, into which the banks will pay.

1. Who, specifically, in the EU is to take the decision as to whether a bank is to be restructured or wound up using the common instrument? The Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, Mr Barnier, has proposed that the Commission take this decision. Is that what is planned?

2. If not, is the decision to be left to the Member States or the European Central Bank? What would/could the rules for voting be in this regard?

3. Would decisions on winding up and bearing of costs be taken by the same panel or by different configurations?

4. How can the mutual dependency of banks' balance sheets and state finances be prevented in the long term within the banking union?

Reply
(31 March 2014)

The position of the Council on the Single Resolution Mechanism is set out in the general approach agreed on 18 December 2013 by the Council ([1]).

Negotiations with the European Parliament are on-going, including on the decision-making procedure.

([1]) Doc. 18070/13.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-014008/13
à la Commission
Philippe de Villiers (EFD)
(10 décembre 2013)

Objet: Conditions sanitaires

Andris Pielbags, le commissaire européen chargé du développement, a révélé lors de la semaine mondiale de l'eau que 2,5 milliards de personnes dans le monde ne vivaient pas dans des conditions sanitaires satisfaisantes et que 768 millions de personnes n'ont pas du tout accès à l'eau potable.

L'Union européenne a alloué, pour les secteurs de l'eau et de l'assainissement dans 62 pays, 2 milliards d'euros pour la période 2008-2013? Qu'en sera-t-il pour la période suivante? Quels sont les résultats atteints?

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(29 janvier 2014)

Pour la période 2007-2013, l'Union européenne a effectivement engagé plus de 2 milliards d'euros dans des programmes d'accès à l'eau potable et à l'assainissement. Ces programmes, mis en œuvre dans 62 pays, principalement dans les pays ACP, ont permis à l'UE de faire une différence significative dans la lutte contre la pauvreté. Ces ressources financières ont été engagées via les programmes indicatifs nationaux et régionaux.

Plus spécifiquement durant cette période, la Facilité Eau financée par les 9^{e} et 10^{e} FED, pour un montant de 712 millions d'euros, a financé plus de 280 projets dans le secteur de l'eau et de l'assainissement au bénéfice de la société civile dans les pays ACP.

Dans la période 2004-2013 plus de 70 millions de personnes ont eu accès à l'eau potable, et plus de 24 millions de personnes ont eu l'accès à l'assainissement grace aux projets financés par l'UE.

Pour la période 2014-2020, bien que l'exercice de programmation n'ait pas encore été finalisé et suivant les données de novembre 2013, le secteur de l'eau et de l'assainissement a été retenu comme secteur focal dans 19 pays et dans au moins 4 programmes indicatifs regionaux. Les budgets définitifs de ces programmes seront connus au deuxième semestre 2014. Les contributions des facilités d'investissement continueront aussi à financer des projets d'eau et d'assainissement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014008/13
to the Commission
Philippe de Villiers (EFD)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Sanitary conditions

Andris Piebalgs, the European Commissioner for Development, revealed during World Water Week that 2.5 billion people worldwide are still without adequate sanitation and that 768 million people are without access to drinking water.

The European Union has allocated EUR 2 billion to the water and sanitation sectors in 62 countries for the 2008-2013 period. What amount is envisaged for the next period? What results have been achieved?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(29 janvier 2014)

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(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-014025/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(11 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Finanziamenti all'Egitto

Da fonti di stampa si apprende che il vice Primo ministro e Ministro per la Cooperazione internazionale egiziano, Ziad Bahaa-Eldin, ha firmato con l'UE tre accordi destinati ad avviare altrettanti progetti nel settore della gestione delle acque e delle acque di scarico, dello sviluppo delle zone rurali e dell'educazione.

Il primo progetto, della durata di 5 anni, fornirà acqua potabile e servizi sanitari. L'UE vi contribuirà con 23 milioni di euro sui 303 milioni previsti, mentre i restanti finanziamenti proverranno da altri enti europei e dalla Banca europea per gli investimenti.

Può la Commissione far sapere: quali sono gli altri enti che finanzieranno questo progetto e per quale entità? quanto concederà la BEI? come monitorerà l'UE il corretto impiego di questi finanziamenti?

Il secondo progetto mira invece a facilitare l'accesso al credito per le piccole e medie imprese del settore agricolo e il sostegno di Bruxelles ammonterà a 22 milioni di euro.

Può la Commissione precisare: come l'UE controllerà il corretto impiego di questi finanziamenti?

Il terzo progetto riguarda infine l'educazione.

Può la Commissione indicare: a quanto ammonta il finanziamento? se vi partecipa solo l'UE o anche altri enti? anche in questo caso come l'UE monitorerà il corretto impiego di questi erogazioni?

Può la Commissione specificare, in conclusione, lo status degli accordi e l'ammontare dei diversi finanziamenti concessi all'Egitto in tema di immigrazione?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(19 febbraio 2014)

La realizzazione del progetto per il miglioramento dei servizi di gestione delle risorse idriche e delle acque reflue, con una copertura di 23 milioni di euro, è stata demandata al *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau* (KfW) che ne è responsabile. Il progetto rientra in un programma, con una copertura di 303 milioni di euro, cofinanziato dal KfW (59 milioni di euro), dalla BEI (57 milioni di euro), dall'*Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) (57 milioni di euro), dalla cooperazione Svizzera (13 milioni di euro) e dal governo egiziano (94 milioni di euro). La Commissione ne conserva la responsabilità nei confronti delle proprie autorità di controllo e di bilancio.

L'accordo di sostegno dell'UE alle PMI agricole, per 22 milioni di euro, è stato firmato nel 2012. Il comunicato stampa richiamato dall'onorevole deputato fa riferimento alla firma dell'accordo tra la Commissione e AFD per la realizzazione del progetto, che comprende il monitoraggio, la valutazione e la revisione contabile, sotto la responsabilità della Commissione.

Il contributo di 50 milioni di euro al programma di riforma dell'istruzione e della formazione tecnico-professionali è strettamente collegato a progetti già realizzati dall'agenzia per lo sviluppo tedesca, italiana, francese e britannica (con un contributo del governo egiziano di 67 milioni di euro). La Commissione sovrintenderà le gare d'appalto ex ante e effettuerà i pagamenti. Oltre ad aver istituito un sistema interno di controllo e valutazione permanente, che rientra nel programma, la Commissione ha stanziato 700 000 euro per effettuare revisioni contabili e valutazioni esterne.

L'UE e l'Egitto cooperano da tempo nel settore della migrazione e dell'asilo. Dal 2005 in poi l'Egitto ha beneficiato di progetti finanziati dall'UE, a livello bilaterale e regionale, per un importo di oltre 25 milioni di euro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014025/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(11 December 2013)

Subject: Funding for Egypt

We have learned from press sources that Egypt's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for International Cooperation Ziad Bahaa-Eldin has signed three agreements with the EU to support three projects in the areas of water and wastewater management, rural development and education respectively.

The first project will run for three years and will provide drinking water and sanitation facilities. Of the EUR 303 million budget for the project, the EU will contribute EUR 23 million and the remaining funds will come from other European bodies and the European Investment Bank.

Can the Commission state which other European bodies will be funding this project and how much they will be contributing? How much will the EIB give? How will the EU monitor the proper use of the funds?

The second project aims to facilitate access to credit for small and medium enterprises in the farming sector and will receive EUR 22 million from Brussels.

How will the EU monitor the proper use of these funds?

The third project is in the field of education.

Can the Commission state: how much funding has been set aside for this project; whether only the EU will be contributing to it, or whether other bodies be involved, and how EU will monitor the proper use of the funds?

Lastly, what is the status of the agreements with Egypt concerning immigration and how much funding has been set aside in this area?

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

The EUR 23 million project aiming to improve water and wastewater services has been delegated to the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) who will be responsible for its implementation. It is part of a EUR 303 million programme co-funded by KfW (EUR 59 million), EIB (EUR 57 million), Agence française de développement (EUR 57 million), Swiss cooperation (EUR 13 million) and the Egyptian government (EUR 94 million). The Commission remains accountable for the project vis-à-vis its own control and budgetary authorities.

The EUR 22 million Agreement concerning EU support to agricultural SMEs was signed in 2012. The press release mentioned by the Honourable Member refers to the signing of the agreement between the Commission and AFD to implement the project, which includes the monitoring, evaluation and audit tasks under the responsability of the Commission.

The EUR 50 million contribution to the Technical Vocational Education and Training Reform Programme has close links to projects already implemented by the German, Italian, French and British development agencies (the Egyptian Government is contributing EUR 67 million). The Commission will supervise the procurement procedures *ex ante* and make payements. In addition to setting up a permanent internal monitoring and evaluation system as a part of the programme, the Commission has allocated EUR 700 000 to carry out financial audits and external evaluations.

The EU has long-standing cooperation with Egypt in the area of migration and asylum. Since 2005 Egypt has benefited from EU funded projects, both at bilateral and regional level, for an amount of over EUR 25 million.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-014033/13
à la Commission
Bernadette Vergnaud (S&D)
(11 décembre 2013)

Objet: De « l'équitaxe» en France

Dans la réponse faite à des questions de députés européens, en date du 25 novembre 2011, M. Algirdas Šemeta, membre de la Commission, a confirmé que «le droit d'admission aux manifestations sportives et le droit d'utilisation d'installations sportives sont éligibles aux taux réduit de TVA dans le secteur équestre» (E-008313/2013).

Pouvez-vous nous indiquer de manière précise si la Commission maintient cette position ou non, et quelle sera la position de la Commission à l'égard de l'État français — lequel, après l'arrêt de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne en date du 8 mars 2012, risque une procédure de manquement sur manquement — s'il maintient une dérogation pour un taux réduit de TVA sur toutes les activités équestres (éducation, insertion par le sport équestre, activités liées au caractère agricole de l'équitation…)?

Enfin, la création d'un «fonds cheval» national pour soutenir la filière équestre lors de la hausse de la TVA, dès le 1er janvier 2014, est-elle compatible avec les règles européennes en matière d'aides d'État?

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

La Commission confirme que «le droit d'admission aux manifestations sportives» et «le droit d'utilisation d'installations sportives» (respectivement points 13 et 14 de l'annexe III de la directive TVA ([1])) sont éligibles au taux réduit de TVA dans le secteur équestre. Toutefois, ces deux notions sont à interpréter de manière stricte et ne sauraient couvrir les cours d'équitation et la prise en pension de chevaux.

Si la France décidait de maintenir un taux réduit de TVA pour toutes les activités équestres, la Commission considérerait que la France n'a pas exécuté pleinement et correctement l'arrêt de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne du 8 mars 2012 (affaire C-596/10). Elle pourrait en conséquence décider de saisir la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne pour «manquement sur manquement» en application de l'article 260 du traité de fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.

S'agissant du «fonds cheval», la Commission ne peut pas répondre à la question de l'Honorable Parlementaire de façon générale et sans plus d'informations. Les aides aux activités économiques sont normalement prohibées par le traité et sont donc illégales, à moins d'être préalablement autorisées par la Commission qui peut déroger à cette prohibition à des conditions strictes assurant leur compatibilité avec le marché intérieur. La Commission a, par exemple, déjà approuvé des mesures d'aide visant le secteur hippique (décision du 19 juin 2013 — dans le cas SA.30753 —Amélioration de l'espèce équine et promotion de l'élevage), sans que cela ne préjuge sa position en cas d'examen de la compatibilité du «fonds cheval».

([1]) Directive 2006/112/CE du Conseil du 28 novembre 2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-014033/13
to the Commission
Bernadette Vergnaud (S&D)
(11 December 2013)

Subject: French 'horse tax'

In his reply to Written Question E-008313/2011, Commissioner Algirdas Šemeta said that 'admission charges for sporting events and charges for the use of sports facilities are […] eligible for the reduced VAT rate in the equestrian sector'.

Does the Commission still hold this position? France faces infringement proceedings following the Court of Justice judgment of 8 March 2012. What position will the Commission take if France continues to apply a reduced VAT rate to all equestrian activities (education, equestrian-based integration schemes, agricultural activities involving horses, etc.)?

Lastly, is the creation of a national 'horse fund' to support the equestrian sector following the VAT increase which will take effect on 1 January 2014 compatible with European law on state aid?

(Version française)

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

La Commission confirme que «le droit d'admission aux manifestations sportives» et «le droit d'utilisation d'installations sportives» (respectivement points 13 et 14 de l'annexe III de la directive TVA ([1])) sont éligibles au taux réduit de TVA dans le secteur équestre. Toutefois, ces deux notions sont à interpréter de manière stricte et ne sauraient couvrir les cours d'équitation et la prise en pension de chevaux.

Si la France décidait de maintenir un taux réduit de TVA pour toutes les activités équestres, la Commission considérerait que la France n'a pas exécuté pleinement et correctement l'arrêt de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne du 8 mars 2012 (affaire C-596/10). Elle pourrait en conséquence décider de saisir la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne pour « manquement sur manquement » en application de l'article 260 du traité de fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.

S'agissant du «fonds cheval», la Commission ne peut pas répondre à la question de l'Honorable Parlementaire de façon générale et sans plus d'informations. Les aides aux activités économiques sont normalement prohibées par le traité et sont donc illégales, à moins d'être préalablement autorisées par la Commission qui peut déroger à cette prohibition à des conditions strictes assurant leur compatibilité avec le marché intérieur. La Commission a, par exemple, déjà approuvé des mesures d'aide visant le secteur hippique (décision du 19 juin 2013 — dans le cas SA.30753 —Amélioration de l'espèce équine et promotion de l'élevage), sans que cela ne préjuge sa position en cas d'examen de la compatibilité du «fonds cheval».

([1]) Directive 2006/112/CE du Conseil du 28 novembre 2006.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-014050/13
al Consejo
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE) y Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(12 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo UE-México: Grupo de Trabajo

El 26 de enero de 2013, el presidente Van Rompuy y el presidente Barroso se reunieron con el presidente de México, Peña Nieto, en los márgenes de la cumbre UE-CELAC.

En dicha reunión acordaron el establecimiento de un grupo de trabajo conjunto para evaluar los sectores del actual Acuerdo de Asociación Económica, Concertación Política y Cooperación entre la Unión Europea y México que habrían de ser objeto de revisión, modernización y puesta al día.

En este sentido, ¿podría el Consejo informar sobre cuáles son los resultados logrados hasta hoy por dicho grupo de trabajo, transcurrido casi un año desde la decisión de crearlo?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-014053/13
al Consejo
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE) y Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(12 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo de Asociación con México: reformas realizadas por la contraparte mexicana

México, socio estratégico de la Unión Europea, ha emprendido un decidido curso de reformas en distintos ámbitos, entre los que cabe destacar el político, el educativo, el fiscal, el energético y el de las comunicaciones.

Muchas de estas reformas van dirigidas a introducir mayores dosis de competencias en los sectores concernidos.

Habida cuenta de que, en gran medida y al amparo del anterior Acuerdo, la liberalización en el sector de los servicios no ha podido ser optimizada convenientemente debido a las limitaciones existentes en la legislación mexicana, ¿podría el Consejo manifestar si el sentido de dichas reformas podría redundar en beneficio de los intereses de las empresas europeas?

¿No piensa el Consejo que la UE debería posicionarse lo antes posible mediante una reforma destinada a mejorar los plazos para la renegociación del actual Acuerdo?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-014056/13
al Consejo
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE) y Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(12 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo UE-México en relación con la XVI Reunión de la Comisión Parlamentaria Mixta México-UE

Durante la XVI Reunión de la Comisión Parlamentaria Mixta México-UE celebrada en Estrasburgo entre el 19 y 21 de noviembre se adoptaron las siguientes conclusiones en relación con la revisión del Acuerdo de Asociación Económica, Concertación Política y Cooperación entre la Unión Europea y México:

— La necesidad de una profundización en la relación entre la UE y México, especialmente en los ámbitos de servicios e inversiones del Acuerdo Global junto con un refuerzo del diálogo político y la cooperación mediante una renovación estratégica.

— La CPM insta a la UE y a México a lanzar el Primer Diálogo Político de alto nivel y a establecer, en una fecha próxima, la totalidad de los Grupos de reflexión que serán creados en el marco del proceso de actualización del mencionado Acuerdo.

— La CPM reitera su deseo de que la actualización del Acuerdo Global se desarrolle de forma autónoma pero coherente con la negociación del Acuerdo Transatlántico sobre Comercio e Inversión entre la UE y EEUU con el fin de facilitar las relaciones comerciales entre los dos lados del Atlántico, tomando también en consideración la reciente conclusión del acuerdo de libre comercio entre Canadá y la UE.

— La CPM destaca la importancia de que las PYME tengan un mayor protagonismo en la relación comercial entre ambos socios. Ambas partes consideran necesario seguir impulsando proyectos que favorezcan la inserción de las PYME mexicanas y europeas en el comercio bilateral, haciendo énfasis en aquellas regiones o países donde no se ha aprovechado plenamente el Acuerdo Global.

¿Podría explicar el Consejo qué importancia concede al contenido de dichas conclusiones?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-014059/13
al Consejo
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE) y Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(12 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Prioridad de las negociaciones del Acuerdo de Asociación con México

La Unión Europea está negociando un Acuerdo de Libre Comercio e Inversión con los EE.UU.

Asimismo, prácticamente ha concluido las negociaciones con Canadá.

También está en negociaciones con la India, Tailandia, Vietnam y otros países.

En este contexto, ¿podría el Consejo especificar qué grado de prioridad otorga a las negociaciones para la revisión y puesta al día del actual Acuerdo de Asociación con México?

Respuesta conjunta
(14 de abril de 2014)

El Consejo no ha abordado los asuntos a que se refieren Sus Señorías. En cualquier caso, las conversaciones exploratorias sobre una posible revisión del vigente Acuerdo de Asociación Económica, Concertación Política y Cooperación entre la Unión Europea y México competen a la Comisión y a la Alta Representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014050/13
to the Council
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE) and Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(12 December 2013)

Subject: EU-Mexico Agreement: working group

On 26 January 2013, President Van Rompuy and President Barroso met with the President of Mexico, Enrique Peña Nieto, on the sidelines of the EU-CELAC Summit.

At the meeting, it was agreed to set up a joint working group to assess the areas of the current Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement between the Union and Mexico that need to be reviewed, modernised and updated.

In that regard, could the Council say what results have been achieved to date by this Working Group, almost a year after the decision was taken to create it?

Question for written answer E-014053/13
to the Council
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE) and Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(12 December 2013)

Subject: Association Agreement with Mexico: reforms implemented by Mexico

Mexico, a strategic partner of the Union, has embarked on a determined course of reforms, most importantly in the areas of politics, education, taxes, energy and communications.

Many of these reforms are aimed at giving a greater share of powers to the sectors concerned.

Considering that liberalisation in the services sector under the previous Agreement has, in large part, failed to be optimised appropriately because of limitations in Mexican law, could the Council state whether the impact of such reforms could be beneficial to the interests of European companies?

Does the Council not think that the EU should take a stand as soon as possible through a reform to improve the periods for renegotiating the current Agreement?

Question for written answer E-014056/13
to the Council
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE) and Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(12 December 2013)

Subject: EU-Mexico Agreement in relation to the 16th Meeting of the Mexico-EU Joint Parliamentary Committee

At the 16th Meeting of the Mexico-EU Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), held in Strasbourg between 19 and 21 November 2013, the following conclusions were adopted in relation to revision of the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and Mexico:

— The need to deepen the relationship between the EU and Mexico, especially in the fields of services and investments covered by the Global Agreement, as well as the need to strengthen political dialogue and cooperation through a strategic renewal.

— The JPC urges the EU and Mexico to launch the first high-level political dialogue and to establish, in the near future, all of the study groups that will be created in the context of updating the aforementioned Agreement.

— The JPC reiterates its wish for the Global Agreement to be updated autonomously but in keeping with the negotiation of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Agreement between the EU and the United States, with the aim of facilitating trade relations between the two sides of the Atlantic, while also taking into account the recent conclusion of the free trade agreement between Canada and the EU.

— The JPC underlines the importance of SMEs playing a larger role in the trade relationship between the two partners. Both parties consider it necessary to continue promoting projects that facilitate the involvement of Mexican and European SMEs in bilateral trade, particularly in regions or countries where the potential of the Global Agreement has not been fully tapped.

Can the Council explain what importance it assigns to the content of these conclusions?

Question for written answer E-014059/13
to the Council
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE) and Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(12 December 2013)

Subject: Priority of the negotiations on the new Association Agreement with Mexico

The European Union is negotiating a Free Trade and Investment Agreement with the United States.

In addition, it has nearly concluded negotiations with Canada.

It is also engaged in negotiations with India, Thailand, Vietnam and other countries.

In this context, can the Council specify what degree of priority it assigns to the negotiations to revise and update the current Association Agreement with Mexico?

Joint reply
(14 April 2014)

The Council has not discussed the matter raised by the Honourable Members. In any case, the exploratory talks on a possible revision of the current Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Mexico are a matter for the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-014089/13
au Conseil
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(12 décembre 2013)

Objet: Accord UE-Canada

Dans son rapport contenant la recommandation du Parlement européen au Conseil, à la Commission et au Service européen pour l'action extérieure sur les négociations relatives à un accord de partenariat stratégique UE-Canada, le Parlement insiste sur le fait que tout accord entre l'Union et des pays tiers doit contenir des clauses de conditionnalité réciproque et de nature politique portant sur les Droits de l'homme et la démocratie, de manière à réaffirmer ensemble l'engagement mutuel à défendre ces valeurs et ce, quelle que soit la situation en matière de protection des Droits de l'homme dans les pays en question.

Quelle est la position du Conseil?

Compte-t-il faire adopter des garde-fous appropriés pour veiller à ce que le mécanisme de suspension ne fasse l'objet d'abus d'aucune des deux parties?

Compte-t-il accéder à notre demande sur le fait que la conditionnalité doit figurer dans l'accord de partenariat stratégique conclu avec le Canada, afin de garantir la cohérence de l'approche commune définie par l'Union européenne dans ce domaine?

Compte-t-il faire en sorte que l'accord contienne l'engagement ferme d'une coopération interparlementaire reconnaissant le rôle important du Parlement européen et du Parlement canadien dans les relations entre l'Union européenne et le Canada, notamment par l'intermédiaire de la délégation parlementaire établie de longue date?

Réponse
(17 mars 2014)

L'UE négocie des accords-cadres/APC qui comportent une série de clauses politiques standard portant notamment sur les Droits de l'homme et visant à affirmer les valeurs fondamentales de l'UE et à les diffuser dans le monde entier. L'accord de partenariat stratégique entre l'UE et le Canada se trouve dans sa phase finale de négociations; il renforcera considérablement les relations de politique étrangère et la coopération sectorielle entre l'UE et le Canada. L'un des objectifs généraux des négociations en cours demeure en effet de garantir la cohérence de l'approche commune susmentionnée.

L'un des objectifs de l'accord de partenariat stratégique entre l'UE et le Canada est de promouvoir la coopération interparlementaire ainsi que les échanges de délégations entre le Parlement européen et le Parlement du Canada.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014089/13
to the Council
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(12 December 2013)

Subject: EU-Canada agreement

In its report containing a recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the European External Action Service on the negotiations for an EU-Canada Strategic Partnership Agreement, Parliament stresses that all EU agreements with third countries should include reciprocal conditionality and political clauses on human rights and democracy, as a common reaffirmation of the mutual commitment to these values and regardless of the state of protection of human rights in those countries.

What is the Council's position on this issue?

Does it intend to adopt appropriate safeguards to ensure that the suspension mechanism cannot be abused by either side?

Does it intend to grant our request for conditionality to form part of the SPA with Canada, to ensure the consistency of the EU's common approach on the matter?

Does it intend to ensure that the agreement contains a solid commitment to inter-parliamentary cooperation that recognises the important role of the European Parliament and the Canadian Parliament in EU-Canada relations, especially through the long-established inter-parliamentary delegation?

Reply
(17 March 2014)

The EU negotiates framework agreements/PCAs that contain a set of standard political clauses, notably on human rights, which aim to assert the EU's fundamental values and project them around the world. The EU-Canada Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) is in its last phase of negotiations; the agreement will significantly upgrade EU-Canada foreign policy and sectoral cooperation. One overall objective in these ongoing negotiations remains indeed the consistency of the abovementioned common approach.

Promoting inter-parliamentary cooperation as well as exchanges of delegations of the European Parliament and the Parliament of Canada is one of the objectives of the EU-Canada Strategic Partnership Agreement.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-014146/13
до Комисията
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Victor Boştinaru (S&D), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Marusya Lyubcheva (S&D), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE) и Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(16 декември 2013 г.)

Относно: Създаване на специални икономически зони за морско трансбордиране

Настоящата икономическа и финансова криза възпрепятства сериозно способността на ЕС да поддържа конкурентоспособността си в ред ключови сектори. Предвид на неговия глобализиран и нестабилен характер, морското трансбордиране е сред най-засегнатите сектори.

В допълнение благоприятните търговски условия, предлагани от северноафриканските пристанища, драстично увеличават опасността европейските пристанища да се окажат маргинализирани — особено средиземноморските пристанища, които географски са най-изложени на конкуренцията от неевропейски пристанища. Понастоящем, значителен процент стоки, влизащи в ЕС, се трансбордира в неевропейски пристанища в Средиземно море, като тази тенденция се очаква да продължи да нараства, особено като се има предвид, че напоследък размерът на корабите все повече се увеличава. Още повече, сигурността на стоковите доставки за държавите—членки на ЕС, е изложена на опасност поради зависимостта от неевропейски възлови пристанища.

Поради това е необходимо да се повишат цялостните стандарти на пристанищата в ЕС, за да могат те да отговарят на тези в неевропейските пристанища чрез създаването на „специални икономически зони“ — средство, което доказа високата си ефективност, като даде тласък на неевропейските пристанища за трансбордиране и на свързаните с тях логистични и промишлени зони.

Тази инициатива, осъществена извън ЕС, подобри конкурентоспособността, създаде данъчни предимства за предприятията, привлечени от по-ниската административна тежест, подобри средата за предприемаческа дейност и създаде работни места, чрез привличането на чуждестранни инвестиции за иновационни, високотехнологични дейности.

Както се посочва в отговора, даден от г-н Рен от името на Комисията на 11 декември 2012 г., специалните икономически зони (СИЗ) могат да бъдат създадени на територията на държавите членки, а разположените в тях предприятия могат да получат подкрепа — например за нови инвестиции, доколкото тя се отпуска в съответствие с правилата на ЕС, включително правилата относно държавните помощи.

1. Като има предвид, че Комисията преразглежда опита, натрупан в използването на СИЗ, възнамерява ли Комисията да насърчи специалните икономически зони като средство и да даде препоръки на държавите членки за това как да създадат СИЗ на своите територии?

2. Какви практически стъпки е склонна да предприеме Комисията, за да преодолее маргинализацията по отношение на трансбордирането? Възнамерява ли Комисията да предприеме съответни инициативи? Би ли могла Комисията да предостави подробна информация за инициативи, които вече са били предприети за тази цел?

3. Комисията споделя ли становището, че разполагането на СИЗ в средиземноморските възлови пристанища би имало двойната полза да гарантира европейската верига за доставки и да защити съществуващите работни места в пристанищата за трансбордиране в ЕС и същевременно да създаде нови работни места в промишлените и логистични зони в региони, които изпитват затруднения в резултат на високия процент на безработица?

Отговор, даден от Сийм Калас от името на Комисията
(18 март 2014 г.)

1. Държавите членки сами решават дали да създадат специални икономически зони (СИЗ) и дали да преразгледат тяхното съществуване. В зависимост от целите, които желаят да насърчават в СИЗ, държавите членки следва да спазват условията, установени в различните инструменти за държавна помощ (насоките за регионална помощ, рамката за научни изследвания, развойна дейност и иновации, насоките за помощи за опазване на околната среда и др.). Държавите членки, които възнамеряват да създадат СИЗ с цел подпомагане на регионалното развитие, трябва да гарантират, че тези СИЗ се намират в подпомаганите региони от картата за регионални помощи за съответната държава членка, както и че възможните данъчни стимули или други предимства в рамките на СИЗ са в съответствие с разпоредбите за регионалните помощи от Общия регламент за групово освобождаване (ОРГО) или с насоките за регионална помощ.

2. Комисията няма доказателства, че текущото състояние на пазарите на трансбордиране излага на риск сигурността на доставките на ЕС или че маргинализира по друг начин интересите на ЕС, засягащи операциите по трансбордиране.

На 23 май 2013 г. Комисията прие съобщение относно пристанищната политика ([1]) и законодателно предложение ([2]) с конкретни мерки за повишаване на конкурентоспособността на европейските пристанища и на капацитета им за привличане на инвестиции. Освен това наскоро приетият Регламент (ЕС) № 1315/2013 относно насоките на Съюза за развитието на трансевропейската транспортна мрежа ([3]) и финансовият инструмент под формата на Механизъм за свързване на Европа ([4]) ще подобрят ефективността на пристанищата на ЕС. В контекста на Седмата рамкова програма за научни изследвания и технологично развитие Комисията стартира проекта Portopia ([5]) — наред с останалото той ще наблюдава дейностите за пристанищно трансбордиране, които обслужват търговията на ЕС.

3. Съгласно рамката, посочена в т. 1, Комисията споделя становището относно ползите от подходящо разположените СИЗ.

([1]) COM(2013) 295 final, 23 май 2013 г. „Пристанищата: двигател на растежа“.

([2]) COM(2013) 296 final, 23 май 2013 г. Предложение за Регламент на Европейския парламент и на Съвета за създаване на рамка за достъп до пазара на пристанищни услуги и финансова прозрачност на пристанищата.

([3]) Вж. http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm

([4]) Вж. http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm

([5]) Повече информация за проекта Portopia се съдържа на http://www.portopia.eu/home.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-014146/13
a la Comisión
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Victor Boştinaru (S&D), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Marusya Lyubcheva (S&D), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE) y Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(16 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Establecimiento de zonas económicas especiales para el transbordo marítimo

La actual crisis económica y financiera está limitando fuertemente la capacidad de la UE de mantener su competitividad en algunos sectores importantes. El transbordo marítimo, debido a su carácter globalizado y volátil, se encuentra entre los sectores más afectados.

Además, las favorables condiciones comerciales de los puertos del norte de África están contribuyendo a que aumente de forma alarmante el riesgo de marginalización de los puertos europeos, principalmente los de la zona mediterránea, que son los más expuestos geográficamente a la competencia de puertos de terceros países. En la actualidad un porcentaje significativo de las mercancías que entran a la UE son objeto de transbordo a través de puertos mediterráneos de terceros países. Se prevé que esta tendencia siga aumentando, en particular teniendo en cuenta que, en los últimos años, el tamaño de los buques ha experimentado un aumento constante. Asimismo, está en riesgo la seguridad del suministro de mercancías a los países de la UE por la peligrosa dependencia de puertos nodales de terceros países.

Por este motivo es necesario mejorar el nivel general de los puertos de la UE para equipararlos a los puertos de terceros países creando «zonas económicas especiales», un instrumento que ha demostrado ser el más eficaz para impulsar los puertos de transbordo de terceros países y sus respectivas zonas logísticas e industriales.

Esta iniciativa, aplicada fuera de la UE, ha reforzado la competitividad, ha creado ventajas fiscales para las empresas atraídas por la menor carga administrativa, ha mejorado el entorno empresarial y ha creado puestos de trabajo atrayendo inversión exterior para actividades innovadoras de alta tecnología.

De acuerdo con la respuesta conjunta del Comisario Rehn en nombre de la Comisión, de 11 de diciembre de 2012, se pueden crear zonas económicas especiales (ZEE) en el territorio de los Estados miembros, y las empresas situadas en dichas zonas pueden recibir ayudas, por ejemplo para nuevas inversiones, siempre que se concedan de conformidad con las normas de la UE, incluidas las normas en materia de ayudas estatales.

1. Teniendo en cuenta que la Comisión está examinando la experiencia adquirida con el recurso a las ZEE, ¿tiene previsto la Comisión promover las ZEE como instrumento y asesorar a los Estados miembros sobre el modo de crear ZEE en sus territorios?

2. ¿Qué medidas concretas prevé adoptar la Comisión para superar la marginalización relativa al transbordo? ¿Tiene intención de adoptar iniciativas en la materia? ¿Puede facilitar información detallada sobre iniciativas que se hayan adoptado ya en este sentido?

3. ¿Comparte la Comisión la idea de que crear ZEE en los centros de transbordo del Mediterráneo tendría la doble ventaja de salvaguardar la cadena de suministro europea y proteger los puestos de trabajo existentes en los puertos de transbordo de la UE, al tiempo que crearía nuevos puestos de trabajo en las zonas industriales y logísticas de las regiones que sufren las consecuencias de índices de desempleo elevados?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de marzo de 2014)

1. Corresponde a los Estados miembros crear o modificar Zonas Económicas Especiales si así lo desean. En función del objetivo que deseen perseguir con las ZEE, deberán ajustarse a las condiciones establecidas por los diferentes instrumentos de ayuda estatal (Directrices sobre ayudas regionales, Marco de investigación, desarrollo e innovación, Directrices sobre ayudas al medio ambiente, etc.). Los Estados miembros que establezcan ZEE con el objetivo de promover el desarrollo regional deben asegurarse de que tales zonas se encuentren en regiones asistidas del mapa de ayudas regionales del Estado miembro en cuestión y de que los eventuales incentivos fiscales u otras ventajas concedidas por la ZEE se ajusten a las disposiciones en materia de ayudas regionales establecidas por el Reglamento general de exención por categorías o por las Directrices sobre ayudas regionales.

2. A la Comisión no le consta que la situación actual de los mercados del transbordo sea tal que la seguridad de suministro de la UE corra peligro o que los intereses de la UE en el ámbito de las operaciones de transbordo sean susceptibles de marginalización.

El 23 de mayo de 2013, la Comisión adoptó una Comunicación sobre política portuaria ([1]) y una propuesta legislativa ([2]) con medidas concretas encaminadas a fortalecer la competitividad de los puertos europeos y su capacidad de atraer la inversión. Por otro lado, el Reglamento (UE) 1315/2013, relativo a la Red Transeuropea de Transporte ([3]), recientemente adoptado, y el instrumento de financiación conocido como Mecanismo «Conectar Europa» ([4]) contribuirán a reforzar las actividades de los puertos de la UE. En el contexto del Séptimo Programa Marco de IDT, la Comisión ha lanzado también el proyecto «Portopia» ([5]) que, entre otras cosas, vigilará la evolución de las actividades de transbordo utilizadas por los sectores de la UE.

3. La Comisión concuerda con Su Señoría en que, en el contexto mencionado en la pregunta 1, unas ZEE bien situadas podrían ser beneficiosas.

([1]) COM(2013) 295 final de 23 de mayo de 2013 «Puertos: motor de crecimiento».

([2]) COM(2013) 296 final de 23 de mayo de 2013 Propuesta del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo por el que se crea un marco sobre el acceso al mercado de los servicios portuarios y la transparencia financiera de los puertos.

([3]) Véase http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm

([4]) Véase http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm

([5]) Para más información sobre el proyecto Portopia, véase http://www.portopia.eu/home

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-014146/13
an die Kommission
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Victor Boştinaru (S&D), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Marusya Lyubcheva (S&D), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE) und Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(16. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Errichtung von Sonderwirtschaftszonen für den Umschlag von Seeverkehrsgütern

Die gegenwärtige Wirtschafts- und Finanzkrise behindert die EU in erheblichem Maße bei der Erhaltung ihrer Wettbewerbsfähigkeit in einer Reihe wichtiger Wirtschaftszweige. Der Umschlag von Seeverkehrsgütern (Transshipment) gehört wegen seiner globalen Beschaffenheit und Volatilität zu den am meisten betroffenen Branchen.

Hinzu kommt, dass die günstigen Handelskonditionen, die nordafrikanische Häfen bieten, die Gefahr dramatisch erhöht haben, dass die europäischen Häfen erheblich an Bedeutung verlieren könnten. Dies gilt vor allem für die Mittelmeerhäfen, die wegen ihrer geografischen Lage dem Wettbewerb von Häfen außerhalb der EU besonders stark ausgesetzt sind. Heutzutage wird bereits ein erheblicher Prozentteil der Güter, die in die EU gelangen, in Mittelmeerhäfen außerhalb der EU umgeschlagen, und dieser Trend setzt sich weiter fort, was dadurch begünstigt wird, dass die Schiffe in jüngster Zeit immer größer werden. Außerdem wird die Sicherheit der Güterversorgung der EU durch eine gefährliche Abhängigkeit von Umschlaghäfen außerhalb der EU aufs Spiel gesetzt.

Daher muss der allgemeine Standard von EU-Häfen erhöht und an den von Häfen außerhalb der EU angepasst werden, indem „Sonderwirtschaftszonen" eingerichtet werden — ein Instrument, das sich bei der Wirtschaftsförderung von Umschlaghäfen außerhalb der EU samt ihrer Logistik und Industriegebiete als sehr wirksam erwiesen hat.

Mit diesen außerhalb der EU durchgeführten Maßnahmen hat man dort die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit erhöht, Steuervorteile für Unternehmen geschaffen, die von dem geringeren Verwaltungsaufwand angezogen werden, die wirtschaftlichen Rahmenbedingungen verbessert und Arbeitsplätze durch Anreize für ausländische Investitionen im Bereich Innovation und Hochtechnologie geschaffen.

Laut der gemeinsamen Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission vom 11. Dezember 2012 können Sonderwirtschaftszonen auf dem Hoheitsgebiet der Mitgliedstaaten errichtet werden und dort angesiedelte Unternehmen können Unterstützungsleistungen zum Beispiel für neue Investitionen erhalten, solange dies im Einklang mit EU-Rechtsvorschriften einschließlich der Regeln für staatliche Hilfen geschieht.

1. Beabsichtigt die Kommission angesichts der Tatsache, dass sie derzeit die Erfahrungen mit der Nutzung von Sonderwirtschaftszonen auswertet, Sonderwirtschaftszonen als Instrument einzusetzen und Mitgliedstaaten im Hinblick auf die Errichtung von Sonderwirtschaftszonen auf deren Hoheitsgebiet zu beraten?

2. Welche praktischen Maßnahmen ist die Kommission gewillt, zu ergreifen, um der schwindenden Wettbewerbsfähigkeit beim Umschlag von Seeverkehrsgütern zu begegnen? Gedenkt die Kommission diesbezüglich tätig zu werden? Kann die Kommission ausführliche Auskunft über Initiativen geben, die zu diesem Zweck bereits ergriffen wurden?

3. Teilt die Kommission die Auffassung, dass die Errichtung von Sonderwirtschaftszonen in Umschlaghäfen im Mittelmeer den doppelten Vorteil hätte, die Güterversorgung der EU sicherzustellen sowie bestehende Arbeitsplätze in EU-Umschlaghäfen zu schützen und gleichzeitig neue Arbeitsplätze in den Industriezonen und Logistikzonen von Regionen zu schaffen, die unter hoher Arbeitslosigkeit leiden?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(18. März 2014)

1. Es liegt im Ermessen der Mitgliedstaaten, Sonderwirtschaftszonen (SWZ) einzurichten und zu überprüfen, wenn sie dies wünschen. Bei der Verfolgung ihrer Ziele in den SWZ müssen sie die jeweiligen Bestimmungen der verschiedenen Instrumente für staatliche Beihilfen beachten (Leitlinien für Regionalbeihilfen, Beihilferahmen für Forschung, Entwicklung und Innovation, Leitlinien für staatliche Umweltschutzbeihilfen, usw.). Mitgliedstaaten, die SWZ zur Förderung der regionalen Entwicklung einrichten wollen, müssen sicherstellen, dass diese SWZ in den auf der Fördergebietskarte des betreffenden Mitgliedstaats verzeichneten Fördergebieten liegen und dass die potenziellen steuerlichen Anreize oder sonstigen Vorteile in der SWZ den Bestimmungen der allgemeinen Gruppenfreistellungsverordnung (AGVO) in Bezug auf Regionalbeihilfen oder den Regionalbeihilfeleitlinien entsprechen.

2. Die Kommission hat keine Anhaltspunkte dafür, dass die derzeitigen Entwicklungen auf Umschlagsmärkten die Versorgungssicherheit der EU gefährden oder den Interessen der EU im Zusammenhang mit Umschlagstätigkeiten auf andere Weise zuwiderlaufen.

Am 23. Mai 2013 verabschiedete die Kommission eine Mitteilung zur Hafenpolitik ([1]) und einen Legislativvorschlag ([2]) mit präzisen Maßnahmen zur Stärkung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der europäischen Häfen und zum Ausbau ihrer Kapazitäten mit dem Ziel, Investitionen anzuziehen. Auch die kürzlich verabschiedete Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1315/2013 über den Aufbau eines transeuropäischen Verkehrsnetzes ([3]) und das Finanzinstrument „Connecting Europe" ([4]) werden dazu beitragen, die Leistung der Häfen in der EU zu verbessern. Beim 7. FTE-Rahmenprogramm hat die Kommission auch das Projekt „Portopia" ([5]) initiiert, bei dem unter anderem die Entwicklung der Umschlagstätigkeiten in Häfen im Zusammenhang mit dem EU-Handel beobachtet werden soll.

3. Innerhalb des genannten Rahmens bestätigt die Kommission, dass gut gelegene SWZ Vorteile bringen könnten.

([1]) KOM(2013)295 endg. vom 23. Mai 2013 „Häfen als Wachstumsmotor".
([2]) KOM(2013)296 endg. vom 23. Mai 2013, Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Schaffung eines Rahmens für den Zugang zum Markt für Hafendienste und für die finanzielle Transparenz der Häfen.
([3]) Siehe: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm
([4]) Siehe: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm
([5]) Weitere Informationen zum Projekt „Portopia": http://www.portopia.eu/home

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-014146/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Victor Boştinaru (S&D), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Marusya Lyubcheva (S&D), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE) και Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(16 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Θέσπιση ειδικών οικονομικών ζωνών για θαλάσσια μεταφόρτωση

Η σημερινή οικονομική και χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση δυσχεραίνει σημαντικά την ικανότητα της ΕΕ να διατηρεί την ανταγωνιστικότητά της σε έναν αριθμό τομέων καίριας σημασίας. Λόγω του παγκοσμιοποιημένου και ευμετάβλητου χαρακτήρα της, η θαλάσσια μεταφόρτωση είναι μεταξύ των τομέων που έχουν πληγεί περισσότερο.

Επιπλέον, οι ευνοϊκές εμπορικές συνθήκες στους λιμένες της Βόρειας Αφρικής αυξάνουν δραματικά τον κίνδυνο για τους ευρωπαϊκούς λιμένες να περιθωριοποιηθούν, ιδίως γι' αυτούς στη Μεσόγειο Θάλασσα που είναι από γεωγραφικής απόψεως περισσότερο εκτεθειμένοι στον ανταγωνισμό από λιμένες εκτός της ΕΕ. Σήμερα, ένα σημαντικό ποσοστό των εμπορευμάτων που εισέρχονται στην ΕΕ μεταφορτώνονται από λιμένες εκτός της ΕΕ στη Μεσόγειο, και αναμένεται η τάση αυτή να συνεχίσει να αυξάνεται, δεδομένου μάλιστα ότι πρόσφατα, το μέγεθος των πλοίων αυξάνεται συνεχώς. Η ασφάλεια του εφοδιασμού με εμπορεύματα των χωρών της ΕΕ, τίθεται, επιπλέον, σε κίνδυνο από την επικίνδυνη εξάρτηση από κεντρικούς λιμένες εκτός της ΕΕ.

Για το λόγο αυτό είναι αναγκαίο να αυξηθεί το γενικό επίπεδο των λιμένων της ΕΕ ώστε να ανταποκρίνεται σε αυτό των λιμένων εκτός ΕΕ, δημιουργώντας «ειδικές οικονομικές ζώνες», ένα εργαλείο το οποίο έχει αποδειχθεί ότι είναι ιδιαίτερα αποτελεσματικό στην ενίσχυση των λιμένων μεταφόρτωσης εκτός της ΕΕ και του σχετικού τομέα υλικοτεχνικής υποστήριξης καθώς και των βιομηχανικών περιοχών.

Η εν λόγω πρωτοβουλία η οποία εφαρμόστηκε εκτός της ΕΕ έχει βελτιώσει την ανταγωνιστικότητα, έχει δημιουργήσει φορολογικά πλεονεκτήματα για εταιρίες που έχουν προσελκυσθεί από τα μικρότερα διοικητικά βάρη, έχει ενισχύσει το επιχειρηματικό περιβάλλον και έχει δημιουργήσει θέσεις απασχόλησης προσελκύοντας ξένες επενδύσεις για καινοτόμες, υψηλής τεχνολογίας δραστηριότητες.

Σύμφωνα με την κοινή απάντηση του έδωσε ο κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής στις 11 Δεκεμβρίου 2012, μπορούν να δημιουργηθούν ειδικές οικονομικές ζώνες (ΕΟΖ) στην επικράτεια κρατών μελών, και οι επιχειρήσεις οι οποίες έχουν εγκατασταθεί εκεί μπορούν να λάβουν ενισχύσεις π.χ. για νέες επενδύσεις, στο βαθμό που αυτές χορηγούνται σύμφωνα με τους κανόνες της ΕΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των κανόνων περί κρατικών ενισχύσεων.

1. Δεδομένου ότι η Επιτροπή επανεξετάζει την εμπειρία που έχει αποκτηθεί με τη χρήση των ΕΟΖ, προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να προωθήσει τις ΕΟΖ ως ένα μέσο και να συμβουλεύσει τα κράτη μέλη με ποιόν τρόπο μπορούν να δημιουργήσουν αντίστοιχες ειδικές οικονομικές ζώνες στην επικράτειά τους;

2. Τι πρακτικά μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει η Επιτροπή προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσει την περιθωριοποίηση στον τομέα της μεταφόρτωσης; Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να αναλάβει σχετικές πρωτοβουλίες; Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες για όλες τις πρωτοβουλίες οι οποίες έχουν ήδη αναληφθεί για το σκοπό αυτό;

3. Συμμερίζεται η Επιτροπή την άποψη ότι, με τη δημιουργία ΕΟΖ στους κεντρικούς κόμβους μεταφόρτωσης της Μεσόγειου θα προέκυπτε ένα διπλό όφελος το οποίο θα συνίστατο αφενός, στην εξασφάλιση της ευρωπαϊκής αλυσίδας εφοδιασμού και, αφετέρου, στην προστασία των υφιστάμενων θέσεων εργασίας στους λιμένες μεταφόρτωσης στην ΕΕ, καθώς και στην ταυτόχρονη δημιουργία νέων θέσεων απασχόλησης στις βιομηχανικές ζώνες και στις ζώνες υλικοτεχνικής υποστήριξης των περιφερειών που πλήττονται ως αποτέλεσμα των υψηλών ποσοστών ανεργίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Μαρτίου 2014)

1. Εναπόκειται στα κράτη μέλη να δημιουργούν και να αναθεωρούν, εφόσον το επιθυμούν, ειδικές οικονομικές ζώνες (ΕΟΖ). Ανάλογα με τον στόχο που επιδιώκουν να προωθήσουν στις ΕΟΖ, οφείλουν να συμμορφώνονται με τους όρους που καθορίζονται στις διάφορες πράξεις που αφορούν τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις (κατευθυντήριες γραμμές για τις περιφερειακές ενισχύσεις, πλαίσιο για την έρευνα, ανάπτυξη και καινοτομία, κατευθυντήριες γραμμές σχετικά με τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις για την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος, κ.λπ.). Τα κράτη μέλη που επιθυμούν να δημιουργήσουν ειδικές οικονομικές ζώνες για την προώθηση της περιφερειακής ανάπτυξης οφείλουν να εξασφαλίσουν ότι αυτές οι ΕΟΖ συγκαταλέγονται μεταξύ των ενισχυόμενων περιοχών του χάρτη περιφερειακών ενισχύσεων του συγκεκριμένου κράτους μέλους και ότι τα πιθανά φορολογικά κίνητρα ή άλλα πλεονεκτήματα στο εσωτερικό της ΕΟΖ συμμορφώνονται με τις διατάξεις για τις ενισχύσεις περιφερειακού χαρακτήρα του γενικού κανονισμού απαλλαγής κατά κατηγορία (ΓΚΑΚ) ή των κατευθυντηρίων γραμμών για τις περιφερειακές ενισχύσεις.

2. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει στοιχεία που να αποδεικνύουν ότι οι τρέχουσες εξελίξεις στις αγορές μεταφόρτωσης θέτουν σε κίνδυνο την ασφάλεια εφοδιασμού της ΕΕ ή περιθωριοποιούν κατ' άλλον τρόπο τα συμφέροντα της ΕΕ στον τομέα της μεταφόρτωσης.

Στις 23 Μαΐου 2013, εξέδωσε ανακοίνωση σχετικά με την πολιτική λιμένων ([1]) και μια νομοθετική πρόταση ([2]) με συγκεκριμένα μέτρα που στοχεύουν στην ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας των ευρωπαϊκών λιμένων και της ικανότητάς τους να προσελκύουν επενδύσεις. Επιπλέον, ο πρόσφατα εκδοθείς κανονισμός (ΕΕ) 1315/2013 σχετικά με το διευρωπαϊκό δίκτυο μεταφορών ([3]) και το χρηματοδοτικό μέσο της διευκόλυνσης «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη» ([4]) θα συμβάλλουν στην ενίσχυση της απόδοσης των λιμένων της ΕΕ. Στο πλαίσιο του 7ου προγράμματος-πλαισίου για την έρευνα και την ανάπτυξη, η Επιτροπή έχει δρομολογήσει επίσης το σχέδιο «Portopia» ([5]) το οποίο, μεταξύ άλλων, θα παρακολουθεί την ανάπτυξη των λιμενικών δραστηριοτήτων μεταφόρτωσης που εξυπηρετούν το εμπόριο της ΕΕ.

3. Εντός του πλαισίου που αναφέρεται στην ερώτηση 1, η Επιτροπή συμφωνεί ότι ειδικές οικονομικές ζώνες σε καίρια σημεία θα μπορούσαν να αποφέρουν οφέλη.

([1]) COM(2013)295 τελικό της 23ης Μαΐου 2013 «Λιμένες: κινητήρας οικονομικής μεγέθυνσης».

([2]) COM(2013)296 τελικό της 23ης Μαΐου 2013 Πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για τη θέσπιση πλαισίου όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση στην αγορά λιμενικών υπηρεσιών και τη χρηματοοικονομική διαφάνεια των λιμένων.

([3]) Βλέπε http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm

([4]) Βλέπε http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm

([5]) Περαιτέρω πληροφορίες σχετικά με το σχέδιο «Portopia» στη διεύθυνση: http://www.portopia.eu/home

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-014146/13
alla Commissione
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Victor Boştinaru (S&D), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Marusya Lyubcheva (S&D), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE) e Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(16 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Istituzione di zone economiche speciali per il trasbordo marittimo

L'attuale crisi economica e finanziaria sta fortemente ostacolando la capacità dell'UE di mantenere la sua competitività in numerosi settori fondamentali. Il trasbordo marittimo, a causa del suo carattere globalizzato e volatile, è tra i settori più colpiti.

Inoltre, le condizioni commerciali favorevoli nei porti dell'Africa settentrionale stanno aggravando notevolmente il rischio di marginalizzazione dei porti europei, specialmente i porti del Mediterraneo che sono geograficamente più esposti alla concorrenza dei porti extra UE. Una percentuale significativa delle merci che entrano oggi nell'UE è trasbordata attraverso porti extra UE del Mediterraneo e si prevede che tale tendenza continuerà ad aumentare, in particolare alla luce del recente costante aumento delle dimensioni delle navi. La sicurezza della fornitura di merci nei paesi dell'UE è inoltre messa a rischio dalla pericolosa dipendenza da porti nodali extra UE.

Per tale motivo è necessario migliorare il livello complessivo dei porti dell'UE di modo che corrisponda a quello dei porti extra UE mediante la creazione di «zone economiche speciali», che si sono dimostrate lo strumento più efficace per sostenere i porti di trasbordo extra UE e la logistica e le aree industriali connesse.

Tale iniziativa, attuata al di fuori dell'UE, ha aumentato la competitività, ha creato vantaggi fiscali per le società attratte da minori oneri amministrativi, ha rafforzato il contesto aziendale e creato posti di lavoro attraendo gli investimenti esteri per le attività innovative e tecnologicamente avanzate.

Come dichiarato nella risposta congiunta del commissario Rehn a nome della Commissione dell'11 dicembre 2012, le zone economiche speciali (ZES) possono essere istituite sul territorio degli Stati membri e le imprese ivi situate possono ricevere aiuti, per esempio nuovi investimenti, purché siano concessi in conformità delle norme dell'UE, comprese le norme in materia di aiuti di Stato.

1. Alla luce del fatto che la Commissione sta esaminando l'esperienza acquisita con l'uso delle ZES, intende essa promuovere le ZES come strumento, fornendo consulenza agli Stati membri su come istituire le ZES sui loro territori?

2. Quali misure concrete intende la Commissione adottare al fine di porre fine alla marginalizzazione relativa al trasbordo? Mira la Commissione ad adottare iniziative in tal senso? Può essa fornire informazioni dettagliate su eventuali iniziative già adottate a tal scopo?

3. Concorda la Commissione sul fatto che istituire delle ZES nei centri di trasbordo del Mediterraneo avrebbe il duplice vantaggio di tutelare la catena di approvvigionamento europea e proteggere i posti di lavoro esistenti nei porti di trasbordo dell'UE, portando al contempo alla creazione di nuovi posti di lavoro nelle zone industriali e logistiche delle regioni che presentano tassi di disoccupazione elevati?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(18 marzo 2014)

1. Gli Stati membri sono liberi di istituire e modificare zone economiche speciali (ZES). In funzione dell'obiettivo che intendono conseguire nelle ZES, gli Stati membri devono conformarsi alle condizioni previste dai differenti strumenti in materia di aiuti di Stato (orientamenti sugli aiuti di Stato a finalità regionale, disciplina in materia di aiuti di Stato a favore di ricerca, sviluppo e innovazione, disciplina degli aiuti di Stato per la tutela dell'ambiente, ecc.). Gli Stati membri che intendono istituire ZES per promuovere lo sviluppo regionale devono accertarsi che tali zone siano all'interno delle regioni assistite della carta degli aiuti regionali e che eventuali incentivi fiscali o altre agevolazioni concessi all'interno della ZES siano conformi alle disposizioni in materia di aiuti di Stato a finalità regionale del regolamento generale di esenzione per categoria o degli orientamenti sugli aiuti di Stato a finalità regionale.

2. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni secondo cui gli attuali sviluppi nel settore del trasbordo marittimo mettano a repentaglio la sicurezza dell'approvvigionamento dell'UE o rischino di marginalizzare gli interessi dell'UE nel settore delle operazioni di trasbordo.

Il 23 maggio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una comunicazione sulla politica portuale ([1]) e una proposta legislativa ([2]) contenente misure mirate per rafforzare la competitività dei porti europei e la loro capacità di attirare investimenti. Inoltre, il regolamento (UE) n. 1315/2013 sulla rete transeuropea dei trasporti ([3]), di recente adozione, e lo strumento finanziario del meccanismo per collegare l'Europa ([4]) contribuiranno a rafforzare l'efficacia dei porti dell'UE. Nell'ambito del 7° Programma quadro di RST la Commissione ha avviato inoltre il progetto «Portopia» ([5]) che permetterà, tra l'altro, di monitorare le attività portuali di trasbordo nel contesto degli scambi commerciali UE.

3. All'interno del quadro delineato al punto 1 la Commissione concorda che l'istituzione di ZES ben ubicate potrebbe apportare benefici.

([1]) COM/2013/0295 final del 23 maggio 2013, «Porti: un motore per la crescita».

([2]) COM(2013) 296 final del 23 maggio 2013, Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio che istituisce un quadro normativo per l'accesso al mercato dei servizi portuali e la trasparenza finanziaria dei porti.

([3]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm

([4]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm

([5]) Ulteriori informazioni sul progetto «Portopia» sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo http://www.portopia.eu/home.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-014146/13
do Komisji
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Victor Boştinaru (S&D), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Marusya Lyubcheva (S&D), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE) oraz Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(16 grudnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Stworzenie specjalnych stref ekonomicznych (SSE) w zakresie przeładunku w portach morskich

Obecny kryzys gospodarczy i finansowy poważnie utrudnia Unii Europejskiej utrzymanie konkurencyjności w szeregu kluczowych sektorów. Sektor przeładunku w portach morskich – z uwagi na zglobalizowany i niestabilny charakter – należy do sektorów najbardziej dotkniętych przez kryzys.

Ponadto korzystne warunki handlowe w portach północnej Afryki znacząco zwiększają ryzyko marginalizacji europejskich portów, zwłaszcza na Morzu Śródziemnym, które ze względów geograficznych są bardziej narażone na konkurencję ze strony portów poza UE. Obecnie przeładunek znacznej części towarów przywożonych do UE odbywa się w śródziemnomorskich portach morskich poza UE i należy spodziewać się nasilenia tej tendencji, zwłaszcza że w ostatnim czasie stale zwiększa się rozmiar statków. Ponadto niebezpieczna zależność od portów przeładunkowych poza UE stwarza zagrożenie dla zabezpieczenia dostaw towarów dla państw UE.

Z tego powodu konieczne jest podniesienie ogólnego standardu unijnych portów, aby odpowiadał on standardowi portów poza UE, poprzez stworzenie specjalnych stref ekonomicznych, tj. narzędzia, które przyczyniło się niezwykle skutecznie do rozwoju portów przeładunkowych poza UE oraz powiązanej z nimi logistyki i obszarów przemysłowych.

Ta inicjatywa zrealizowana poza UE pozwoliła zwiększyć konkurencyjność, stworzyć zachęty podatkowe dla przedsiębiorstw przyciąganych przez mniejsze obciążenia administracyjne, usprawnić otoczenie biznesowe i stworzyć miejsca pracy poprzez przyciągnięcie zagranicznych inwestycji w innowacyjne działania związane z nowoczesnymi technologiami.

W nawiązaniu do wspólnej odpowiedzi udzielonej w imieniu Komisji przez O. Rhena w dniu 11 grudnia 2012 r. specjalne strefy ekonomiczne można tworzyć na terytorium państw członkowskich, a zlokalizowane tam przedsiębiorstwa mogą otrzymywać wsparcie, np. na nowe inwestycje, o ile udziela się go zgodnie z zasadami UE, w tym z zasadami pomocy państwa.

1. Z uwagi na fakt, że Komisja poddaje przeglądowi doświadczenia zebrane podczas tworzenia specjalnych stref ekonomicznych, czy zamierza ona promować je jako narzędzie i wskazywać państwom członkowskim, jak tworzyć SSE na swoich terytoriach?

2. Jakie praktyczne kroki chce podjąć Komisja, aby uporać się z marginalizacją przeładunku w unijnych portach morskich? Czy Komisja zamierza przeprowadzić odpowiednie inicjatywy w tym zakresie? Czy mogłaby przedstawić szczegółowo wszelkie inicjatywy, które podjęto już w tym celu?

3. Czy Komisja podziela pogląd, że umiejscowienie SSE w portach przeładunkowych na Morzu Śródziemnym przyniosłoby podwójne korzyści w postaci zabezpieczenia europejskiego łańcucha dostaw i ochrony istniejących miejsc pracy w unijnych portach przeładunkowych przy jednoczesnym tworzeniu nowych miejsc pracy w strefach przemysłowych i logistycznych regionów borykających się z wysokim bezrobociem?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącego Komisji Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(18 marca 2014 r.)

1. To do państw członkowskich należy tworzenie specjalnych stref ekonomicznych (SSE) i ewentualne poddawanie ich przeglądowi. W zależności od tego, jakie cele mają być wspierane w SSE, muszą one spełniać warunki ustanowione w ramach różnych instrumentów pomocy państwa (wytyczne w sprawie pomocy regionalnej, zasady ramowe dotyczące badań, rozwoju i innowacji, wytyczne w sprawie pomocy na ochronę środowiska itd.). Państwa członkowskie, które pragną ustanowić specjalne strefy ekonomiczne w celu wspierania rozwoju regionalnego, muszą zapewnić, by strefy te znajdowały się w regionach objętych pomocą na mapie pomocy regionalnej w danym państwie członkowskim, oraz że ewentualne zachęty podatkowe lub inne korzyści w ramach SSE są zgodne z przepisami dotyczącymi pomocy regionalnej zawartymi w ogólnym rozporządzeniu w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych lub w wytycznych w sprawie pomocy regionalnej.

2. Komisja nie dysponuje żadnymi dowodami na to, by zachodzące obecnie zmiany na rynkach przeładunkowych stanowiły zagrożenie dla bezpieczeństwa dostaw do UE lub w inny sposób marginalizowały interesy UE w zakresie działalności przeładunkowej.

W dniu 23 maja 2013 r. Komisja przyjęła komunikat na temat polityki dotyczącej portów ([1]) oraz wniosek ustawodawczy ([2]), w których określono konkretne środki mające na celu zwiększenie konkurencyjności europejskich portów i ich potencjału w zakresie przyciągania inwestycji. Ponadto niedawno przyjęte rozporządzenie (UE) nr 1315/2013 dotyczące transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej ([3]) oraz instrument finansowy „Łącząc Europę" ([4]) przyczynią się do zwiększenia wydajności portów UE. W kontekście siódmego programu ramowego w zakresie badań i rozwoju technologicznego Komisja zainicjowała również projekt „Portopia" ([5]), dzięki któremu m.in. monitorowany będzie rozwój działalności portów przeładunkowych obsługujących wymianę handlową z UE.

3. W kontekście pytania pierwszego Komisja zgadza się, że dobrze zlokalizowane SSE mogłyby przynieść wiele korzyści.

([1]) COM(2013) 0295 final z dnia 23 maja 2013 r. „Porty: motor wzrostu".

([2]) COM(2013) 0296 final z dnia 23 maja 2013 r. Wniosek dotyczący rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady ustanawiającego ramy w zakresie dostępu do rynku usług portowych oraz przejrzystości finansowej portów.

([3]) Zob. http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm

([4]) Zob. http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm

([5]) Więcej informacji na temat projektu „Portopia" można znaleźć na stronie internetowej: http://www.portopia.eu/home.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-014146/13
à Comissão
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Victor Boştinaru (S&D), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Marusya Lyubcheva (S&D), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE) e Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(16 de dezembro de 2013)

Assunto: Estabelecimento de zonas económicas especiais para o transbordo marítimo

A atual crise económica e financeira está a dificultar seriamente a capacidade de a UE garantir a sua competitividade num certo número de setores importantes. O carácter volátil e globalizado que caracteriza o transbordo marítimo faz com que este seja um dos setores que têm sido mais afetados.

Além disso, a existência de condições comerciais favoráveis nos portos do norte de África tem vindo a aumentar consideravelmente o risco de marginalização dos portos europeus, especialmente os que se situam no Mediterrâneo, que estão geograficamente mais expostos à concorrência dos portos de países terceiros. Atualmente, uma percentagem significativa dos bens que entram na UE é transbordada em portos de países terceiros no Mediterrâneo e prevê-se que esta tendência continue a acentuar-se, especialmente em virtude da tendência para o aumento contínuo do porte dos navios. Além disso, a segurança do aprovisionamento de bens para os países da UE está a ser posta em causa pela perigosa dependência relativamente aos portos principais situados em países terceiros.

Por esta razão, importa aumentar os padrões globais dos portos da UE, para os equiparar aos dos portos de países terceiros, criando, para tal, «zonas económicas especiais», um instrumento que já deu provas de ser o mais eficiente para o aumento da capacidade dos portos de transbordo de países terceiros e das suas respetivas zonas logísticas e industriais.

Esta iniciativa levada a cabo fora da UE levou à melhoria da competitividade, à criação de vantagens fiscais para as empresas, atraídas por menos encargos administrativos, à melhoria do ambiente empresarial e à criação de empregos, atraindo investimentos estrangeiros para atividades inovadoras e de alta tecnologia.

De acordo com a resposta conjunta do Senhor Comissário Rehn, em nome da Comissão, em 11 de dezembro de 2012, podem ser criadas zonas económicas especiais (ZEE) no território dos Estados-Membros, e as empresas presentes nestas zonas podem, por exemplo, receber apoios para novos investimentos, na condição de estes apoios serem concedidos no respeito das regras da UE, incluindo as regras em matéria de auxílios estatais.

1. Atendendo a que a Comissão está a examinar a experiência adquirida com a criação de ZEE, tenciona a Comissão promover estas zonas enquanto instrumento e aconselhar os Estados-Membros sobre a forma como criar ZEE nos seus territórios?

2. Que medidas práticas está a Comissão disposta a tomar para ultrapassar a marginalização no que diz respeito ao transbordo? Pretende a Comissão tomar iniciativas pertinentes neste âmbito? Pode a Comissão prestar informações detalhadas relativamente às iniciativas que já foram tomadas neste sentido?

3. Partilha a Comissão a convicção de que localizar ZEE nos centros de transbordo do Mediterrâneo teria a dupla vantagem de salvaguardar a cadeia de abastecimento europeia e proteger os empregos existentes nos portos de transbordo da UE, criando, ao mesmo tempo, novos empregos nas zonas industriais e logísticas nas regiões que sofrem as consequências de elevadas taxas de desemprego?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(18 de março de 2014)

1. Os Estados-Membros podem, se assim o desejarem, criar ou rever as respetivas ZEE. Dependendo dos objetivos que pretendam promover através desse processo, deverão cumprir as condições estabelecidas no âmbito dos diferentes instrumentos em matéria de auxílios estatais (orientações relativas aos auxílios com finalidade regional, quadro de investigação, desenvolvimento e inovação, orientações relativas aos auxílios a favor do ambiente, etc.). Os Estados-Membros que pretendam estabelecer ZEE para promover o desenvolvimento regional deverão assegurar que essas ZEE se situem no interior de regiões assistidas do seu mapa de auxílios com finalidade regional e que os eventuais incentivos fiscais ou outras vantagens conferidas à ZEE respeitem as disposições relativas aos auxílios regionais constantes do Regulamento Geral de Isenção por Categorias (RGIC) ou das orientações relativas aos auxílios com finalidade regional.

2. A Comissão não tem indicações de que a evolução dos mercados de transbordo esteja a pôr em risco a segurança do abastecimento da UE ou a prejudicar de outra forma os interesses da UE envolvidos nas operações de transbordo.

Em 23 de maio de 2013, a Comissão adotou uma comunicação sobre a política portuária ([1]) e uma proposta legislativa ([2]) que inclui medidas especificamente destinadas ao reforço da competitividade e da capacidade de atração de investimento dos portos europeus. Por outro lado, tanto o recentemente adotado Regulamento (UE) n.° 1315/2013, relativo à rede transeuropeia de transportes ([3]), como o instrumento financeiro «Mecanismo Interligar a Europa» ([4]) contribuirão para reforçar o desempenho dos portos europeus. No contexto do 7.º Programa-Quadro de IDT, a Comissão lançou igualmente o projeto «Portopia» ([5]), que irá nomeadamente acompanhar o desenvolvimento das atividades de transbordo nos portos no quadro dos fluxos comerciais na UE.

3. No âmbito daquilo que é referido na resposta à primeira pergunta, a Comissão concorda que a criação de ZEE bem situadas poderá trazer benefícios.

([1]) COM(2013) 295 final de 23 de maio de 2013 — «Portos: um motor para o crescimento».

([2]) COM(2013) 296 final de 23 de maio de 2013 — Proposta de Regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho que estabelece um quadro normativo para o acesso ao mercado dos serviços portuários e a transparência financeira dos portos.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm

([5]) Para mais informações sobre o projeto «Portopia», consultar o endereço: http://www.portopia.eu/home

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-014146/13
adresată Comisiei
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Victor Boştinaru (S&D), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Marusya Lyubcheva (S&D), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE) şi Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(16 decembrie 2013)

Subiect: Stabilirea unor zone economice speciale pentru transbordarea maritimă

Actuala criză economică și financiară afectează în mod grav capacitatea UE de a-și păstra competitivitatea într-o serie de sectoare-cheie. Datorită caracterului său global și volatil, transbordarea maritimă se numără printre sectoarele cele mai afectate.

În plus, condițiile comerciale favorabile ale porturilor nord-africane sporesc în mod semnificativ riscul de marginalizare a porturilor europene, în special a celor din Marea Mediterană, care sunt, din motive geografice, cele mai expuse concurenței cu porturile țărilor terțe. În prezent, o mare parte a mărfurilor care intră în UE sunt transbordate în porturi din Marea Mediterană care nu aparțin de UE și această tendință se așteaptă să se accentueze, în special datorită faptului că, în ultima vreme, mărimea navelor este în creștere continuă. În plus, siguranța aprovizionării cu bunuri a statelor membre ale UE este periclitată de dependența periculoasă de porturile nodale din țări terțe.

Este necesar, prin urmare, să se îmbunătățească situația generală a porturilor din UE, astfel încât acestea să ajungă la nivelul celor din afara UE, prin crearea unor „zone economice speciale", un instrument care s-a dovedit a fi extrem de eficient pentru stimularea porturilor de transbordare ale țărilor terțe, precum și a infrastructurii și a zonelor industriale conexe ale acestor porturi.

Această inițiativă pusă în aplicare în afara UE a îmbunătățit competitivitatea, a creat avantaje fiscale pentru întreprinderile atrase de poveri administrative reduse, a stimulat mediul de afaceri și a creat locuri de muncă prin atragerea investițiilor străine pentru activități inovatoare și de înaltă tehnologie.

Astfel cum a fost precizat în răspunsul comun prezentat de dl Rehn în numele Comisiei la 11 decembrie 2012, pot fi stabilite zone economice speciale (ZES) pe teritoriul statelor membre, iar întreprinderile situate în cadrul acestora pot beneficia de sprijin, de exemplu, pentru noi investiții, în măsura în care acesta este acordat în conformitate cu normele UE, inclusiv cu normele privind ajutoarele de stat.

1. Având în vedere că, în prezent, Comisia analizează experiența dobândită în ceea ce privește utilizarea ZES, intenționează aceasta să promoveze ZES ca un instrument și să ofere consiliere statelor membre cu privire la modalitățile de stabilire a unor ZES pe teritoriul lor?

2. Care sunt măsurile practice pe care Comisia este dispusă să le ia pentru a rezolva problema marginalizării la nivelul transbordării maritime? Intenționează Comisia să ia niște inițiative relevante? Poate Comisia să furnizeze informații detaliate privind inițiative care au fost, eventual, luate deja în acest sens?

3. Împărtășește Comisia punctul de vedere conform căruia stabilirea unor ZES în centrele de transbordare din Marea Mediterană ar avea drept consecințe benefice atât protejarea lanțului de aprovizionare european și a locurilor de muncă din porturile de transbordare ale UE, cât și crearea de noi locuri de muncă în zonele industriale și logistice care se confruntă cu un nivel ridicat de șomaj?

Răspuns dat de dl Kallas în numele Comisiei
(18 martie 2014)

1. Crearea și revizuirea ZES sunt la latitudinea statelor membre, în măsura în care doresc acest lucru. În funcție de obiectivul pe care vor să îl promoveze în ZES, statele membre trebuie să respecte condițiile stabilite în diferitele instrumente de ajutor de stat (orientările privind ajutoarele de stat regionale, cadrul pentru cercetare, dezvoltare și inovare, orientările privind ajutorul pentru protecția mediului etc.). Statele membre care doresc să stabilească ZES pentru a promova dezvoltarea regională trebuie să se asigure că respectivele ZES se află în regiuni asistate situate pe harta ajutoarelor regionale a statului membru în cauză și că posibilele stimulente fiscale sau alte avantaje din ZES respectă dispozițiile privind ajutoarele regionale din Regulamentul general de exceptare pe categorii de ajutoare sau din orientările privind ajutoarele regionale.

2. Comisia nu dispune de nicio dovadă cu privire la faptul că evoluțiile actuale de pe piețele de transbordare pun în pericol siguranța aprovizionării UE sau marginalizează în alt mod interesele UE în ceea ce privește operațiunile de transbordare.

La 23 mai 2013, Comisia a adoptat o Comunicare privind politica portuară ([1]) și o propunere legislativă ([2]) ce includ măsuri concrete menite să consolideze competitivitatea porturilor europene și capacitatea acestora de a atrage investiții. Mai mult, Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1315/2013, adoptat recent, referitor la rețeaua transeuropeană de transport ([3]) și instrumentul financiar al Mecanismului pentru interconectarea Europei ([4]) vor contribui la sporirea performanței porturilor UE. În contextul celui de-al 7-lea Program-cadru de cercetare și dezvoltare tehnologică, Comisia a lansat, de asemenea, proiectul „Portopia" ([5]) care, printre altele, va monitoriza dezvoltarea activităților de transbordare din porturi, care deservesc schimburile comerciale ale UE.

3. În cadrul menționat la răspunsul 1, Comisia este de acord ZES bine situate ar putea aduce beneficii.

([1]) COM(2013) 295 final din 23.5.2013: „Porturile: un motor al creșterii economice".

([2]) COM(2013) 296 final din 23.5.2013: Propunere de Regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului de stabilire a unui cadru privind accesul la piața serviciilor portuare și transparența financiară a porturilor.

([3]) A se consulta http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm

([4]) A se consulta http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm

([5]) Mai multe informații despre proiectul Portopia sunt disponibile la adresa: http://www.portopia.eu/home.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014146/13
to the Commission
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Victor Boştinaru (S&D), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Marusya Lyubcheva (S&D), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE) and Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(16 December 2013)

Subject: Setting up special economic zones for maritime transhipment

The current economic and financial crisis is severely hampering the EU's ability to sustain its competitiveness in a number of key sectors. Owing to its globalised and volatile nature, maritime transhipment is among the sectors that have been most affected.

In addition, the favourable commercial conditions at north African ports are dramatically increasing the risk of European ports becoming marginalised, especially those in the Mediterranean that are geographically more exposed to competition from non-EU ports. Today, a significant percentage of goods entering the EU is transhipped via non-EU ports in the Mediterranean, and this trend is expected to continue to grow, especially given that, recently, the size of ships has constantly been on the increase. The security of goods supply to EU countries, moreover, is being put at risk by a dangerous dependence on non-EU hub ports.

For this reason it is necessary to increase the overall standard of EU ports to match that of non-EU ports by creating 'special economic zones', a tool that has proven to be most effective in boosting non-EU transhipment ports and their related logistics and industrial areas.

This initiative implemented outside the EU has improved competitiveness, created tax advantages for companies attracted by the smaller administrative burden, enhanced the business environment and created jobs by attracting foreign investment for innovative, high-technology activities.

As per the joint answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission on 11 December 2012, special economic zones (SEZs) can be established on the territory of Member States, and undertakings located therein can receive support, e.g. for new investment, as long as it is granted in line with EU rules, including state aid rules.

1. Given that the Commission is reviewing experience gained with the use of SEZs, does the Commission intend to promote SEZs as a tool and advise the Member States on how to establish SEZs in their territories?

2. What practical steps is the Commission willing to take in order to overcome marginalisation with regard to transhipment? Is the Commission aiming to take any relevant initiatives? Could the Commission provide detailed information on any initiatives that have already been taken for this purpose?

3. Does the Commission share the view that locating SEZs in Mediterranean transhipment hubs would have the double benefit of safeguarding the European supply chain and protecting existing jobs in EU transhipment ports, at the same time creating new jobs in the industrial and logistics zones of regions suffering as a result of high unemployment rates?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2014)

1. It is up to the Member States to create and review SEZ if they wish. Depending on the objective they want to promote in the SEZs, they need to comply with the conditions established in the different state aid instruments (Regional aid guidelines, Framework on Research development and Innovation, Guidelines for environmental aid, etc). Member States that wish to establish SEZs to promote regional development, have to ensure that these SEZs are within assisted regions of the regional aid map of the Member State concerned and that the possible tax incentives or other advantages within the SEZ comply with the regional aid provisions of the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) or of the Regional aid Guidelines.

2. The Commission has no evidence that current developments in transhipment markets put at risk the security of supply of the EU or otherwise marginalise EU interests involved in transhipment operations.

On 23 May 2013, the Commission adopted a communication on ports policy ([1]) and a legislative proposal ([2]) with precise measures aimed to strengthen the competitiveness of European ports and their capacity to attract investments. Moreover, the recently adopted Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 on the trans-European transport network ([3]) and the Connecting Europe Facility financial instrument ([4]) will contribute to reinforce the performance of EU ports. In the context of the 7th RTD Framework programme, the Commission has launched also the 'Portopia' project ([5]) which, *inter alia*, will monitor the development of port transhipment activities serving the EU trades.

3. Within the framework mentioned in Q1, the Commission agrees that well located SEZs could bring benefits.

([1]) COM(2013) 295 final of 23 May 2013 'Ports: an engine for growth'.
([2]) COM(2013) 296 final of 23 May 2013 Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and Council establishing a framework on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports.
([3]) See http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/revision-t_en.htm
([4]) See http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm
([5]) Further information on the Portopia project is available on http://www.portopia.eu/home

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-014187/13
a Bizottság számára
Bauer Edit (PPE)
(2013. december 17.)

Tárgy: A gyermekekkel való kapcsolattartásról szóló egyezmény ratifikálása

A gyermekekkel való kapcsolattartásról szóló, 2003. május 15-i egyezményt az Európai Unió még nem írta alá és nem is ratifikálta. Azt csak néhány tagállam írta alá, és még kevesebb ratifikálta.

Szlovákiában jelenleg a jogi helyzet számos problémát vet fel. A szlovák igazságügyi minisztériumnak mint illetékes szervnek az az álláspontja, hogy az Európai Unió az akadálya annak, hogy az ország nem tudja az egyezményt ratifikálni. A minisztériumi illetékesek szerint Szlovákia azért nem tudja most ratifikálni az egyezményt, mert az EU-nak ezen a területen külső hatásköre van. Ezért kizárólag az EU-nak van felhatalmazása arra, hogy az EU és a tagállamok közötti megosztott hatáskör esetében csatlakozzon az egyezményhez.

Mivel az EU-ban emelkedik azon gyermekek száma, akiknek elváltak a szülei, ez a probléma manapság már a mindennapok szintjén jelenik meg.

Úgy tűnik, más tagállamokban hasonló problémák vetődnek fel, így az egyezmény EU általi ratifikálása számos uniós polgár életét megkönnyítené.

Tervezi-e az EU a fent említett egyezmény ratifikálását?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 31.)

A Bizottság a tisztelt képviselő asszony kérdésére válaszolva megerősíti, hogy a gyermekekkel való kapcsolattartásról szóló európai tanácsi egyezmény részben az EU kizárólagos külső hatáskörébe tartozik, ezért a tagállamok nem írhatják alá és nem erősíthetik meg azt megelőzően, hogy az Európai Unió ezt megtenné.

A Bizottság szerint fontos hozzáadott értéket képvisel az Európai Unió számára ez az egyezmény, amelynek célja, hogy megerősítse a gyermekek, a szülők és a gyermekkel családi kötelékben álló egyes más rokonok rendszeres kapcsolattartáshoz való jogát, ezért a Bizottság már 2002-ben ([1]) javasolta a Közösségnek az egyezmény aláírását. A Tanácson belül azonban sajnálatos módon tíz évig tartó tárgyalások után sem sikerült elérni a tagállamok körében a javaslat elfogadásához szükséges konszenzust. Következésképpen a Bizottság 2012-ben úgy határozott, hogy visszavonja javaslatát ([2]). Döntésében szerepet játszott az a megfontolás is, hogy a gyermekekkel való kapcsolattartásról szóló egyezmény uniós hatáskörbe tartozó rendelkezései már más uniós és nemzetközi jogi eszközök hatálya alá tartoznak ([3]).

([1]) COM(2002) 520 végleges.

([2]) Lásd a Bizottság 2012. október 23-án elfogadott „A Bizottság 2013. évi munkaprogramja” című közleményét (COM(2012) 629 final), amely tartalmazza a visszavont, függőben lévő javaslatok listáját: a gyermekekkel való kapcsolattartásról szóló egyezmény a 19. oldalon a 10. pont alatt található.

([3]) Ezek közé tartozik különösen a házassági ügyekben és a szülői felelősségre vonatkozó eljárásokban a joghatóságról, valamint a határozatok elismeréséről és végrehajtásáról szóló 2201/2003/EK tanácsi rendelet (az úgynevezett Brüsszel IIa. rendelet), a gyermekek jogellenes külföldre vitelének polgári jogi vonatkozásairól szóló 1980. évi egyezmény, valamint a szülői felelősséggel és a gyermekek védelmét szolgáló intézkedésekkel kapcsolatos együttműködésről, valamint az ilyen ügyekre irányadó joghatóságról, alkalmazandó jogról, elismerésről és végrehajtásról szóló 1996. évi hágai egyezmény.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-014187/13
to the Commission
Edit Bauer (PPE)
(17 December 2013)

Subject: Ratification of the Convention on Contact concerning Children

The Convention on Contact concerning Children of 15 May 2003 has thus far been neither signed nor ratified by the European Union. Only a few Member States have signed it, and fewer still have ratified it.

The current legal situation in Slovakia is causing a number of problems. The Slovak Ministry of Justice — as the competent body — is saying that the European Union is preventing it from ratifying. Ministry officials say that Slovakia cannot currently ratify the convention as the EU has external competence in the relevant area. Only the EU, therefore, is authorised to accede to the convention in the case of shared competence between the EU and the Member States.

Given the increasing number of children from divorced families in the EU, this issue is turning into an everyday problem.

It seems that other Member States are experiencing similar problems, and the EU's ratification of the convention would make life easier for a large number of people in the EU.

Does the European Union plan to ratify the aforementioned convention?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2014)

The Commission confirms to the Honourable Member that the Council of Europe Convention on Contact concerning Children falls partly within EU exclusive external competence and therefore Member States can neither sign nor ratify it before the European Union.

The Commission considers that this Convention, that aims at reinforcing the rights of children and parents and certain other relatives having family ties to the child to maintain contact on a regular basis, has an important added value for the European Union and therefore proposed already in 2002 ([1]) the signature of the Convention by the Community. Unfortunately, notwithstanding 10 years of negotiations in the Council, the necessary unanimity between Member States for the adoption of the proposal could be not found. As a consequence, the Commission decided in 2012 to withdraw the proposal ([2]). This decision was taken also on the basis of the consideration that the provisions under EU competence of the Contact concerning Children Convention are already covered by other EU and international instruments ([3]).

([1]) COM(2002) 520 final.

([2]) See Commission's Communication on the Work Programme 2013 adopted on 23.10.2012 - COM(2012) 629 final - which contains the list of the withdrawals of pending proposals: the Contact with Children proposal is at page.19 under n.10.

([3]) In particular, Council Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 concerning jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in matrimonial matters and the matters of parental responsibility (the Brussels IIa regulation), the 1980 Hague Convention on International Child Abduction, the 1996 Hague Convention on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition, enforcement and cooperation in respect of parental responsibility and measures for the protection of children.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-014196/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(17. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Vorratsdatenspeicherung — Vereinbarkeit mit EU-Grundrechten

Nach Ansicht des Generalanwaltes beim Europäischen Gerichtshof widerspricht die Vorratsdatenspeicherung den EU-Grundrechten. Zu diesem Ergebnis kam der Generalanwalt Mitte Dezember — nach Klagen in Irland, Luxemburg und Österreich gegen die Vorratsdatenspeicherung von Internet- und Kommunikationsdaten. Verschiedene Höchstgerichte haben Zweifel an der Vereinbarkeit der EU-Richtlinie mit dem in der EU-Grundrechtecharta verankerten Recht auf Datenschutz eingewandt.

Die entsprechende EU-Richtlinie sei unvereinbar mit der Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union, „da die Einschränkungen der Grundrechtsausübung, die sie aufgrund der durch sie auferlegten Verpflichtung zur Vorratsdatenspeicherung enthält, nicht mit unabdingbaren Grundsätzen einhergehen, die für die zur Beschränkung des Zugangs zu den Daten und ihrer Auswertung notwendigen Garantien gelten müssen“, heißt es in dem Gutachten.

1. Sind auf EU-Ebene im Falle eines entsprechenden Urteils diesbezüglich Nachbesserungsarbeiten geplant?

2. Mit welchen Maßnahmen soll eine Vereinbarkeit mit den EU-Grundrechten hergestellt werden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(28. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission äußert sich grundsätzlich nicht zu Rechtssachen, die dem Gerichtshof zur Beratung vorliegen, wie dies bei der angesprochenen Angelegenheit der Fall ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014196/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(17 December 2013)

Subject: Data retention — compatibility with EU fundamental rights

According to an advocate-general of the European Court of Justice, data retention is contrary to the EU's fundamental rights. The advocate-general reached this conclusion in mid-December, following actions in Ireland, Luxembourg and Austria opposing the retention of Internet and communications data. Various supreme courts have expressed doubts about the compatibility of the EU directive with the right to data protection enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

The advocate-general argues, in his opinion, that the directive in question is incompatible with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 'since the limitations on the exercise of fundamental rights which that directive contains because of the obligation to retain data which it imposes are not accompanied by the necessary principles for governing the guarantees needed to regulate access to the data and their use.'

1. Are any measures to rectify this situation planned at EU level in the event of a verdict that corresponds with this opinion?

2. What steps are planned to ensure compatibility with the EU's fundamental rights?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(28 février 2014)

Comme en veut l'usage, la Commission ne commente par les affaires qui sont en délibéré à la Cour de justice, telle que celle évoquée ici par l'Honorable Parlementaire.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-014199/13
an die Kommission
Claude Turmes (Verts/ALE)
(17. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Minenprojekt in Rosia Montana und Einsatz von Zyanid im Bergbau

2006 wurde die EU-Richtlinie über die Bewirtschaftung von Abfällen aus der mineralgewinnenden Industrie infolge der Umweltkatastrophe von Baia Mare und Baia Borsa, Rumänien, eingeführt. Damit sollte sichergestellt werden, dass bei neuen Minenprojekten die geplanten Sicherheits- und Umweltmaßnahmen und deren Umsetzung kontrolliert werden. Seit September 2013 versucht die rumänische Regierung eine Ausnahmeregelung für Minenprojekte „von übergeordnetem öffentlichen Nutzen und Interesse" durchzusetzen, die den Gebrauch von Zyanid in der Mine von Rosia Montana zulassen soll.

Ist der Kommission bekannt, dass die rumänische Regierung dadurch die EU-Richtlinie 2000/60/EG zur Schaffung eines Ordnungsrahmens für Maßnahmen der Gemeinschaft im Bereich der Wasserpolitik umgehen würde, und würde die Kommission dann dagegen vorgehen?

Vorgesehen ist, rund 314 t Gold durch den Gebrauch von 40 t Zyanid pro Tag zu fördern, wobei kein zureichendes Klärungsbecken vorgesehen ist. Wegen der Größe des Minenprojektes hätte ein etwaiger Unfall in Rosia Montana drastische Auswirkungen auf insgesamt 3 EU Mitgliedstaaten (RU, HU, BG) und 2 Nachbarstaaten (UA, RS).

Ist sich die Kommission der erheblichen Umwelt- und Gesundheitsrisiken für die europäischen Bürger bewusst, die durch die Verwendung von Zyanid und dessen Auswirkungen auf die Wasserqualität entstehen?

(English version)

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

To ensure full compliance with the relevant EU legislation, including Directives on Environmental Impact Assessments ([1]), on Strategic Environmental Assessments ([2]), on Water Policy ([3]) and on Mining Waste ([4]) the Commission is closely monitoring developments as regards the possible mining project in Rosia Montana. In September and November 2013 it addressed a number of questions on the relevant draft law to the Romanian authorities through the EU Pilot system.

According to the most recent information provided by the Romanian authorities, the permitting procedure has not yet been finalised. At this stage, the Commission is therefore unable to assess the compliance with applicable EU legislation.

([1]) Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 175, 5.7.1985.
([2]) Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.
([3]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([4]) Directive 2006/21/EC (Directive on the management of extractive waste), OJ L 102, 11.4.2006.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-014199/13
à la Commission
Claude Turmes (Verts/ALE)
(17 décembre 2013)

Objet: Projet d'exploitation minière à Rosia Montana et utilisation du cyanure dans les activités minières

En 2006, suite à la catastrophe environnementale de Baia Mare et Baia Borsa, en Roumanie, la directive concernant la gestion des déchets de l'industrie extractive a été adoptée. Celle-ci avait pour objectif de garantir que, pour les nouveaux projets d'exploitation minière, les mesures prévues en matière de sécurité et de protection de l'environnement et leur mise en œuvre soient contrôlées. Depuis septembre 2013, le gouvernement roumain essaie d'imposer une dérogation pour les projets d'exploitation minière qui sont justifiés par un «intérêt public supérieur», visant à autoriser l'utilisation du cyanure dans la mine de Rosia Montana.

La Commission est-elle consciente que le gouvernement roumain contournerait de cette façon la directive 2000/60/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant un cadre pour une politique communautaire dans le domaine de l'eau? Si tel était le cas, la Commission prendrait-elle des mesures à l'encontre de la Roumanie?

Dans le cadre de ce projet, il est prévu d'extraire environ 314 tonnes d'or en utilisant 40 tonnes de cyanure par jour, mais il n'a pas été prévu de station d'épuration suffisante. En raison de la taille du projet, un accident à Rosia Montana aurait des conséquences désastreuses pour trois États membres de l'Union européenne (Roumanie, Hongrie, Bulgarie) et deux pays voisins (Ukraine et Serbie).

La Commission est-elle consciente des risques considérables pour l'environnement et la santé des citoyens européens qui seraient engendrés par l'utilisation du cyanure et de ses conséquences pour la qualité de l'eau?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(17 mars 2014)

Afin que la législation européenne en vigueur soit pleinement respectée, y compris les directives relatives à l'évaluation des incidences sur l'environnement ([1]), à l'évaluation environnementale stratégique ([2]), à la politique de l'eau ([3]) et aux déchets miniers ([4]), la Commission suit avec attention l'évolution d'un possible projet minier à Rosia Montana. En septembre et novembre 2013, elle a posé un certain nombre de questions relatives au projet de loi préparé à cet effet aux autorités roumaines par l'intermédiaire du système EU Pilot.

Selon les informations les plus récentes fournies par les autorités roumaines, la procédure d'autorisation n'a pas encore été finalisée. À ce stade, la Commission ne peut dès lors évaluer le respect de la législation européenne en vigueur.

([1]) Directive 85/337/CEE du Conseil concernant l'évaluation des incidences de certains projets publics et privés sur l'environnement, JO L 175 du 5.7.1985.
([2]) Directive 2001/42/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 27 juin 2001 relative à l'évaluation des incidences de certains plans et programmes sur l'environnement, JO L 197 du 21.7.2001.
([3]) Directive 2000/60/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant un cadre pour une politique communautaire dans le domaine de l'eau, JO L 327 du 22.12.2000.
([4]) Directive 2006/21/CE (directive concernant la gestion des déchets de l'industrie extractive), JO L 102 du 11.4.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014199/13
to the Commission
Claude Turmes (Verts/ALE)
(17 December 2013)

Subject: Mining project in Rosia Montana and use of cyanide in mining

The EU Directive on the management of waste from extractive industries was introduced in 2006 following the environmental disaster in Baia Mare and Baia Borsa in Romania. It was intended to ensure that the planned safety and environmental measures and their implementation would be checked in connection with new mining projects. Since September 2013, the Romanian Government has been trying to push through a derogation for mining projects 'of overriding public utility and public interest' that would allow the use of cyanide in the Rosia Montana mines.

Is the Commission aware that, in doing this, the Romanian Government would be circumventing Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, and would the Commission then take action to prevent this?

The plan is to mine around 314 tonnes of gold using 40 tonnes of cyanide per day, with no adequate settling basin provided. On account of the size of the mining project, any accident occurring in Rosia Montana would have a dramatic impact on a total of three EU Member States (Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria) and two neighbouring states (Ukraine and Serbia).

Is the Commission aware of the considerable environmental and health risks for European citizens that could arise through the use of cyanide and its effects on water quality?

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

To ensure full compliance with the relevant EU legislation, including Directives on Environmental Impact Assessments ([1]), on Strategic Environmental Assessments ([2]), on Water Policy ([3]) and on Mining Waste ([4]) the Commission is closely monitoring developments as regards the possible mining project in Rosia Montana. In September and November 2013 it addressed a number of questions on the relevant draft law to the Romanian authorities through the EU Pilot system.

According to the most recent information provided by the Romanian authorities, the permitting procedure has not yet been finalised. At this stage, the Commission is therefore unable to assess the compliance with applicable EU legislation.

([1]) Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 175, 5.7.1985.
([2]) Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.
([3]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([4]) Directive 2006/21/EC (Directive on the management of extractive waste), OJ L 102, 11.4.2006.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-014202/13
al Consejo
Dominique Vlasto (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE) y Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE)
(17 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Aplicación del IVA a la industria del alquiler de yates

El IVA que se aplica a la industria del alquiler de yates varía considerablemente de un Estado miembro a otro. Esta discrepancia conlleva una competencia desleal que, en última instancia, genera un desplazamiento de la actividad de los Estados miembros con el IVA más elevado a los que aplican un IVA más bajo.

Estas deslocalizaciones por motivos fiscales llevan al colapso económico a otras muchas industrias relacionadas, tales como la industria de la navegación a vela (alquiler con opción a compra, reparación de buques y servicios), el sector del abastecimiento de combustible y todos los sectores relacionados con el turismo de lujo.

Algunos Estados miembros han sufrido, por lo tanto, una pérdida sustancial de ingresos y existe un creciente desequilibrio entre las regiones y los Estados miembros en el Mar Mediterráneo.

A la luz de estos hechos, y teniendo en cuenta que muchas partes interesadas y regiones mediterráneas solicitan que se ponga a todos los Estados miembros en igualdad de condiciones con el fin de garantizar una competencia leal en materia de ingresos y puestos de trabajo creados por esta industria:

1. ¿Ha analizado el Consejo las considerables diferencias en el IVA que se aplica en los diferentes Estados miembros a la industria del alquiler de yates?

2. En caso negativo, ¿tiene intención de hacer frente a las distorsiones económicas causadas por las variaciones del IVA que se aplica a este sector?

Respuesta
(14 de abril de 2014)

El Consejo no ha debatido esta cuestión concreta.

Las disposiciones que regulan el tratamiento a efectos del impuesto sobre el valor añadido en relación con el arrendamiento de barcos están establecidas por la Directiva 2006/112/CE relativa al sistema común del impuesto sobre el valor añadido ([1]). Las modificaciones de dichas disposiciones las puede debatir el Consejo únicamente a partir de una propuesta de la Comisión y esta no ha presentado ninguna propuesta al respecto.

([1]) DO L 347 de 11.12.2006, p. 1.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-014202/13
au Conseil
Dominique Vlasto (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE) et Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE)
(17 décembre 2013)

Objet: TVA appliquée dans le secteur de la location de yachts

La TVA appliquée dans le secteur de la location de yachts varie sensiblement d'un État membre à l'autre. Ces écarts conduisent à une concurrence déloyale se traduisant par un transfert de cette activité des États membres appliquant une TVA élevée vers ceux ayant opté pour une TVÀ plus faible.

Ces relocalisations à des fins fiscales aboutissent à l'effondrement économique de nombreux autres secteurs y associés, tels que celui de la navigation de plaisance (location, réparation navale et services), du ravitaillement et de tous les secteurs liés au tourisme de luxe ou haut de gamme.

En conséquence, certains États membres subissent une forte perte de recettes fiscales et un déséquilibre croissant s'installe entre les régions et les États membres du pourtour de la Méditerranée.

Compte tenu de ces éléments et du fait que de nombreuses parties prenantes et régions méditerranéennes demandent aujourd'hui que tous les États membres soient placés sur un pied d'égalité afin que soit assurée la loyauté de la concurrence pour le revenu et l'emploi générés par ce secteur:

1. Le Conseil a-t-il évoqué les écarts considérables existant entre les taux de TVA appliqués par les États membres dans le secteur de la location de yachts?

2. Si tel n'est pas le cas, envisage-t-il de lutter contre les distorsions économiques induites par les écarts de TVA?

Réponse
(14 avril 2014)

Le Conseil n'a pas débattu de cette question précise.

Les règles régissant le régime de la taxe sur la valeur ajoutée applicable à la location de navires sont fixées par la directive 2006/112/CE relative au système commun de taxe sur la valeur ajoutée ([1]). Le Conseil ne peut débattre de modifications à ces règles que sur la base d'une proposition de la Commission. Aucune proposition en ce sens n'a été présentée par la Commission.

([1]) JO L 347 du 11.12.2006, p. 1.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-014202/13
ao Conselho
Dominique Vlasto (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE) e Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE)
(17 de dezembro de 2013)

Assunto: IVA aplicado ao setor do aluguer de iates

O IVA aplicado ao setor do aluguer de iates varia substancialmente de um Estado-Membro para outro. Esta discrepância é responsável por uma concorrência desleal que, em última análise, conduz à transferência desta atividade dos Estados-Membros que aplicam a mais elevada taxa de IVA para os que aplicam a mais baixa.

Estas deslocalizações por razões fiscais levam ao colapso económico de muitos outros setores a este associados, como o setor da navegação de recreio (*leasing*, reparação de embarcações e serviços), o setor do abastecimento de combustível e todos os setores ligados ao turismo de luxo e de topo.

Por esta razão, alguns Estados-Membros deparam-se com uma perda substancial de receitas e instala-se um desequilíbrio crescente entre as regiões e os Estados-Membros situados na bacia do Mediterrâneo.

À luz destes factos e tendo em conta que grande número de partes interessadas e de regiões mediterrânicas exigem agora que todos os Estados-Membros sejam colocados em pé de igualdade para assegurar uma concorrência leal em termos de receitas e empregos criados por este setor:

1. Debateu o Conselho as variações substanciais do IVA aplicado pelos Estados-Membros ao setor do aluguer de iates?

2. Em caso de resposta negativa, como tenciona pôr termo às distorções económicas causadas pelas variações do IVA aplicado a este setor?

Resposta
(14 de abril de 2014)

O Conselho não debateu este assunto específico.

As regras que regem o tratamento do imposto sobre o valor acrescentado no aluguer de embarcações estão estabelecidas na Diretiva 2006/112/CE relativa ao sistema comum do imposto sobre o valor acrescentado ([1]). As eventuais alterações a essas regras só podem ser debatidas pelo Conselho com base numa proposta da Comissão. A Comissão não apresentou nenhuma proposta nesse sentido.

([1]) JO L 347 de 11.12.2006, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014202/13
to the Council
Dominique Vlasto (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE) and Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE)
(17 December 2013)

Subject: VAT applied to the yacht rental industry

VAT applied to the yacht rental industry varies substantially from one Member State to another. This discrepancy leads to unfair competition which ultimately generates a shift of this activity from the Member States with the highest VAT to those with the lowest VAT.

These tax-motivated relocations lead to the economic collapse of many other related industries such as the yachting industry (leasing, ship repair and services), the refuelling sector and all sectors related to luxury and upscale tourism.

Some Member States have therefore suffered a substantial loss of revenue and there is a growing imbalance between regions and Member States around the Mediterranean Sea.

In light of these facts, and considering that many stakeholders and Mediterranean regions are now requesting that all Member States be put on a level playing field in order to ensure fair competition for income and jobs created by this industry:

1. Has the Council discussed the substantial variations in the VAT applied by Member States to the yacht rental industry?

2. If not, does it intend to address the economic distortions caused by the variations in VAT applied to this sector?

Reply
(14 April 2014)

The Council has not discussed this specific issue.

Rules governing the value added tax treatment of the hiring of vessels are laid down by Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax ([1]). Modifications to these rules may be discussed by the Council only on the basis of a Commission proposal. No such proposal has been tabled by the Commission.

([1]) OJ L 347, 11.12.2006, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-014203/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(17 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Finanziamenti UE all'Ucraina

Da fonti di stampa si apprende che l'Ucraina, in grande difficoltà economica e finanziaria, necessita di 20 miliardi di euro di aiuti europei per firmare un accordo di associazione con l'UE e limitare le conseguenze sull'economia. Il premier, Mykola Azarov, ha precisato che l'UE potrà partecipare agli investimenti in progetti comuni e reciprocamente vantaggiosi quali l'espansione e la modernizzazione dei corridoi di trasporto.

L'Alto Rappresentante conferma tale impegno economico dell'UE in Ucraina? Può specificare lo status degli accordi UE-Ucraina?

Può altresì rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

a quali progetti sono specificamente destinati i finanziamenti e per quale periodo?

In che modo intende l'UE monitorare il corretto impiego di questi finanziamenti?

L'Alto Rappresentante non ritiene che, in questo momento di crisi economico-finanziaria per la maggior parte dell'Europa, sia imprudente investire in un Paese già di per sé in grande difficoltà finanziaria ed economica?

L'Alto Rappresentante è a conoscenza di eventuali finanziamenti europei all'Ucraina nel settore dell'immigrazione?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(22 aprile 2014)

Il 6 marzo i capi di Stato e di governo hanno ribadito l'impegno a fornire un consistente sostegno finanziario all'Ucraina e hanno accolto con favore la presentazione, da parte della Commissione europea, di un pacchetto globale di assistenza di almeno 11 miliardi di EUR per i prossimi anni. Il pacchetto comprende in particolare un nuovo programma di assistenza macrofinanziaria di 1 miliardo di EUR e 1,4 miliardi di EUR di sovvenzioni nell'ambito dello strumento europeo di vicinato.

L'assistenza dell'UE viene fornita per la maggior parte sotto forma di sostegno al bilancio (sovvenzioni), in base a una serie di criteri di ammissibilità chiaramente definiti e di condizioni stabilite di comune accordo. Inoltre, durante la visita dei commissari Füle e Lewandowski del 25 e 26 marzo, l'OLAF ha accettato di fornire consulenza per l'istituzione di un'autorità antifrode/anticorruzione, la cui attività si concentrerà sull'effettiva erogazione degli aiuti dell'UE.

Le parti politiche dell'accordo di associazione, che comprende una zona di libero scambio globale e approfondito, sono state firmate il 21 marzo. L'UE si è impegnata a firmare le altre parti dell'AA/DCFTA dopo le elezioni presidenziali.

Nel corso degli anni sono stati finanziati diversi progetti in un gran numero di settori, tra cui la gestione della migrazione e dell'asilo. In particolare, la Commissione europea ha approvato un programma settoriale di sostegno al bilancio per la gestione delle frontiere nell'ambito del programma d'azione annuale 2010, per un importo totale di 66 milioni di EUR, e a dicembre 2013 è stato firmato un programma di assistenza tecnica da 28 milioni di EUR, intitolato «Sostegno per la gestione della migrazione e dell'asilo in Ucraina», che dovrebbe iniziare prossimamente. Il dialogo politico con il servizio statale per la migrazione prosegue nell'ambito del piano d'azione sulla liberalizzazione dei visti e attraverso i progetti in corso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014203/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(17 December 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU funding for Ukraine

Press reports have revealed that Ukraine, in major economic and financial difficulties, needs EUR 20 billion in EU aid to sign an association agreement with the EU and limit the impact on the economy. The Prime Minister, Mykola Azarov, stated that the EU may participate in investments in joint, mutually advantageous projects, such as the expansion and modernisation of transport corridors.

Can the High Representative confirm the EU's financial commitment in Ukraine? Can she indicate the status of the EU-Ukraine agreements?

For which specific projects is the funding intended and for which period?

How does the EU intend to monitor the correct use of this funding?

Does the High Representative not believe that, at a time when most of Europe is in an economic and financial crisis, it would be unwise to invest in a country which is itself facing major economic and financial difficulties?

Is the High Representative aware of any EU funding for Ukraine in the immigration sector?

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

On 6 March, the Heads of State and Government reiterated their commitment to provide Ukraine with strong financial backing, while welcoming the presentation by the European Commission of a comprehensive assistance package of at least EUR 11 billion over the coming years. This package refers notably to a new macro-financial assistance programme of EUR 1 billion and EUR1.4 billion grants under the European Neighbourhood Instrument.

EU assistance takes mainly the shape of budget support (grants) which involves a clear set of eligibility criteria and mutually agreed conditions. In addition, during the visit of Commissioners Füle and Lewandowski on 25-26 March, OLAF has agreed to provide expertise for the establishment of an anti-fraud/anti-corruption authority, which will focus on the effective disbursement of the EU aid.

Political parts of the Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, were signed on 21 March. The EU is committed to sign the remaining parts of the AA/DCFTA after the Presidential elections.

Over the years, several projects have been funded across sectors, including on migration and asylum management. In particular, a sector budget support programme on border management was approved by the European Commission under the 2010 Annual Action Programme for a total amount of EUR 66 million and a EUR 28 million technical assistance programme 'Support for Migration and Asylum Management in Ukraine' was signed in December 2013 and it is expected to start soon. Policy dialogue with the State Migration Service continues in the framework of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan as well as through ongoing projects.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-014218/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(18 Nollaig 2013)

Ábhar: Línte Ardvoltais Cumhachta Lastuas á dtógáil in Éirinn

Tá sé i gceist ag EirGrid, an comhlacht stáit Éireannach um tharchur cumhachta leictrí, uasghrádú a dhéanamh ar ghréasán leictreach na tíre agus, mar chuid de thionscadal Grid 25 an chomhlachta, líne ardvoltais cumhachta lastuas a thógáil idir Cúige Mumhan agus Cúige Laighean.

Tá sé ráite ag Fáilte Éireann (An tÚdarás Náisiúnta Forbartha Turasóireachta) go bhfuil imní ann i dtaca le piolóin lastuas a thógáil, go háirithe sa mhéid a bhaineann leis an tionchar a d'fhéadfadh a bheith aige sin ar láithreacha áilleachta. Tá togra i dtaca le Gréasán Natura 2000 – gréasán láithreacha éiceolaíochta ar fud na hEorpa, a chlúdaíonn 18 % de thalamh an Aontais Eorpaigh – i gcroílár na dTreoracha maidir le hÉin agus Gnáthóga. An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún breis eolais a thabhairt maidir leis an mbealach inar cuireadh i bhfeidhm bearta coimirce substainteacha agus nós imeachta arna leagan amach in alt 3, alt 4 agus alt 6 den Treoir maidir le Gnáthóga?

Faoi Choinbhinsiún Aarhus na Náisiún Aontaithe, tá an ceart ag an bpobal eolas a lorg maidir leis an mbaol sláinte a d'fhéadfadh a bheith i gceist le tionscadal den chineál seo agus an ceart acu freisin a bheith páirteach i dtograí a mbíonn tionchar acu ar an gcomhshaol. An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún measúnú a thabhairt ar an bpróiseas comhairliúcháin a bhí ann le hEirGrid; an leor an próiseas a bhí ann agus céard go díreach a bheadh i gceist le próiseas ceart comhairliúcháin i gcás den chineál seo?

Ó thaobh sábháilteacht phoiblí de, an bhféadfadh an Coimisiún sonraí a thabhairt maidir leis an bhfad slí ba cheart a bheith ann idir piolóin agus línte ardvoltais cumhachta lastuas agus tithe nó láithreacha cónaithe?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Potočnik thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(20 Feabhra 2014)

Is mian leis an gCoimisiún aird an Fheisire Onóraigh a dhíriú ar na freagraí a tugadh ar cheisteanna scríofa P-012246/2013, E-011013/2013 agus P-013577/2013 ([1]).

Faoi Airteagal 168 agus Airteagal 169 den Chonradh ar Fheidhmiú an Aontais Eorpaigh, is ar na Ballstáit atá an phríomhfhreagracht reachtaíocht a thabhairt isteach maidir le cosaint an phobail i gcoitinne ar na héifeachtaí a d'fhéadfadh bheith ag baint le réimsí leictreamaighnéadacha. Ní thugann na hAirteagail sin inniúlachtaí don AE reachtaíocht a thabhairt isteach sa réimse sin.

D'fhéadfadh an fad slí is ceart a bheith idir línte cumhachta agus ceantair cónaithe a bheith ag brath ar thosca éagsúla amhail cumraíocht na línte nó a voltas. Faoin údarás náisiúnta inniúil atá sé féachaint chuige nach nochtar na daoine atá ina gcónaí in aice leis na línte cumhachta do réimsí leictreamaighnéadacha atá os cionn na leibhéal atá leagtha síos sa reachtaíocht náisiúnta.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014218/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(18 December 2013)

Subject: Construction of high-voltage overhead lines in Ireland

The Irish state-owned electricity transmission operator, EirGrid, intends to upgrade the country's electricity network and, as part of its Grid 25 project, construct a high-voltage overhead power line between Munster and Leinster.

Fáilte Ireland (The National Tourism Development Authority) has raised concerns about the construction of overhead pylons, in particular regarding the impact it might have on areas of natural beauty. The Natura 2000 network project, concerning ecological areas throughout Europe and covering 18% of EU territory, is the centrepiece of the Birds and Habitats Directives. Could the Commission provide more information on how substantial protection measures and the procedure as set out in Articles 3, 4 and 6 of the Habitats Directive have been enforced?

Under the United Nations Aarhus Convention, the public have a right to seek information on health risks that could derive from a project of this nature and they also have a right to participate in projects that impact on the environment. How would the Commission assess the consultation process held with EirGrid? Was that process adequate? What exactly would a proper consultation process in such a case entail?

As regards public safety, could the Commission outline the distance that pylons and high-voltage overhead lines are to be kept from houses and residential areas?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to parliamentary questions P-012246/2013, E-011013/2013 and P-013577/2013 ([1]).

Under Articles 168 and 169 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Member States have primary responsibility to legislate in the area of protection of the general public from the potential effects of electromagnetic fields. They do not confer competences on the EU to legislate in this area.

Determination of the distance between power lines and residential areas can depend on different factors such as configuration of the lines or their voltage. It will be up to the national competent authority to ensure that people living in the vicinity of power lines will not be exposed above the safety limits as established in the national legislation.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-014224/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(18 décembre 2013)

Objet: Fermeture du site internet Presseurop

Depuis 2009, le site d'actualité Presseurop traduit quotidiennement en 10 langues l'actualité de l'Union européenne en prenant pour référence près de 200 titres de presse.

Début décembre, la Commission européenne, qui apportait jusqu'à présent 3 millions d'euros par an à ce site, a décidé de ne pas renouveler son contrat de cinq ans, qui arrive à échéance à la fin de l'année 2013. Ainsi, faute de soutien financier, le site pourrait être contraint de cesser brutalement son activité le 20 décembre prochain, laissant dans une situation précaire près de 70 journalistes, pigistes et traducteurs.

Ce choix de la Commission européenne est pour le moins surprenant. En effet, lors de la session plénière de Strasbourg, le 20 novembre dernier, le budget alloué aux projets multimédia, en 2014, a été augmenté de 6,8 millions d'euros par rapport au budget initial.

Alors que l'échéance électorale de 2014 se rapproche, cette décision rencontre à juste titre l'incompréhension de nos concitoyens. Le site Presseurop permet de diffuser gratuitement une actualité de qualité, concernant l'action de l'Union européenne dans les différents États membres. Il contribue au sentiment d'appartenance à l'Union.

Ainsi, comment la Commission peut-elle justifier sa volonté de retirer son soutien financier à Presseurop?

La Commission a-t-elle mené en amont une étude d'impact afin d'évaluer les conséquences d'une telle décision sur l'avenir des salariés de ce média? Alors que le fossé entre les décisions des institutions européennes et la réalité vécue par nos concitoyens ne cesse de se creuser, la Commission peut-elle exposer sa nouvelle stratégie de communication, qui a pour conséquence d'éloigner encore davantage les citoyens des actions des élus européens?

En outre, quelles solutions peuvent être apportées par la Commission afin de garantir au plus grand nombre un droit d'accès à l'information sur l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Reding au nom de la Commission
(18 février 2014)

L'Honorable Parlementaire voudra bien se reporter à la réponse que la Commission a donnée à sa question écrite E-011724/2013 ([1]).

Le renfort de crédits de 6.8 millions d'euros adopté par le Parlement européen n'a pas permis de rétablir le budget à son niveau de 2013. Les crédits pour les actions multimédias sont réduits de 2 860 millions d'euros, contraignant la Commission à se limiter à la poursuite des contrats en cours d'exécution tel qu'Euranet Plus. À ce titre, il convient de rappeler que le contrat avec Presseurop a définitivement expiré le 22 décembre 2013 et que dès lors il n'existe plus de cadre contractuel permettant de travailler avec cet opérateur.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-011724%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fE0N&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014224/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(18 December 2013)

Subject: Closure of the Presseurop website

Since 2009, the news website Presseurop has translated EU-related news articles daily from some 200 publications into 10 different languages.

At the beginning of December, the Commission, which until now has funded the site to the tune of EUR 3 million a year, decided not to renew its five-year contract, which expires at the end of 2013. Without any funding, therefore, the site could be forced to close with immediate effect on 20 December 2013, leaving some 70 journalists, freelancers and translators in a precarious position.

The Commission's decision is surprising to say the least. Indeed, during the Strasbourg part-session, on 20 November, the initial budget for multimedia projects in 2014 was increased by EUR 6.8 million.

With the 2014 elections approaching, this decision has understandably been met with incomprehension by our fellow citizens. The Presseurop site enables high-quality news articles on EU action in the various Member States to be distributed free of charge. It helps people feel more a part of the EU.

How, then, can the Commission justify its intention to withdraw its funding for Presseurop?

Did the Commission carry out an impact assessment beforehand to assess the consequences of such a decision on the future of Presseurop's employees? At a time when the gap between the European institutions' decisions and the reality as experienced by our fellow citizens is widening, can the Commission explain its new communication strategy, which serves to distance the citizens even more from the actions of Europe's elected representatives?

Furthermore, what solutions can the Commission provide in order to guarantee as many people as possible the right to information on the European Union?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(18 février 2014)

L'Honorable Parlementaire voudra bien se reporter à la réponse que la Commission a donnée à sa question écrite E-011724/2013 ([1]).

Le renfort de crédits de 6.8 millions d'euros adopté par le Parlement européen n'a pas permis de rétablir le budget à son niveau de 2013. Les crédits pour les actions multimédias sont réduits de 2 860 millions d'euros, contraignant la Commission à se limiter à la poursuite des contrats en cours d'exécution tel qu'Euranet Plus. À ce titre, il convient de rappeler que le contrat avec Presseurop a définitivement expiré le 22 décembre 2013 et que dès lors il n'existe plus de cadre contractuel permettant de travailler avec cet opérateur.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-011724%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fE0N&language=EN

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-014254/13
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(18 décembre 2013)

Objet: Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis

Le fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis va bientôt entrer en vigueur. Ce fut une longue lutte, mais on peut se féliciter, aujourd'hui, du travail accompli avec les associations caritatives depuis maintenant plus de 2 ans. Malheureusement, nous ne sommes que peu informés sur les détails de la réforme. La Commission pourrait-elle exposer brièvement la mise en place précise de cette réforme en France ainsi que son calendrier?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(11 février 2014)

Le Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis (FEAD) offre un champs d'application élargi, prévoyant la possibilité pour les États membres qui le souhaitent de continuer à financer de l'aide alimentaire, mais permettant aussi la distribution d'autres biens de base, voire le soutien de mesures immatérielles visant à l'inclusion des personnes les plus démunis.

Ce Fonds sera mis en œuvre en gestion partagée, laissant aux États membres la responsabilité première en termes de programmation, d'exécution et de contrôle de chaque programme opérationnel national. Les États membres sont en train de préparer leurs systèmes de mise en œuvre du Fonds en attendant l'adoption du règlement correspondant prévu pour mars 2014. La Commission n'est donc pas à ce stade en mesure de fournir des informations sur la façon dont la France, ou tout autre État membre, entend mettre en œuvre le FEAD.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014254/13
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(18 December 2013)

Subject: Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)

The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived will soon be launched. It has been a long struggle lasting over two years, but we can now congratulate ourselves on what we have achieved by working together with charitable organisations. Unfortunately, few details of the reform have been published. Can the Commission provide a brief overview of the exact arrangements and timetable for the programme's reform in France?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(11 février 2014)

Le Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis (FEAD) offre un champs d'application élargi, prévoyant la possibilité pour les États membres qui le souhaitent de continuer à financer de l'aide alimentaire, mais permettant aussi la distribution d'autres biens de base, voire le soutien de mesures immatérielles visant à l'inclusion des personnes les plus démunis.

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(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-014261/13
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(18 décembre 2013)

Objet: IGP et AOP viticoles: procédure

Récemment, une appellation viticole de ma région a engagé le passage d'IGP en AOP. Elle vient à peine de recevoir une réponse positive. Mais la procédure a été longue, fastidieuse et quelque peu opaque. Je peux moi-même en témoigner, ayant été associé à la démarche.

1. La Commission peut-elle me donner la procédure standard pour l'obtention d'une IGP et d'une AOP viticoles (étapes et calendrier)?

Je sais que l'obtention préalable d'une IGP, et donc l'existence d'un cahier des charges à peu près équivalent, permettait aux vignerons d'obtenir plus facilement et rapidement l'AOP (procédure accélérée autorisant a priori l'apposition de l'AOP sur les bouteilles).

2. La Commission peut-elle me confirmer cette information? Dans l'affirmative, peut-elle me préciser la procédure ainsi que les délais?

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

La procédure standard de protection d'une IGP ou d'une AOP viticole est définie dans le règlement (UE) n° 1308/2013 portant organisation commune des marchés des produits agricoles ([1]). Les demandes de protection sont introduites par les producteurs auprès des États membres au territoire desquels se rattachent cette IGP/AOP. À l'issue d'une procédure préliminaire au niveau national qui inclut une procédure nationale d'opposition d'au moins deux mois, l'État membre transmet à la Commission la demande, s'il estime qu'elle remplit les conditions établies dans la réglementation de l'Union. Si la Commission estime que la demande est conforme au droit de l'Union, elle procède à la publication à fin d'opposition. Tout État membre, tout pays tiers, ou toute personne ayant un intérêt légitime et établie dans un État membre ou un pays tiers autre que celui qui a demandé la protection, peut s'y opposer dans un délai de deux mois. À l'issue de la procédure d'opposition, la Commission décide soit d'accorder, soit de rejeter la demande de protection.

Le règlement précité ne définit pas une procédure de modification simplifiée lorsque les changements au cahier des charges sont mineurs mais habilite la Commission à définir les conditions et procédures applicables à la modification du cahier des charges. Selon l'Article 20 du règlement (CE) n° 607/2009 fixant certaines modalités d'application ([2]), les changements mineurs au cahier des charges ne doivent pas faire l'objet d'une phase d'opposition au niveau de l'Union. Dans la mesure où elles sont compatibles avec la nouvelle organisation commune des marchés, ces règles restent applicables jusqu'à ce que la Commission définisse de nouvelles procédures.

([1]) JO L 347 du 20.12.2013, p. 671.
([2]) JO L 193 du 24.7.2009, p. 60.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014261/13
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(18 December 2013)

Subject: PGIs and PDOs for wine: procedures

A wine manufacturer in my region recently applied for a PDO label in place of its current PGI status. Its application has just been approved, but the procedure was long, tedious and somewhat opaque. I myself can testify to this, having been involved in the process.

1. Can the Commission provide details of the standard procedure for obtaining PGI or PDO status for a wine (stages and timetable)?

I am aware that wine-growers who have previously been granted PGI status and have thus already submitted roughly equivalent specifications are eligible for a simplified and accelerated PDO application procedure, as part of which advance authorisation is granted for the affixing of PDO labels to bottles.

2. Can the Commission confirm this? If so, can it provide details of the procedure and the deadlines?

(Version française)

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

La procédure standard de protection d'une IGP ou d'une AOP viticole est définie dans le règlement (UE) n° 1308/2013 portant organisation commune des marchés des produits agricoles ([1]). Les demandes de protection sont introduites par les producteurs auprès des États membres au territoire desquels se rattachent cette IGP/AOP. À l'issue d'une procédure préliminaire au niveau national qui inclut une procédure nationale d'opposition d'au moins deux mois, l'État membre transmet à la Commission la demande, s'il estime qu'elle remplit les conditions établies dans la réglementation de l'Union. Si la Commission estime que la demande est conforme au droit de l'Union, elle procède à la publication à fin d'opposition. Tout État membre, tout pays tiers, ou toute personne ayant un intérêt légitime et établie dans un État membre ou un pays tiers autre que celui qui a demandé la protection, peut s'y opposer dans un délai de deux mois. À l'issue de la procédure d'opposition, la Commission décide soit d'accorder, soit de rejeter la demande de protection.

Le règlement précité ne définit pas une procédure de modification simplifiée lorsque les changements au cahier des charges sont mineurs mais habilite la Commission à définir les conditions et procédures applicables à la modification du cahier des charges. Selon l'Article 20 du règlement (CE) n° 607/2009 fixant certaines modalités d'application ([2]), les changements mineurs au cahier des charges ne doivent pas faire l'objet d'une phase d'opposition au niveau de l'Union. Dans la mesure où elles sont compatibles avec la nouvelle organisation commune des marchés, ces règles restent applicables jusqu'à ce que la Commission définisse de nouvelles procédures.

([1]) JO L 347 du 20.12.2013, p. 671.
([2]) JO L 193 du 24.7.2009, p. 60.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-014333/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Guardia Civil y ejercicio de la democracia

El jueves 12 de diciembre, cinco partidos políticos catalanes acordaron realizar una consulta el 9 de noviembre de 2014 sobre el futuro estatus político de Cataluña. En una cuenta de Twitter gestionada por miembros de la Guardia Civil, se colgó el 13 de diciembre un fotomontaje ([1]) —posteriormente calificado de «broma»— donde se amenazaba con una intervención militar de dicho cuerpo en caso de ganar el sí a la independencia. En concreto, los agentes responsables preguntan si en esa coyuntura «prefiere que la Guardia Civil entre por las Ramblas desfilando o con las tanquetas», recordando el golpe de Estado que acabó con la República Española en 1936.

En *tuits* posteriores, los agentes no solo no rectificaron su «broma», sino que se reafirmaron en ella. La dirección de la Guardia Civil —habitualmente celosa ante cualquier pronunciamiento sindical o político de sus miembros— no ha condenado los hechos ni se ha desmarcado de los mismos. La «broma» coincide con la voluntad de algunos políticos del Estado español de utilizar la Guardia Civil para suspender la autonomía de Cataluña en caso de que se celebre la consulta. También sintoniza con declaraciones literales en ese sentido de un vicepresidente de este Parlamento. Una «broma» que —por los valores que propugna y el canal que se utiliza para ello — podría encajar en las conductas que la Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI del Consejo Europeo, relativa a la lucha contra el racismo y la xenofobia, considera que deben tener reproche penal. Una broma que es una manifestación más del avance de la extrema derecha en Europa, no suficientemente prevenido por las autoridades públicas, que fue denunciado en el Pleno celebrado en esta Cámara en octubre ([2]).

A la luz de lo anterior:

¿Considera la Comisión que estos hechos tienen entidad suficiente para ser considerados objeto de estudio de la red para la sensibilización frente a la radicalización («RSR»)?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de abril de 2014)

La Red de la UE para la Sensibilización frente a la Radicalización (RSR) pone en contacto a profesionales que se dedican a prevenir la radicalización que conduce al terrorismo y el extremismo violento. Una serie de grupos de trabajo de la Red intercambian información sobre cómo preparar mejor a los profesionales de primera línea para su trabajo diario con las personas y grupos vulnerables.

La RSR no tiene como misión ser un foro de investigación de denuncias particulares de actividades extremistas.

([1]) https://twitter.com/iguardiacivil/status/411438672420937728
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20131009&secondRef=ITEM-014&language=ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014333/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 December 2013)

Subject: The Spanish Civil Guard and the exercising of democracy

On 12 December 2013, five Catalan political parties agreed that a referendum on Catalonia's future political status would be held on 9 November 2014. On 13 December, a photomontage ([1])was posted on a Twitter account run by members of the Civil Guard. Although it was subsequently described as a 'joke', this photomontage suggested that the Civil Guard would stage a military intervention if Catalonia voted for independence. In words that recall the coup d'état that brought about the end of the Spanish Republic in 1936, the officers responsible for the tweet asked whether Catalan citizens would 'prefer the Civil Guard to enter Las Ramblas on foot or in armoured cars'.

In subsequent tweets, the officers not only failed to rectify their 'joke' but also reaffirmed it. Senior members of the Civil Guard, who usually react to political or trade-union related statements made by its members, have neither condemned the tweets nor disassociated themselves from them. This 'joke' is in line with the desire expressed by some Spanish politicians to use the Civil Guard to suspend the autonomy of Catalonia if the referendum is held. It also chimes with statements made in this respect by a Vice-President of the European Parliament. In the values that it espouses and the channel through which it was expressed, this joke could be classed as conduct that merits a criminal sanction under Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, which deals with the fight against racism and xenophobia. This joke is another expression of the advance of the far right in Europe, an advance which the public authorities have not done enough to prevent and which was denounced in the plenary session held in this House in October ([2]).

Does the Commission believe that these facts are of sufficient significance as to merit examination by the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(7 April 2014)

The EU Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) connects practitioners involved in preventing radicalisation leading to terrorism and violent extremism. A number of RAN working groups exchange information on ways to better equip front line practitioners in their daily work with at-risk individuals and groups.

The RAN is not intended as a forum for investigating individual allegations of extremism.

([1]) https://twitter.com/iguardiacivil/status/411438672420937728
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20131009&secondRef=ITEM-014&language=ES

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-014335/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) y Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(19 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Un grupo de extrema derecha españolista asalta e interrumpe un acto democrático de la asociación «Súmate» en Mataró — transposición de la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI

El 17 de diciembre 2013, un grupo de fascistas y miembros de extrema derecha irrumpieron en una sala repleta de gente e interrumpieron una conferencia de la asociación de catalanes castellanohablantes «Súmate». Dicha organización defiende el ejercicio de la democracia mediante el ejercicio del derecho a decidir de los catalanes ([1]) ([2]).

Más concretamente, fue un grupo de cinco personas el que intentó boicotear sin éxito dicha conferencia en la ciudad de Mataró, en la sala del centro cívico Pla d'en Boet. Los citados individuos desplegaron entre gritos banderas españolas y pancartas en contra de la asociación «Súmate», irrumpiendo en el escenario donde se desarrollaba la conferencia ([3]).

La grave acción, por suerte, solo derivó en algún enfrentamiento verbal entre los asaltantes extremistas y los asistentes al acto. Uno de los asistentes tuvo que reducir a uno de los asaltantes, que utilizaba un spray con el fin de desalojar la sala, en clara imitación del uso de gases lacrimógenos en el asalto de la Delegación de Madrid del Gobierno catalán el pasado 11 de septiembre.

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:

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de estos hechos que violan flagrantemente los valores de la UE?

2. ¿Qué información tiene la Comisión sobre la transposición de la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI, relativa a la trivialización de símbolos relacionados con dictaduras y crímenes contra la humanidad por parte del Reino de España?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de abril de 2014)

La Comisión no ha recibido información específica sobre los incidentes mencionados por Sus Señorías.

El informe de la Comisión sobre la aplicación de la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI se adoptó el 27 de enero de 2014 y abarca a todos los Estados miembros ([4]).

([1]) http://www.laxarxa.com/noticia/boicotegen-un-acte-de-la-plataforma-sumate-a-mataro#.UrDMCDXH9iY.twitter
([2]) https://twitter.com/JordiVazquez/status/413028860968841216/photo/1
([3]) https://twitter.com/Llibertatcat/status/413037658714038273/photo/1
([4]) Informe disponible en http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/com_2014_27_en.pdf y http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/swd_2014_27_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014335/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) and Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(19 December 2013)

Subject: An extreme right-wing Spanish nationalist group assaults and interrupts a democratic act of the 'Súmate' association in Mataró — transposition of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA

On 17 December 2013, a group of fascists and extreme right-wing activists broke into a room full of people where they interrupted a conference of the 'Súmate' association of Castilian-speaking Catalan people. This organisation defends the exercise of democracy by Catalans exercising their right to decide ([1]) ([2]).

More specifically, a group of five people tried unsuccessfully to boycott the conference held in the Pla d'en Boet room of the city of Mataró's civic centre. Amid their shouts, these individuals unfurled Spanish flags and banners against the 'Súmate' association, storming the stage where the conference was taking place ([3]).

Fortunately, this very serious action ended in only a verbal confrontation between the extremist assailants and those attending the event. One of the attendees had to overpower an assailant who used a spray to try to empty the room, in clear imitation of the use made of tear gas in the assault on the Catalan Government's Madrid Delegation on 11 September 2013.

In view of the above, and taking into account the precedents of violence and fascist demonstrations and intolerance reported in Questions E-011140/2013, E-010490/2013 and E-010386/2013:

1. Is the Commission aware of these incidents in flagrant violation of EU values?

2. What information does the Commission have about the transposition of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on trivialising symbols related to dictatorships and crimes against humanity by the Kingdom of Spain?

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

The Commission has not received specific information on the incidents mentioned by the Honourable Members.

The Commission report on the implementation of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA was adopted on 27 January 2014, covering all Member States ([4]).

([1]) http://www.laxarxa.com/noticia/boicotegen-un-acte-de-la-plataforma-sumate-a-mataro#.UrDMCDXH9iY.twitter
([2]) https://twitter.com/JordiVazquez/status/413028860968841216/photo/1
([3]) https://twitter.com/Llibertatcat/status/413037658714038273/photo/1
([4]) The report is available at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/com_2014_27_en.pdf and http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/swd_2014_27_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-014354/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πληροφορίες περί μη εφαρμογής εκ μέρους της Τουρκίας της συμφωνίας επανεισδοχής ως προς την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία

Στις 16 Νοεμβρίου 2013 υπεγράφη στην Άγκυρα συμφωνία μεταξύ της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και της Τουρκίας για την επανεισδοχή των μεταναστών που εισέρχονται παράνομα στην Ευρώπη ή στην Τουρκία, μέσω του τουρκικού εδάφους ή του εδάφους κράτους μέλους της ΕΕ. Πληροφορίες αναφέρουν ωστόσο πως η τουρκική κυβέρνηση δεν προτίθεται να εφαρμόσει τη συμφωνία με την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία και δεν πρόκειται να συνάψει οποιαδήποτε απευθείας σχέση με την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία στο πλαίσιο αυτό.

Δεδομένου ότι η συμφωνία περιλαμβάνει διατάξεις που σχετίζονται με την επανεισδοχή των υπηκόων των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ και της Τουρκίας, καθώς και για την επανεισδοχή κάθε άλλου προσώπου που εισήλθε ή διέμεινε στην επικράτεια της ΕΕ ή της Τουρκίας, προερχόμενο απευθείας από την επικράτεια της ΕΕ ή της Τουρκίας:

1. Τι μέσα διαθέτει η Επιτροπή για να εγγυηθεί την ολοκληρωμένη και συνολική εφαρμογή της συμφωνίας, χωρίς διακρίσεις μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ και για να παρακολουθεί την ορθή της εφαρμογή;

2. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή σε περίπτωση που η Τουρκία υλοποιήσει τις εξαγγελθείσες θέσεις της ότι θα εξαιρέσει την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία από την εφαρμογή της συμφωνίας επανεισδοχής;

3. Εν όψει της επικύρωσης της συμφωνίας που επίκειται, θα ζητήσει η Επιτροπή ρητές διαβεβαιώσεις από την τουρκική κυβέρνηση, που, αφενός, να διαψεύδουν τις ανωτέρω πληροφορίες και, αφετέρου, να εγγυώνται την χωρίς διακρίσεις εφαρμογή της συμφωνίας επανεισδοχής;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαρτίου 2014)

Στις 16 Δεκεμβρίου 2013, η Τουρκία υπέγραψε τη συμφωνία επανεισδοχής με την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση χωρίς να διατυπώσει καμία επιφύλαξη.

Η συμφωνία εφαρμόζεται σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, με εξαίρεση μόνον εκείνα τα οποία έχουν επιλέξει να μη συμμετάσχουν. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι η συμφωνία θα εφαρμοστεί πλήρως και αποτελεσματικά από την Τουρκία έναντι όλων των συμμετεχόντων κρατών μελών, μεταξύ των οποίων και η Κύπρος.

Οι τυχόν δυσκολίες κατά την εφαρμογή της συμφωνίας θα πρέπει να εξεταστούν πρωτίστως στη μεικτή επιτροπή επανεισδοχής. Η επιτροπή αυτή θα θεσπιστεί μόλις δρομολογηθεί η εφαρμογή της συμφωνίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014354/13
to the Commission
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 December 2013)

Subject: Information on Turkey's non-implementation of the readmission agreement in relation to the Republic of Cyprus

On 16 November 2013, an agreement was signed in Ankara between the European Union and Turkey on the readmission of immigrants illegally entering Europe or Turkey through Turkish territory or the territory of an EU Member State. However, there are indications that the Turkish Government does not intend to implement the agreement with the Republic of Cyprus, and is not going to enter into any direct relationship with the Republic of Cyprus on this matter.

As the agreement includes clauses relating to the readmission of nationals of EU Member States and Turkey, as well as the readmission of any other person entering or residing in the territory of the EU or Turkey, originating directly from the territory of the EU or Turkey:

1. What means does the Commission have available in order to ensure the integrated and full implementation of the agreement, with no discrimination between EU Member States, and in order monitor its correct implementation?

2. What does it plan to do if Turkey applies in practice its declared position that it will exclude the Republic of Cyprus from implementation of the readmission agreement?

3. In relation to the forthcoming ratification of the agreement, will the Commission demand explicit confirmation from the Turkish Government that, on the one hand, the above reports can be discounted and, on the other hand, that the non-discriminatory application of the agreement can be ensured?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

On 16 December 2013, Turkey signed the readmission agreement with the European Union without expressing any reservations.

The agreement applies to all the European Union Member States, excluding only those which have specifically chosen not to participate. The European Commission expects the agreement to be fully and effectively implemented by Turkey vis-à-vis all participating Member States, including Cyprus.

Should any difficulty in the implementation of the agreement arise, this will be addressed first of all in the Joint Readmission Committee. This Committee will be established once implementation of the agreement is underway.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014400/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(20 December 2013)

Subject: Number of journalists killed in 2013

According to research by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), an organisation which promotes freedom of the press , 71 journalists were killed worldwide in 2013 while carrying out their work. There was also a 129% increase in the number of journalists abducted in the same period, with Syria, Somalia and Pakistan remaining the most dangerous places for media workers.

In light of this, can the Commission say what steps have been and will be taken at EU level to better promote universal recognition of a free press, and to secure the safety and rights of journalists both within the EU and in third countries?

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

The EU is committed to promoting and protecting freedom of expression worldwide and attaches the highest priority to the safety of journalists. The HR/VP has repeatedly condemned the violence, intimidation and harassment of journalist, in the framework of its bilateral relations with third countries and through several public statements.

The EU continues its efforts to ensure that freedom of expression remains prominently on the UN agenda and multilateral fora. Most recently, the EU is actively engaging with the wider donor community, such as OECD DAC GovNet, to raise the issue of media freedom and journalist safety on the international development cooperation agenda.

The EU also supports freedom of expression through financial assistance and projects, in particular through the EIDHR, at both local and global level. The EIDHR is currently funding a programme implemented by Reporters Sans Frontiers aiming at defending online and offline freedom of expression. The action includes training and capacity building for journalists, bloggers and net citizens on data security and protection, the creation of secured 'virtual shelters' and direct material and financial support.

Moreover, journalists at risk are regularly supported via the EIDHR emergency fund for Human Rights Defenders (HRDs). This urgent support may take any form that is considered necessary, for instance to cover the fees for the legal representation of defenders, to purchase security material for offices or homes, to pay for the evacuation of a HRD to another country, etc.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-014413/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(20 ta' Diċembru 2013)

Suġġett: Ir-rati tal-fertilità fl-UE

Fl-aħħar għexieren ta' snin, ir-rati Ewropej tal-fertilità naqsu, u dan il-mudell jispjega b'mod ġenerali t-tnaqqis fit-tkabbir tal-popolazzjoni fl-UE-28. Ir-rata totali tal-fertilità fl-UE-27 naqset ferm anqas mil-livell ta' sostituzzjoni fl-aħħar għexieren ta' snin. Fl-2011, il-medja tar-rata totali tal-fertilità fl-UE-27 kienet ta' 1.57 twelid ta' trabi għal kull mara ([1]).

It-teknoloġiji riproduttivi assistiti huma metodi użati sabiex tinkiseb it-tqala permezz ta' mezzi artifiċjali, u għalhekk huma użati primarjament bħala trattament tal-fertilità. Dan it-trattament għali tal-fertilità huwa disponibbli f'ħafna Stati Membri, iżda f'xi pajjiżi l-ispejjeż mhumiex koperti mis-servizz pubbliku tas-saħħa. Minħabba pożijiet finanzjarji, xi nies huma esklużi milli jfittxu dan it-trattament f'pajjiżhom.

F'dan ir-rigward:

1. Il-Kummissjoni hija tal-istess fehma li t-tnaqqis tar-rati tal-fertilità, u b'hekk twassal għal tixjiħ tal-popolazzjoni, jikkawża sfidi soċjali u ekonomiċi għall-Komunità?

2. Il-Kummissjoni, sa fejn hija preparata li tkun minn ta' quddiem fil-ġlieda kontra t-tnaqqis tar-rati tal-fertilità?

3. Il-Kummissjoni hija tal-istess fehma li t-trattamenti tal-fertilità ffinanzjati mill-Istat hija għażla pożittiva fil-ġlieda kontra t-tnaqqis tar-rati tal-fertilità?

4. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi informazzjoni fl-Istati Membri kollha dwar id-disponibbiltà, l-ispejjeż u l-eliġibbiltà għat-trattamenti tal-fertilità ffinanzjati mill-Istat?

5. Il-Kummissjoni, x'inizjattivi qed tippjana li tieħu fil-ġlieda kontra t-tnaqqis tar-rati tal-fertilità?

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

Il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat, fl-2009, ir-rapport "Data and Information on Women's Health in the European Union" ("Dejta u Tagħrif dwar is-Saħħa tan-Nisa fl-Unjoni Ewropea") ([2]), li juri li r-rati tal-fertilità naqsu minn 2.6 fil-bidu tas-snin sittin tas-seklu għoxrin għal madwar 1.4 fil-perjodu ta' bejn l-1995 u l-2005. Ir-rati huma ogħla f'pajjiżi li jadottaw politiki li jiffavorixxu l-familja, bħal mhi l-implimentazzjoni ta' servizzi għall-indukrar tat-tfal aċċessibbli faċilment u li u/jew skedi flessibbli tal-ħinijiet tax-xogħol.

Fl-2010, il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat l-istudju "Comparative Analysis of Medically Assisted Reproduction in the EU: Regulation and Technologies" ("Analiżi komparattiva tar-riproduzzjoni assistita b'mod mediku fl-UE: regolazzjoni u teknoloġiji") ([3]), li jagħti ħarsa ġenerali lejn il-leġiżlazzjoni eżistenti u l-politiki ta' rimborż, u lejn il-prattiki stabbiliti u l-aspetti transkonfinali tat-teknoloġiji tar-riproduzzjoni assistita fl-Unjoni Ewropea.

L-organizzazzjoni u l-finanzjament tas-servizzi tas-saħħa u l-kura medika, inklużi t-trattamenti għall-fertilità ffinanzjati mill-Istat, u d-definizzjoni tal-politiki tas-saħħa, huma kwistjonijiet li jaqgħu taħt ir-responsabbiltà tal-Istati Membri.

B'hekk, il-Kummissjoni ma għandhiex għad-dispożizzjoni tagħha dejta komprensiva u aġġornata dwar id-disponibbiltà tat-trattamenti marbutin mal-fertilità ffinanzjati mill-Istat, l-ispejjeż marbutin magħhom u l-eliġibbiltà għalihom.

([1]) Statistika Soċjali Ewropea, 2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/population_groups/docs/women_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/blood_tissues_organs/docs/study_eshre_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014413/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(20 December 2013)

Subject: Fertility rates in the EU

In recent decades, European fertility rates have decreased, and this pattern largely explains the slowdown in the EU-28's population growth. The total fertility rate in the EU-27 has declined to well below the replacement level in recent decades. In 2011, the EU-27 average total fertility rate was 1.57 live births per woman ([1]).

Assisted reproductive technologies are methods used to achieve pregnancy by artificial means, and are therefore used primarily as fertility treatment. This expensive fertility treatment is available in most Member States, but in some countries the cost is not covered by the public health service. This precludes people from seeking the treatment available in their country due to financial constraints.

In light of this;

1. Does the Commission share the view that declining fertility rates, and hence an ageing population, cause social and economic challenges for the Community?

2. To what extent is the Commission prepared to take the lead in combating declining fertility rates?

3. Does the Commission share the view that state-funded fertility treatments are a positive option for combating decreasing fertility rates?

4. Can the Commission provide data on the availability, cost and eligibility for state-funded fertility treatments throughout the Member States?

5. What initiatives does the Commission plan to take in order to combat declining fertility rates?

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

The Commission published in 2009 the report 'Data and Information on Women's Health in the European Union' ([2]), which shows that fertility rates declined from 2.6 in early 1960 to approximately 1.4 in 1995-2005. The rates are higher in countries which adopt family-friendly policies such as implementation of easily accessible and affordable childcare and/or flexible working time patterns.

In 2010 the Commission published the study 'Comparative Analysis of Medically Assisted Reproduction in the EU: Regulation and Technologies' ([3]) which provides an overview of existing legislation and reimbursement policies and established practices and cross-border aspects of assisted reproductive technologies in the European Union.

The organisation and financing of health services and medical care, including state-funded fertility treatments, and the definition of health policies, is a matter under the responsibility of the Member States

As such the Commission does not dispose of comprehensive and updated data on the availability, cost and eligibility for state-funded fertility treatments.

([1]) European Social Statistics, 2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/population_groups/docs/women_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/blood_tissues_organs/docs/study_eshre_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-014456/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Interessenkonflikte im Zuge der Troika-Beratungen

Um herauszufinden, wie viel Geld die ins Straucheln geratenen Länder brauchen, werden anscheinend unabhängige Consultingfirmen — auf Druck der Troika ohne öffentliche Ausschreibung — beauftragt. Dabei besteht der Verdacht von Interessenkonflikten.

So soll etwa Alvarez & Marsal einerseits im Rahmen des zyprischen Bail-out beauftragt worden sein und gleichzeitig parallel dazu im selben Jahr als Wirtschaftsprüfer von der zyprischen Zentralbank herangezogen worden sein.

Im Fall Irlands soll 2011 Black Rock Solutions — dem Vernehmen nach auf Druck der Troika ebenfalls ohne Ausschreibung — unter Vertrag genommen worden sein, eine Prognose darüber zu erstellen, wie viel Geld die irischen Banken nun verlieren werden, eine Art „Worst-Case-Stresstest". Diese wiederum hält offenbar drei Prozent an der Bank of Ireland, einem der Institute, die von Black Rock Solutions auf Herz und Nieren geprüft wurden.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu diesen Interessenkonflikten?

2. Was wird unternommen, um (künftig) Interessenkonflikte zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(10. April 2014)

Für die Vergabe von Beraterverträgen im Zusammenhang mit Finanzhilfeprogrammen sind letztlich die betreffenden Mitgliedstaaten zuständig. Überprüfungen der Aktiva-Qualität und Stresstests wurden dagegen im Einklang mit den bereits unterzeichneten oder derzeit ausgehandelten Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) durchgeführt; die Institutionen der Troika wurden hinsichtlich der diesbezüglichen Auftragsvergabe konsultiert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014456/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23 December 2013)

Subject: Conflicts of interest in the course of the Troika's consultations

It appears that independent consulting firms are being awarded contracts to establish how much money the countries which have got into difficulties require — without any public tendering procedure following pressure from the Troika. This gives rise to a suspicion of conflicts of interest.

For instance, Alvarez & Marsal is said to have been awarded a contract in connection with the bail-out of Cyprus and at the same time, in parallel and in the same year, to have been used by the Central Bank of Cyprus as its auditor.

In the case of Ireland, in 2011 Black Rock Solutions is said to have been given a contract — likewise apparently without any public tendering process following pressure from the Troika — to produce a prognosis about how much money the Irish banks will now lose: a kind of 'worst-case stress test'. That firm in turn owns three per cent of the Bank of Ireland, one of the institutions that were subject to an in-depth examination by Black Rock Solutions.

1. What is the Commission's position with regard to these conflicts of interest?

2. What is being done to prevent (future) conflicts of interest?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2014)

It is the ultimate responsibility of the Member States concerned to contract for advisory services related to financial assistance programmes. Asset Quality Reviews (AQRs) and stress tests were however conducted in line with the Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) signed or under negotiation, and the Troika institutions were consulted regarding the contracting process for their provision.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000028/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Άρνηση Τουρκίας να επεκτείνει τη Συμφωνία επανεισδοχής μεταναστών και στην Κύπρο

Πριν ακόμη στεγνώσει το μελάνι της υπογραφής της Συμφωνίας για την επανεισδοχή μεταναστών, η Τουρκία και ο Τούρκος πρωθυπουργός Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, δείχνουν ξανά το πραγματικό τους πρόσωπο, αμφισβητώντας ότι έχουν υποχρέωση να εφαρμόσουν τη συμφωνία και με την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία. Με τις ενέργειες του ο κ. Ερντογάν ξεκαθαρίζει την πρόθεσή του να μην εφαρμόζει τη συμφωνία μ' ένα κράτος μέλος, την Κύπρο, σε αντίθεση με τις υπόλοιπες χώρες της ΕΕ.

Καλείται η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στα εξής ερωτήματα:

1. Θεωρεί ότι υπάρχει συμβατική και πολιτική υποχρέωση εκ μέρους της Τουρκίας να εφαρμόσει τη συμφωνία με όλα τα κράτη μέλη, περιλαμβανομένης της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας;

2. Η συμφωνία αυτή θα καλύψει και τις δεκάδες χιλιάδες παράνομους εποίκους που η Τουρκία έχει εγκαταστήσει στην Κύπρο, με σκοπό την αλλοίωση του δημογραφικού χαρακτήρα του νησιού;

3. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει σε περίπτωση που η Τουρκία υλοποιήσει την πρόθεση της να μη εφαρμόσει τη συμφωνία στην περίπτωση της Κύπρου; Έχει τη δυνατότητα να επιβάλει κυρώσεις και ποιες;

4. Μέχρι πότε η ΕΕ θα ανέχεται τη μη υλοποίηση υποχρεώσεων της Άγκυρας σε μια σειρά από σημαντικά θέματα;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Απριλίου 2014)

Μετά τη θέση σε ισχύ της συμφωνίας επανεισδοχής ΕΕ-Τουρκίας, η Τουρκία θα υποχρεούται να την εφαρμόσει στα κράτη μέλη που είναι μέρη της συμφωνίας αυτής. Η συμφωνία θα εφαρμόζεται στην Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία.

Η συμφωνία επανεισδοχής ισχύει για τους υπηκόους τη χώρας, τους υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών και τους απάτριδες που δεν έχουν το δικαίωμα να παραμείνουν στην επικράτεια των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ. Οποιοδήποτε πρόσωπο σε τέτοια κατάσταση ενδέχεται να υπόκειται σε διαδικασία επανεισδοχής υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι τηρούνται όλες οι άλλες διαδικασίες (συμπεριλαμβανομένης της απόφασης περί επιστροφής).

Η Επιτροπή θα παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς την εφαρμογή της συμφωνίας σε συνεργασία με τα κράτη μέλη και την Τουρκία και θα εξετάζονται όλα τα σχετικά ζητήματα στο πλαίσιο της μεικτής επιτροπής επανεισδοχής που θα συσταθεί βάσει της συμφωνίας. Η ορθή εφαρμογή της συμφωνίας από την Τουρκία αποτελεί μία από τις προϋποθέσεις προόδου στον διάλογο για την ελευθέρωση του καθεστώτος θεωρήσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000028/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Turkey's refusal to extend the agreement on the readmission of migrants to Cyprus

Shortly after the signing of the agreement on the readmission of migrants, Turkey and its Prime Minister, Tayyip Erdoğan, are once again showing their real face, disputing that they have an obligation to implement the agreement in respect of the Republic of Cyprus also. By his actions, Mr Erdoğan clarifies his intention not to apply the agreement in respect of one Member State, i.e. Cyprus, in contrast to other EU countries.

We have the following questions for the Commission:

1. Does it consider that Turkey has a contractual and political obligation to implement the agreement in respect of all Member States, including the Republic of Cyprus?

2. Will this agreement also cover the tens of thousands of illegal settlers that Turkey has brought to Cyprus in order to alter the demographic character of the island?

3. What will it do in the event that Turkey fulfils its intention not to implement the agreement in respect of Cyprus? Is it in a position to impose sanctions and, if so, what type of sanctions?

4. Until when will the EU tolerate Ankara's failure to implement its obligations regarding a number of important issues?

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

After the entry into force of the EU-Turkey readmission agreement, Turkey will be obliged to implement it to the Member States which are party to this agreement. The agreement will be applicable to the Republic of Cyprus.

The Readmission Agreement applies to own nationals, third-country nationals and stateless persons who do not have the right to stay on the EU Member States' territory. Any person in such a situation may be subject to readmission provided all the other procedures (including return decision) are respected.

The Commission will monitor closely the implementation of the agreement in cooperation with the Member States and Turkey and discuss all relevant issues in the joint readmission committee that will be established under the agreement. The proper implementation of the agreement by Turkey is one of the conditions to progress in the visa liberalisation dialogue.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000079/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Información sobre la contaminación de las aguas del pantano de Oiola

El pasado 23 de septiembre, el Comisario de Medio Ambiente respondía a varias preguntas parlamentarias referentes a la concentración de residuos de pesticidas en el agua destinada al consumo humano procedente del pantano de Oiola en el País Vasco (España). En su respuesta sostenía que iba a solicitar información sobre el tema a las autoridades españolas para esclarecer si se incumple o no el Derecho de la UE.

La asociación Ekologistak Martxan/Ecologistas en Acción elaboró el pasado mes de mayo el «Informe sobre la contaminación por HCH en el embalse de Oiola y el uso de agua para la producción de aguas de consumo humano», que presentó al Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente para poner en su conocimiento las infracciones que suponen los elevados niveles de contaminación en agua destinada al consumo humano. Dicho informe contiene información sobre la presencia de HCH en altas concentraciones en las aguas de dicho pantano, lo que ha obligado a determinadas localidades de la zona, como Barakaldo, a tratar de evitar la conexión del pantano a la red de abastecimiento.

Tras un periodo de espera, durante el cual las autoridades españolas han debido aportar información a la Comisión Europea sobre la calidad de las aguas del pantano de Oiola, los habitantes de la zona que consumen sus aguas están profundamente preocupados por disponer de la información oficial sobre la calidad de dichas aguas.

¿La información que ha facilitado el Gobierno de España sobre la contaminación en el pantano de Oiola confirma la aportada por Eologistak Mertxan/Ecologistas en Acción?

¿Está incumpliendo España, en el caso de este pantano, lo dispuesto en la Directiva de aguas 98/83/CE, así como en la Directiva 2008/105/CE?

¿Considera la Comisión que se debe garantizar que las aguas de este pantano no sean empleadas para el consumo humano?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de junio de 2014)

Tras sus respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-008793/2013 y E-013625/2013, la Comisión ha pedido a las autoridades españolas información más detallada sobre la contaminación del pantano de Oiola y del agua potable extraída del mismo para evaluar si existe algún incumplimiento del Derecho de la UE. Ha abierto un procedimiento EU Pilot (ref. 6235/14/ENVI) y las autoridades españolas han enviado recientemente una respuesta, que está siendo evaluada.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000079/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Information on Oiola reservoir pollution

On 23 September 2013, the Environment Commissioner answered a number of parliamentary questions with regard to the concentration of pesticide residue in water intended for human consumption from the Oiola reservoir in the Basque Country (Spain). In his answer the Commissioner stated that the Spanish authorities would be contacted in order to establish whether they were in breach of EU legislation.

In May 2013, the environmental association Ekologistak Martxan/Ecologistas en Acción drew up the 'Report on HCH pollution in the Oiola reservoir and the use of water for the production of water intended for human consumption', which it presented to the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment with the aim of drawing its attention to the directives which have been infringed by allowing these high pollution levels in water intended for human consumption. The report contains information on the high concentration of HCH in the water from this reservoir, which has led certain municipalities in the area, such as Barakaldo, to attempt to disconnect their water supply network from the reservoir.

After waiting for the Spanish authorities to provide the Commission with the required information on the quality of the water in the Oiola reservoir, the people living in the area are now very anxious to have access to the official information on the quality of the water they are drinking.

Does the information provided by the Spanish Government with regard to pollution in the Oiola reservoir tally with the report by the environmental association Ekologistak Martxan/Ecologistas en Acción?

Is Spain in breach of Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC and Priority Substaces Directive 2008/105/EC?

Does the Commission consider that a guarantee should be provided to the effect that this water will not be used for human consumption?

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

Following its answers to written questions E-008793/2013 and E-013625/2013, the Commission still requires more detailed information from the Spanish authorities on the pollution in the Oiola reservoir and in the drinking water abstracted from it, in order to assess whether there has been any infringement to EC law. The Commission has already launched an EU Pilot (ref. 6235/14/ENVI), and the Spanish authorities have very recently sent their reply, which is currently being assessed.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000118/14
al Consejo
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Latinoamérica y política de visados (1)

En respuesta a una pregunta parlamentaria presentada en el Congreso español sobre la política de visados respecto a ciudadanos de países latinoamericanos, el Gobierno del Reino de España contesta que se limita a aplicar la normativa comunitaria; en concreto, menciona el Reglamento (CE) n° 539/2001 del Consejo, de 15 de marzo de 2001, y el Reglamento (CE) n° 810/2009 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de julio de 2009.

La pregunta hacía referencia a ciudadanos de Cuba, la República Dominicana, Perú, Ecuador, Colombia y Bolivia. En dicha respuesta se indica que el Gobierno del Reino de España propuso, el pasado 23 de septiembre de 2013, al Grupo de Visados del Consejo de la Unión Europea la exención de visado para los ciudadanos de Perú y Colombia. Ello se ha aprobado ya en el Parlamento Europeo y en el Coreper.

¿Para cuándo calcula el Consejo que la exención de visado para los ciudadanos de Perú y Colombia estará operativa?

¿No considera el Consejo que sería más justo y equitativo extender la exención de visado a todos los países de ámbito latinoamericano?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000119/14
al Consejo
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Latinoamérica y política de visados (2)

En respuesta a una pregunta parlamentaria presentada en el Congreso español sobre la política de visados respecto a ciudadanos de países latinoamericanos, el Gobierno del Reino de España contesta que se limita a aplicar la normativa comunitaria; en concreto, menciona el Reglamento (CE) n° 539/2001 del Consejo, de 15 de marzo de 2001, y el Reglamento (CE) n° 810/2009 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de julio de 2009.

La pregunta hacía referencia a ciudadanos de Cuba, la República Dominicana, Perú, Ecuador, Colombia y Bolivia. En ella se indicaba que el Índice de Desarrollo Humano (IDH) de esos países ha progresado mucho y que ese parámetro sirve de referencia para la política europea de visados. El Gobierno del Reino de España indicaba textualmente en su respuesta: «La política de visados seguida con respecto a Cuba, República Dominicana, Perú, Ecuador, Colombia y Bolivia no está íntimamente ligada con el IDH, habida cuenta de que dicho factor no aparece mencionado, como tal, en el acervo comunitario […] como determinante a la hora de modificar las listas de terceros países sujetos a visado y exentos de esa obligación».

¿Considera el Consejo que es correcta la interpretación del Gobierno del Reino de España?

En caso afirmativo, ¿prevé el Consejo estudiar la conveniencia de considerar el IDH como factor a la hora de establecer la política de visados respecto a terceros países?

¿Tiene el Consejo alguna posición prefijada al respecto?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000120/14
al Consejo
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Latinoamérica y política de visados (3)

En respuesta a una pregunta parlamentaria presentada en el Congreso español sobre la política de visados respecto a ciudadanos de países latinoamericanos, el Gobierno del Reino de España contesta que se limita a aplicar la normativa comunitaria; en concreto, menciona el Reglamento (CE) n° 539/2001 del Consejo, de 15 de marzo de 2001, y el Reglamento (CE) n° 810/2009 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de julio de 2009.

La pregunta hacía referencia a ciudadanos de Cuba, la República Dominicana, Perú, Ecuador, Colombia y Bolivia. En su respuesta, el Gobierno del Reino de España señala textualmente: «Los principales parámetros empleados para evaluar la conveniencia de mover o no a un país tercero de una relación a otra [de la "lista negativa" a la "positiva"] son los flujos de inmigrantes irregulares procedentes de su territorio, así como la hipotética participación de sus ciudadanos en actos que atenten contra el orden público o la seguridad nacional de los Estados Parte».

Por otra parte, el Gobierno del Reino de España propuso, el pasado 23 de septiembre de 2013, al Grupo de Visados del Consejo de la Unión Europea la exención de visado para los ciudadanos de Perú y Colombia. Ello se ha aprobado ya en el Parlamento Europeo y en el Coreper.

Se puede entender, en razón de la respuesta del Gobierno del Reino de España y de su propuesta del día 23 de septiembre, que considera a los ciudadanos de Cuba, la República Dominicana, Ecuador y Bolivia hipotéticos peligros para la seguridad de los Estados de la Unión.

¿Comparte el Consejo la opinión implícitamente expresada por el Gobierno del Reino de España?

Respuesta conjunta
(14 de abril de 2014)

En el Reglamento (CE) n° 539/2001 del Consejo ([1]) se enumeran los países terceros cuyos nacionales deben estar provistos de un visado al cruzar las fronteras exteriores (la llamada lista negativa, anexo I) y aquellos cuyos nacionales están exentos de esa obligación (la llamada lista positiva, en el anexo II).

El 7 de noviembre de 2012, la Comisión presentó una propuesta ([2]) al Parlamento Europeo y al Consejo con vistas a la modificación del Reglamento (CE) n° 539/2001. El principal objetivo de la propuesta era transferir 16 naciones de las islas del Caribe y del Pacífico de la lista negativa a la lista positiva del Reglamento 539/2001.

El Consejo sabe que, el 21 de octubre de 2013, la Comisión de Libertades Civiles, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior del Parlamento Europeo (LIBE) votó ([3]) a favor de añadir los 16 países inicialmente propuestos por la Comisión al Anexo II del Reglamento 539/2001, así como los Emiratos Árabes Unidos (EAU), Colombia y Perú, a reserva de la entrada en vigor de los acuerdos de exención de visado celebrados con dichos países.

La inclusión de los Emiratos Árabes Unidos, Colombia y Perú también fue examinada en los órganos preparatorios del Consejo y, recientemente, los dos colegisladores, el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo, acordaron, que deberían adoptar la propuesta de Reglamento rápidamente. A continuación, Colombia y Perú serán evaluados además por la Comisión antes de la posible apertura de las negociaciones sobre los citados acuerdos de exención de visado. Por lo tanto, no es posible citar a Su Señoría una fecha para la exención de visado para los nacionales de Colombia y Perú. El Consejo no está en condiciones de hacer observaciones sobre cualquier opinión expresada por el Gobierno de un Estado miembro.

([1]) DO L 81 del 21.3.2001, p. 1.
([2]) COM(2012) 650 final.
([3]) Véase la versión provisional del informe: PE504.389v02-00 — A7-9999/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000118/14
to the Council
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Latin America and visa policy (1)

In response to a parliamentary question put before the Spanish Congress on the visa policy concerning citizens of Latin American countries, the Spanish Government states that it simply applies Community regulations; specifically, it refers to Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 of 15 March 2001, and Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009.

The question referred to citizens of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Bolivia. In the response, it was stated that on 23 September 2013 the Spanish Government proposed to the Council of the European Union's Visa Working Party to waive the visa requirement for citizens of Peru and Columbia. This has already been approved in the European Parliament and Coreper.

When does the Council expect the visa waiver for citizens of Peru and Colombia to come into effect?

Does the Council not believe that it would be fairer and more reasonable to extend the visa waiver to all countries in Latin America?

Question for written answer E-000119/14
to the Council
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Latin America and visa policy (2)

In response to a parliamentary question put before the Spanish Congress on the visa policy concerning citizens of Latin American countries, the Spanish Government states that it simply applies Community regulations; specifically, it refers to Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 of 15 March 2001, and Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009.

The question referred to citizens of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Bolivia. It indicated that the Human Development Index (HDI) of these countries has improved significantly and that this value serves as a reference for European visa policy. The Spanish Government explicitly stated in its response that 'Visa policy regarding Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Bolivia is not closely related to the HDI, since this factor is not mentioned as such in Community law […] as a decisive factor when it comes to amending the list of third countries that are subject to visas and visa waivers'.

Does the Council believe that the Spanish government's interpretation is correct?

If so, did the Council plan to study the benefits of taking the HDI into account when establishing visa policy regarding third countries?

Does the Council have any predetermined stance on this issue?

Question for written answer E-000120/14
to the Council
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Latin America and visa policy (3)

In response to a parliamentary question put before the Spanish Congress on the visa policy concerning citizens of Latin American countries, the Spanish Government states that it simply applies Community regulations; specifically, it refers to Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 of 15 March 2001, and Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009.

The question referred to citizens of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Bolivia. In its response, the Spanish Government explicitly pointed out that 'the main factors that are used to evaluate whether it is appropriate to move a third country from one list to another [from a "negative" to a "positive" list] are the flow of illegal immigrants originating from its territory and the assumed participation of its citizens in acts that constitute a threat to the public order or the national security of Member States.'

Moreover, on 23 September 2013 the Spanish Government proposed to the Council of the European Union's Visa Working Party to waive the visa requirement for citizens of Peru and Columbia. This has already been approved in the European Parliament and Coreper.

In view of the response from the Spanish Government and its proposal of 23 September, it can be understood that the Spanish Government believes citizens of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Bolivia to pose a possible threat to the security of Member States.

Does the Council share the opinion that was implicitly expressed by the Spanish government?

Joint reply
(14 April 2014)

Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 ([1]) lists the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders (the so-called negative list, Annex I) and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (the so-called positive list, Annex II).

On 7 November 2012, the Commission tabled a proposal ([2]) to the European Parliament and to the Council with a view to amending Regulation (EC) No 539/2001. The main purpose of the proposal was to transfer 16 Caribbean and Pacific Island nations from the negative to the positive list of Regulation 539/2001.

The Council is aware that, on 21 October 2013, the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the EP (LIBE) voted ([3]) in favour of adding the 16 countries originally proposed by the Commission to Annex II to Regulation 539/2001, as well as the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Columbia and Peru, subject to the entry into force of visa waiver agreements to be concluded with those countries.

The inclusion of the UAE, Colombia and Peru has also been dealt with by the preparatory bodies of the Council and has recently been agreed on between the two co-legislators, the EP and the Council, which should adopt the draft Regulation very soon. Thereafter, Colombia and Peru will be further assessed by the Commission before the possible opening of negotiations on the abovementioned visa waiver agreements. It is therefore not possible to inform the Honourable Member of the date of any visa waiver for the nationals of Colombia and Peru. The Council is not in a position to comment on any opinion expressed by the government of an individual Member State.

([1]) OJ L 81, 21.3.2001, p. 1.
([2]) COM(2012) 650 final.
([3]) See provisional version of the report: PE504.389v02-00 — A7-9999/2013.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-000161/14
adresată Consiliului
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Președinția greacă — respectarea libertății de circulație a lucrătorilor români și bulgari

Conform Tratatului privind Uniunea Europeană (TUE) și Tratatului privind Funcționarea Uniunii Europene (TFUE), Uniunea oferă cetățenilor săi un spațiu de libertate, securitate și justiție, fără frontiere interne, în interiorul căruia este asigurată libera circulație a persoanelor. Uniunea combate excluziunea socială și discriminările și promovează justiția și protecția socială, egalitatea între femei și bărbați, solidaritatea între generații și protecția drepturilor copilului. De asemenea, libera circulație a lucrătorilor este garantată în cadrul Uniunii. Libera circulație implică eliminarea oricărei discriminări pe motiv de cetățenie între lucrătorii statelor membre în ceea ce privește încadrarea în muncă, remunerarea și condițiile de muncă.

Aș dori să întreb Președinția greacă a Consiliului care sunt măsurile concrete pe care le are în vedere pentru asigurarea liberei circulații a forței de muncă în cadrul UE și, în special, a eliminării oricărei discriminări pe motiv de cetățenie între lucrătorii statelor membre?

Răspuns
(14 aprilie 2014)

Libera circulație a lucrătorilor, astfel cum a fost consacrată în articolul 45 din TFUE, implică eliminarea oricărei discriminări pe motiv de cetățenie între lucrătorii statelor membre, în ceea ce privește încadrarea în muncă, remunerarea și celelalte condiții de muncă.

Parlamentul European și Consiliul au obținut recent un acord provizoriu privind propunerea Comisiei de directivă privind măsurile de facilitare a exercitării drepturilor conferite lucrătorilor în contextul liberei circulații a lucrătorilor ([1]). Proiectul de directivă este în proces de finalizare de către experții juriști-lingviști ai colegiuitorilor. Directiva urmează să fie adoptată până la sfârșitul lunii aprilie 2014.

Așa cum distinsa deputată este informată, Comisia, în calitatea sa de gardian al tratatelor, are responsabilitatea de a supraveghea aplicarea dreptului Uniunii de către statele membre. Prin urmare, nu este de competența Președinției Consiliului să garanteze libera circulație a lucrătorilor.

([1]) 9124/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000161/14
to the Council
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Greek Presidency — respecting the freedom of movement of Romanian and Bulgarian workers

Under the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Union offers its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, in which the free movement of persons is ensured. The Union combats social exclusion and discrimination and promotes social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child. The free movement of workers is also guaranteed within the Union. Freedom of movement entails the abolition of any discrimination based on nationality between workers of the Member States as regards employment, remuneration and other working conditions.

Can the Greek Presidency of the Council say what specific measures it is planning to take to guarantee freedom of movement for workers within the EU and, in particular, to abolish any discrimination based on nationality between workers from the various Member States?

Reply
(14 April 2014)

The freedom of movement of workers, as enshrined in Article 45 TFEU, entails the abolition of any discrimination based on nationality between workers of the Member States as regards employment, remuneration and other conditions of work and employment.

The European Parliament and the Council recently reached provisional agreement on the Commission's proposal for a directive on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers ([1]). The draft Directive is being finalised by the legal linguistic experts of the co-legislators. It is expected to be adopted by the end of April 2014.

As the Honourable Member is aware, the Commission, as a guardian of the Treaties, is responsible for overseeing Member States' application of Union law. Therefore, it is not for the Council's Presidency to guarantee the freedom of movement for workers.

([1]) 9124/13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000166/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Los técnicos de la Agencia Tributaria y el caso Cemex

A lo largo del pasado mes de noviembre se han producido una serie de destituciones de funcionarios de la unidad encargada de las inspecciones a grandes contribuyentes a raíz de un escándalo relacionado con una inspección fiscal realizada a la cementera Cemex.

La funcionaria encargada de dicha inspección fue destituida al rechazar el recurso que presentó la citada multinacional mexicana al expediente abierto por dicha inspección. Ante esta destitución, el superior directo de la inspectora y varios compañeros dimitieron en señal de solidaridad y denunciaron la intromisión de criterios ajenos a los técnicos en el interior de los órganos de la Agencia Tributaria. Asimismo, el 4 de diciembre dimitió el Director de Inspección Financiera y Tributaria por el mismo tema, lo que ha generado un verdadero escándalo en la institución. En un momento en el que la exigencia para mantener un bajo déficit público está provocando numerosos recortes de servicios públicos básicos, no se está actuando con la misma diligencia por el lado de los ingresos del Estado. Según el Sindicato de Técnicos del Ministerio de Hacienda (Gestha), se calcula que en las grandes empresas se produce más del 70 % del fraude, y la evasión fiscal en España se produce en los grandes patrimonios, incluidas las grandes empresas.

Ante estos datos, las medidas en materia fiscal tomadas por el Gobierno no están tratando de garantizar que estos contribuyentes cumplan la legislación tributaria. A la luz de estas dimisiones y las denuncias de injerencia política en el funcionamiento de dicha Agencia, el Gobierno podría estar incurriendo en un delito, pero, cuando menos, no está tratando de incrementar los ingresos públicos tan necesarios para mantener un nivel controlado de déficit público.

¿Conoce la Comisión los citados escándalos en la Agencia Tributaria de España?

¿Considera que el Gobierno está actuando de manera adecuada para controlar el déficit público cuando no se está permitiendo un funcionamiento técnico adecuado de la Agencia Tributaria?

¿Considera necesario el incremento de ingresos a través de la mejora en el control de las grandes empresas y fortunas?

¿Piensa incluir en las próximas recomendaciones para España que se impulse una Agencia Tributaria independiente que luche de una manera efectiva contra el fraude y la evasión fiscal e incremente la recaudación entre las grandes empresas y fortunas del país?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de marzo de 2014)

La recaudación de impuestos es competencia de las autoridades nacionales. Por lo tanto, la Comisión no puede hacer declaraciones sobre la manera en que los Estados miembros organizan sus controles ni sobre la estructura interna de las autoridades tributarias.

La Comisión considera que una recaudación fiscal eficaz es importante para una buena gestión de la hacienda pública y la equidad. Los considerandos de las recomendaciones de 2013 a España ([1]) en el marco del Semestre Europeo ya recordaron que «l eficiencia del sistema tributario puede mejorarse, además, aumentando la proporción de impuestos indirectos más favorables al crecimiento y luchando contra el fraude y la evasión fiscal, en línea con los esfuerzos de consolidación fiscal». La Comisión publicará las recomendaciones de 2014 en el verano de este año.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2010656%202013%20REV%201&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F13%2Fst10%2Fst10656-re01.en13.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000166/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Specialists at the Spanish Tax Agency and the Cemex case

In November last year, a number of civil servants left their posts at the body in charge of inspecting high taxpayers, following the scandal surrounding a tax inspection carried out at the cement producer Cemex.

The official responsible for this inspection was dismissed after she rejected the Mexican multinational's appeal against the case opened in respect of its inspection. The inspector's immediate superior and a number of other colleagues resigned in protest against her dismissal, condemning the application of criteria other than those used by specialists at the Tax Agency. On 4 December, the Director of Financial and Tax Inspection also resigned on the same grounds, which has caused a real scandal within the institution. At a time when basic public services are having to be cut to maintain low public debt, the same diligence is not being applied to collecting state revenue. The Spanish Union of Specialists of the Ministry of Finance (GESTHA) has calculated that over 70% of fraud occurs within the largest companies, and that tax evasion is prevalent among the wealthiest in Spanish society, including big businesses.

Against this backdrop, the fiscal measures adopted by the Government make no attempt to ensure that these taxpayers comply with fiscal legislation. In the light of these resignations and the reports of political meddling in the Agency's operations, the government could well be breaking the law, and at the very least is not making any effort to increase the public revenue needed to keep the level of public debt under control.

Is the Commission aware of these scandals at the Spanish Tax Agency?

Does the Commission believe that the Spanish Government, in not allowing the Tax Agency to conduct its specialist operations in the correct manner, is acting appropriately to keep the public deficit under control?

Does the Commission believe it necessary to increase revenue by improving inspections of large companies and wealthy individuals?

In its next set of recommendations to Spain, does the Commission intend to encourage that country to operate an independent Tax Agency that can combat fraud and tax evasion effectively and improve tax collection from large companies and wealthy individuals?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(10 March 2014)

Collection of taxes is a competence of national authorities. The Commission is therefore not in a position to comment on how Member States organise their controls nor on the internal structure of tax authorities.

The Commission considers that efficient tax collection is important to sound public finance management and to fairness. The recitals to the 2013 recommendations to Spain ([1]) in the context of the EU semester already recalled that 'The efficiency of the tax system can be improved further by increasing the share of more growth-friendly indirect taxes and by tackling tax fraud and evasion, in line with the fiscal consolidation efforts'. The Commission will issue the 2014 recommendations in the summer 2014.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2010656%202013%20REV%201&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F13%2Fst10%2Fst10656-re01.en13.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000189/14
à la Commission
Astrid Lulling (PPE)
(9 janvier 2014)

Objet: Diminution de 10 % du pouvoir d'achat du personnel des institutions européennes affecté à Luxembourg

D'après les calculs d'Eurostat, une disparité du pouvoir d'achat est constatée pour le personnel des différentes institutions européennes selon leur lieu d'affectation. Celle-ci a atteint 10 % en 2013 pour le personnel affecté à Luxembourg.

Malgré le fait que le statut de la fonction publique européenne a instauré des «coefficients correcteurs» qui sont encore appliqués pour le personnel employé en dehors de Bruxelles, ce coefficient correcteur n'est plus appliqué au personnel employé à Luxembourg.

Quelles sont les raisons pour lesquelles la Commission refuse d'appliquer au Luxembourg le «coefficient correcteur»? La Commission est-elle prête à revoir sa position qui est contraire au principe d'égalité de traitement du personnel, quel que soit son lieu d'affectation?

Dans cet ordre d'idées, la Commission est-elle consciente du fait que, depuis la crise de 2008, la valeur du point indiciaire pour le calcul des traitements dans la fonction publique luxembourgeoise a été augmentée de 17 % alors que les traitements des salariés des institutions européennes sont gelés depuis 2010 jusqu'en 2015?

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(2 juillet 2014)

La Commission attire l'attention de l'Honorable Parlementaire sur le fait qu'en octobre 2013, le Parlement européen et le Conseil ont décidé de modifier le statut à partir du 1/1/2014, ce qui inclut une nouvelle méthode concernant l'actualisation annuelle des rémunérations et pensions du personnel de l'UE ainsi que les coefficients correcteurs dont sont affectées ces rémunérations et pensions. La situation au Luxembourg est prise en considération au moyen du nouvel indice commun, qui reflète l'évolution du coût de la vie au Luxembourg et en Belgique.

En outre, les colégislateurs ont également maintenu le principe d'une pondération unique, vieux de 40 ans, pour Bruxelles et Luxembourg. L'article 64 du statut modifié stipule que «aucun coefficient correcteur n'est appliqué en Belgique et au Luxembourg, étant donné le rôle spécial de référence joué par ces lieux d'affectation en tant que sièges principaux et d'origine de la plupart des institutions». La Commission continue à se conformer à son obligation d'examiner périodiquement les règles en vigueur, afin de faire en sorte qu'elles atteignent toujours l'objectif en vue duquel elles ont été adoptées.

Enfin, la Commission est bien consciente de la perte de 11,7 % du pouvoir d'achat depuis 2010 pour l'ensemble du personnel de l'Union, notamment le personnel du Luxembourg. À la suite d'un arrêt récemment rendu par la Cour de justice, la Commission a fait une proposition concernant les adaptations annuelles 2011 et 2012 des rémunérations, qui entraînerait de légères hausses de salaire, si elle est adoptée par le Parlement et le Conseil.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000189/14
to the Commission
Astrid Lulling (PPE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Ten per cent fall in purchasing power for staff of EU institutions based in Luxembourg

According to calculations carried out by Eurostat, a purchasing power disparity has arisen among the staff of the EU institutions depending on their place of work. This disparity was 10% in 2013 for staff employed in Luxembourg.

Although the EU Staff Regulations established salary weightings for staff employed outside Brussels, the weighting for Luxembourg is no longer applied.

Why is the Commission refusing to apply the salary weighting for Luxembourg? Is the Commission prepared to review its position, which goes against the principle of the equal treatment of staff, regardless of their place of employment?

Against this background, is the Commission aware of the fact that, since the crisis of 2008, the value of the index used to calculate salaries in the Luxembourg civil service has risen by 17%, while salaries in the EU institutions have been frozen from 2010 until 2015?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2014)

The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the fact that in October 2013, the European Parliament and Council agreed to amend the Staff Regulations from 1.1.2014, which include a new method for the annual update of salaries and pensions of the EU staff and the correction coefficients applied thereto. The situation in Luxembourg is taken into account through the new Joint Index, which reflects changes in the cost of living in Luxembourg and in Belgium.

Furthermore, the co-legislators also maintained the 40-year old principle of single weighting for Brussels and Luxembourg. Article 64 of the amended Staff Regulations stipulates that 'No correction coefficient shall be applicable in Belgium and Luxembourg, having regard to the special referential of those places of employment as principal and original seats of most of the European institutions'. The Commission continues to comply with its obligation to keep the current rules under review, in order to ensure that they still meet the purpose for which they were adopted.

Finally, the Commission is well aware of the 11.7% loss in purchasing power since 2010 for all EU staff, including staff in Luxembourg. Following a recent court ruling, the Commission has made a proposal regarding the annual adjustments of remuneration for 2011 and 2012, which would, if adopted by Parliament and Council, lead to small salary increases.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-000200/14
Radě
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(10. ledna 2014)

Předmět: Jednotná pravidla prodeje léku pseudoefedrin

Pseudoefedrin je lék patřící do skupiny dekongescencia, užívaný na tlumení překrvení nosní sliznice způsobené alergiemi či rýmou. Jedná se ale také o lék ve velké míře zneužívaný pro výrobu drogy pervitin, a proto v mnoha státech EU patří do skupiny léků vydávaných na předpis či „volně prodejných s omezením". Například v České republice je nutné ověření totožnosti nakupujícího a registrace transakce u Státního ústavu pro kontrolu léčiv. Přísná pravidla pro výdej tohoto snadno zneužitelného léku nejsou však ve všech státech EU jednotná a hrozí tudíž, že drogoví dealeři nakoupí snadno drogu v jednom státě a poté ji nezákonně zpracují v amatérských varnách na drogu, kterou distribuují v okolních státech. V této souvislosti je často uváděn příklad Polska, kde je pseudoefedrin snadno dostupný, a České republiky, kde je pervitin jedním z nejrozšířenějších narkotik a odkud je pašován dále do západních zemí EU.

Diskutovala Rada s ohledem na společenskou závažnost drogové problematiky potřebu učinit v blízké budoucnosti kroky, které zpřísní stávající podmínky prodeje pseudoefedrinu v zemích EU, kde jeho dostupnost není nijak regulována?

Odpověď
(13. května 2014)

Harmonizovaná opatření pro kontrolu a sledování některých látek – včetně pseudoefedrinu – často používaných při nedovolené výrobě omamných nebo psychotropních látek v rámci Unie, jejichž cílem je zabránit zneužití takových látek, jsou upravena nařízením Evropského parlamentu a Rady (ES) č. 273/2004 o prekursorech drog ([1]).

Pseudoefedrin je v příloze I daného nařízení zařazen do kategorie 1 uvedených látek, a může být tudíž uváděn na trh pouze za podmínek stanovených v článku 3, zejména pak jmenuje-li hospodářský subjekt osobu odpovědnou za obchod s uvedenými látkami a obdrží-li povolení od příslušných orgánů.

Nařízení (ES) č. 273/2004 o prekursorech drog se nevztahuje na léčivé přípravky. Podmínky a omezení, za kterých by léčivý přípravek měl být dostupný pacientům, stanoví příslušné členské státy, s jedinou výjimkou léčivých přípravků registrovaných Evropskou komisí centralizovaným postupem. Rada nediskutovala o učinění kroků, které by tato pravidla změnily.

([1]) Nařízení (ES) č. 273/2004, Úř. věst. L 47, 18.2.2004, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000200/14
to the Council
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Uniform rules for sale of pseudoephedrine

Pseudoephedrine is a decongestant drug used to control nasal congestion caused by allergies or colds. However, it is also significantly misused to produce methamphetamine, which is why it is available only as a prescription or limited over-the-counter drug in many EU Member States. For instance, in the Czech Republic it is compulsory to verify the identity of the purchaser and to register the transaction with the State Institute for Drug Control. However, not all EU Member States have put in place strict and uniform rules on the dispensation of this easily abused drug. Drug dealers, therefore, have little difficulty in travelling to one country and buying up large amounts of the drug, which they then process in amateur drug labs for distribution in neighbouring countries. Countries that are often mentioned in this context are Poland, where pseudoephedrine is easily available, and the Czech Republic, where methamphetamine is one of the most widely used drugs and which serves as a launch pad for smuggling to western EU Member States.

Given the impact that this drug has on society, has the Council discussed taking steps in the near future to tighten up the rules on the sale of pseudoephedrine in those EU Member States where the drug's availability is completely unregulated?

Reply
(13 May 2014)

Harmonised measures for the intra-Union control and monitoring of certain substances — including pseudoephedrine — frequently used for the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances, aimed at preventing the diversion of such substances are regulated by Regulation (EC) No 273/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on drug precursors ([1]).

Pseudoephedrine, being listed in Annex I of that regulation as a 'Category I scheduled substance', can only be placed on the market under the conditions laid down in Article 3, notably if the operator appoints an officer responsible for the trade in these substances and obtains a licence issued by the competent authorities.

Regulation (EC) No 273/2004 on drug precursors does not cover medicinal products. The conditions and restrictions under which a medicinal product should be made available to patients are laid down by the respective member states, with the only exception of medicinal products authorised by the European Commission in the centralized procedure. The Council has not discussed taking steps to amend these rules.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 273/2004, OJ L 47, 18.2.2004, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000248/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ελλάδα

Αυτή την περίοδο εκκρεμεί υπόθεση κατά πρώην Υπουργού Άμυνας της Ελλάδας και των συνεργατών του, οι οποίοι εικάζεται ότι έλαβαν μεγάλα ποσά δωροδοκίας από γερμανικές εταιρείες. Κατά την τελευταία εικοσαετία οικοδομήθηκε ένα ολόκληρο σύστημα με σκοπό την οργάνωση παραγγελιών του ελληνικού Υπουργείου Άμυνας από γερμανικές εταιρείες πώλησης στρατιωτικού εξοπλισμού. Σε πολλές περιπτώσεις ο εξοπλισμός που αγοράστηκε ήταν ουσιαστικά άχρηστος για τον ελληνικό στρατό. Δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ δαπανήθηκαν με μοναδικό σκοπό να γίνουν πλουσιότερες ορισμένες γερμανικές εταιρείες.

1. Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή ότι γερμανικές εταιρείες αποκόμισαν σημαντικά κέρδη εις βάρος του ελληνικού κράτους; Σκοπεύει να διερευνήσει περαιτέρω την υπόθεση;

2. Δεδομένου ότι η παθητική δωροδοκία κυβερνητικών στελεχών θεωρείται παράνομη σε πολλές ευρωπαϊκές χώρες, είναι επίσης παράνομη η ενεργητική δωροδοκία;

3. Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να διεξαγάγει ενδελεχή έρευνα σχετικά με τις γερμανικές εταιρείες οι οποίες δωροδόκησαν Έλληνες αξιωματούχους για να επιτύχουν επιχειρησιακές συμβάσεις;

4. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι οι Έλληνες στιγματίστηκαν ως «πρωταθλητές της διαφθοράς» στην Ευρώπη, σε ποιες ενέργειες σκοπεύει να προβεί η Επιτροπή;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Απριλίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί με προσοχή την εφαρμογή των πολιτικών κατά της διαφθοράς σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη, περιλαμβανομένων της Ελλάδας και της Γερμανίας, μέσω του μηχανισμού υποβολής εκθέσεων της ΕΕ για την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς («έκθεση για την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς στην ΕΕ»). Η πρώτη έκθεση δημοσιεύτηκε στις 3 Φεβρουαρίου 2014 ([1]). Στην έκθεση αυτή καλύπτονται η παθητική και η ενεργητική δωροδοκία, καθώς και ευρύ φάσμα άλλων σχετικών με τη διαφθορά πρακτικών. Η έκθεση επικεντρώνεται σε βασικά θέματα σε κάθε κράτος μέλος. Για πολλά κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Γερμανίας, στην έκθεση αξιολογείται η αποτελεσματικότητα των πολιτικών που στοχεύουν τη διαφθορά δημοσίων υπαλλήλων από ιδιώτες, καθώς και τη δωροδοκία από το εξωτερικό, και έγιναν ειδικές ανά χώρα συστάσεις ώστε να ενισχυθούν περαιτέρω οι προσπάθειες στον εν λόγω τομέα.

Σύμφωνα με το δίκαιο της ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει αρμοδιότητα να παρεμβαίνει σε μεμονωμένες περιπτώσεις. Τα κράτη μέλη είναι αρμόδια για την τήρηση της έννομης τάξης σε εθνικό επίπεδο. Η έκθεση είναι ένα εργαλείο για την ευαισθητοποίηση του κοινού ως προς τη φύση και τη σοβαρότητα των προβλημάτων που σχετίζονται με τη διαφθορά στην ΕΕ και καλεί για την ανάληψη πιο αποφασιστικής δράσης στον τομέα αυτό. Η Επιτροπή θα καταρτίσει ένα πρόγραμμα ανταλλαγής εμπειριών, ώστε να δοθεί συνέχεια στις συστάσεις της έκθεσης. Η επόμενη έκθεση θα εκδοθεί σε δύο έτη.

Στο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής έχουν εισαχθεί μέτρα για την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς στην Ελλάδα. Εκτός από την αναδιοργάνωση της φορολογικής διοίκησης, σκοπός της οποίας είναι η βελτίωση της είσπραξης των φόρων και η εκ παραλλήλου καταπολέμηση της απάτης και της διαφθοράς, θεσπίστηκε εθνική στρατηγική καταπολέμησης της διαφθοράς και, τον Μάιο του 2013, διορίστηκε εθνικός συντονιστής για την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς. Αναμένεται δε να σταλεί σύντομα στη Βουλή σχέδιο νόμου. Παρασχέθηκε σημαντική τεχνική βοήθεια που προορίζεται να στηρίξει τις ελληνικές αρχές στην εκτέλεση αυτού του έργου.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-corruption-report/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000248/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Greece

A case is currently ongoing against a former Greek defence minister and his associates who allegedly received large bribes from German companies. An entire system was built up over the last two decades for the purpose of organising Greek defence ministry orders from German companies selling military equipment. In many cases, the equipment purchased was of practically no use to the Greek army. Billions of euros were spent for the sole purpose of making some German companies richer.

1. Does the Commission know that German companies made substantial profits at the expense of the Greek state? Does it intend to investigate the situation further?

2. Given that the receipt of bribes by government officials is regarded as illegal in many European countries, is it also illegal to offer bribes?

3. Does the Commission intend to launch an all-out investigation into the German companies who paid bribes to Greek officials in order to win business contracts?

4. Bearing in mind that Greeks have been stigmatised as the 'champions of corruption' in Europe, what action does the Commission intend to take?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

The Commission closely follows the implementation of anti-corruption policies in all Member States, including Greece and Germany, via the EU anti-corruption reporting mechanism ('EU Anti-Corruption Report'). The first report was published on 3 February 2014 ([1]). Passive and active bribery were covered by this report, with a wide range of other corrupt practices. The report focused on key issues in each Member State. For several Member States, including Germany, the report assessed the effectiveness of policies targeting private-to-public corruption and foreign bribery and country-specific suggestions were made to further improve efforts in this area.

Under EC law, the Commission has no competence to intervene in individual cases. The Member States are responsible for the maintenance of law and order at national level. The report is a tool to raise awareness of the nature and seriousness of corruption-related problems in the EU and to call for more determined action in this area. The Commission will set up an experience sharing programme, to follow-up on the suggestions of the report. The next Report will be adopted in two years.

Measures to fight corruption in Greece are introduced in the context of the Economic Adjustment Programme. In addition to the overhaul of the revenue administration, which aims to improve tax collection while combatting fraud and corruption, a national anti-corruption strategy has been adopted and a national coordinator for the fight against corruption was appointed in May 2013. A draft law is expected to be sent to Parliament soon. Substantial technical assistance has been deployed to support the Greek authorities in these tasks.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-corruption-report/

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-000253/14
komissiolle
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(13. tammikuuta 2014)

Aihe: VP/HR – EU:n tuki Syyrian demokratian puolesta toimiville ryhmille

Komission varapuheenjohtaja / ulkoasioiden ja turvallisuuspolitiikan korkea edustaja on toistuvasti korostanut, että Syyriaan tarvitaan rauhanomainen poliittinen ratkaisu (esimerkiksi Euroopan parlamentissa 11.9.2013). Koska kansainvälinen yhteisö ei tähän mennessä ole kyennyt lähentämään konfliktin osapuolia, epädemokraattiset toimijat (myös Al-Qaedaan yhteyksissä olevat ryhmät) ovat lisänneet vaikutusvaltaansa Syyriassa, ja nuorison sekä kansalaisyhteiskunnan aktivistien aloittaman demokraattisen kansannousun tavoitteet ovat muuttuneet. Monet kyseisistä aktivisteista olivat ensimmäisiä, jotka Assadin hallinto karkotti Syyriasta, ja he asuvat nyt EU:n alueella poliittisina pakolaisina.

Yksi merkittävimmistä demokratiaa kannattavista ryhmistä on Syyrian demokraattinen foorumi. Sen johdossa on lähinnä Syyrian kansannousun alkuvaiheessa voimansa yhdistäneitä nuoria aktivisteja, joilla oli keskeinen rooli mielenosoitusten ja marssien järjestämisessä sekä ihmisoikeusrikkomusten kirjaamisessa. Nämä Syyriasta pakenemaan joutuneet kansalaisyhteiskunnan aktivistit ovat erittäin huolissaan konfliktin jälkeisen Syyrian luonteesta ja siitä, miten esimerkiksi valtion rakenteiden suunnittelu ja perustuslain laadinta etenevät, jos todennäköisesti vallassa olevat ryhmittymät ovat täysin epädemokraattisia. Siksi on oleellista, että EU tukee niitä ”helposti tavoitettavia” demokratiaa kannattavia ryhmiä EU:n sisällä, jotka haluavat konfliktin jälkeen kotimaahansa palattuaan vaikuttaa demokraattisen ja perustuslaillisen Syyrian syntymiseen.

1. Onko varapuheenjohtajan / korkean edustajan strategiana tukea Syyrian demokratiaa kannattavia pakolaisryhmiä EU:n alueella, jotta Syyrian mahdollinen poliittinen siirtymä kävisi helpommaksi?

2. Onko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja kuullut EU:n alueella toimivia demokratiaa kannattavia syyrialaisryhmiä, kartoittanut niiden tilannetta ja vaihtanut kokemuksia niiden kanssa EU:n päätöksentekoon tarvittavien tietojen kartuttamiseksi? Mitä tuloksia näistä mahdollisista kuulemisista ja kartoittamisista on ollut? Onko EU pyrkinyt saattamaan näitä toimijoita yhteen?

3. Onko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja antanut taloudellisia sitoumuksia näillä ryhmille? Onko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja harkinnut koulutuksen tarjoamista EU:n sisällä toimiville demokratiaa kannattaville syyrialaisryhmille?

4. Onko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja kartoittanut demokratiaa kannattavien liikkeiden toimintaa Syyriassa (esimerkiksi Geneven prosessiin vaikuttamiseksi)? Onko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja kuullut EU:n alueella olevia syyrialaisia toimijoita, jotta se tavoittaisi paremmin mahdollisia toimijoita Syyrian ja sen naapurivaltioiden alueella? Onko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja pyrkinyt yhteyden luomiseen Syyriassa ja sen ulkopuolella olevien demokratiaa kannattavien liikkeiden välillä erimielisyyksien ratkaisemiseksi?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(9. huhtikuuta 2014)

EU tukee konfliktista kärsimään joutuneita syyrialaisia valmistaakseen näitä toimimaan aktiivisesti Syyrian tulevalla siirtymäkaudella. Erityinen painopiste on naisissa. EU:n toimiin sisältyy koulutusohjelmia syyrialaisia – myös maahanmuuttajayhteisöissä asuvia – varten monilla politiikan, kansalaisyhteiskunnan ja talouden aloilla. Korkea edustaja, komissio ja EU:n jäsenvaltiot toteuttavat yhteistyössä ehdotuspyyntöön perustuvia hankkeita, joilla kehitetään valmiuksia erityisesti siirtymäaikaa varten, kun taistelut ovat päättyneet. Turvallisuussyistä ja tuensaajien turvallisuuden varmistamiseksi EU:n Syyriaan liittyvät, demokratiaa ja ihmisoikeuksia koskevaan eurooppalaiseen rahoitusvälineeseen kuuluvat hankkeet ovat luottamuksellisia. Hankkeet liittyvät tiedotusvälineiden vapauteen, median normeihin, toimittajille suunnattavaan tukeen sekä ihmisoikeusloukkauksien dokumentointiin ja niistä raportointiin.

Korkea edustaja on ollut yhteydessä eri ryhmien, myös maahanmuuttajayhteisöjen, kanssa. Mukana on ollut useita Syyrian oppositioliittouman (SOC) aktivisteja, jotka kuuluvat maahanmuuttajayhteisöihin. Kuulemiset ovat olleet hyödyllisiä. Niissä on yhdessä arvioitu tärkeitä siirtymään liittyviä muuttujia perustuslakikysymyksistä ja siirtymäkauden oikeusjärjestelyistä vaalilain uudistamiseen. EU on johdonmukaisesti ajanut ulkomailla ja Syyriassa toimivien oppositioryhmien yhteyksien parantamista esimerkiksi Geneve II -neuvottelujen yhteydessä.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000253/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(13 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — EU support for the Syrian pro-democracy diaspora

The Vice-President/High Representative has constantly stressed the need for a peaceful political solution to the Syrian crisis (e.g. at the European Parliament on 11 September 2013). The inability of the international community to bring the relevant parties together in the years since the conflict began has increased the influence of non-democratic actors in Syria (including Al-Qaeda-related groups), and has also altered the goals of the democratic uprising started by youth and civil society activists. Many of these activists were among the first to be expelled from Syria by the Assad regime and are now residing as political refugees in the EU.

One of the most prominent pro-democracy groups is the Syrian Democratic Forum, which is driven mostly by young activists who joined forces during the early stages of the Syrian uprising and played an essential role in organising protests, sit-ins and marches and documenting human rights violations. These Syrian civil society activists, who have had to flee the country, are very concerned about what post-conflict Syria will look like and the way in which state-building and constitution-drafting, among other things, will proceed if the parties likely to be in power are inherently undemocratic. It is therefore essential that the EU support 'easily accessible' pro-democracy groups operating from within the EU that wish to contribute to a democratic and constitutional post-conflict Syria upon their return to the country.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative have a strategy to support the Syrian pro-democracy diaspora in the EU in order to facilitate a possible political transition within Syria?

2. Has the VP/HR engaged in consultations, mapping and exchanges of experiences with pro-democracy movements operating from within the EU in order to inform EU policy-making, and if so, what are the results of such consultations and mapping? Has the EU attempted to bring these actors together?

3. Has the VP/HR made any financial commitments to groups of this kind? Has the VP/HR considered providing training for Syrian pro-democracy movements operating from within the EU?

4. Has the VP/HR mapped pro-democracy movements within Syria (e.g. for the purpose of contributing to the Geneva process)? Has the EU consulted Syrian actors in the EU in order to better reach out to potential players in Syria and neighbouring countries? Has the VP/HR attempted to establish a link between pro-democracy movements inside and outside Syria in order to bridge differences?

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

The EU is supporting Syrians affected by the conflict to prepare them to play an active role in the future transition in Syria, with a particular focus on women. This includes training programmes for Syrians, including those in the diaspora, in various areas of politics, civil society and economy. The HR/VP, the Commission and the EU member states are cooperating on projects under 'the call for proposals' for capacity-building activities that focus specifically on the transition period once fighting has stopped. For security reasons and out of concern for the safety of beneficiaries, four Syria-related projects under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), are kept confidential. The projects are related to the freedom of the media, media standards, support to journalists, documentation of and reporting on human rights abuses.

The HR/VP has been in touch with different groups, also in the diaspora. Among them are various activists from the Syrian Opposition Coalition (SOC) who originate from diaspora communities. The consultations were helpful in jointly assessing important transition parameters ranging from constitutional issues, transitional justice to electoral law reform. The EU has consistently advocated for better links between external and internal opposition groups, also in the context of the Geneva II talks.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000272/14
al Consejo (Presidente del Consejo Europeo)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: PCE/PEC — Declaraciones de Herman Van Rompuy ante la muerte de Ariel Sharon

El pasado 11 de enero, el Presidente del Consejo Europeo, Herman Van Rompuy, publicó un comunicado ante la muerte del antiguo Primer Ministro israelí Ariel Sharon. Dicho comunicado no contenía condena alguna a las masacres de Sabra y Chatila ni a las continuas ofensivas que el mismo realizó sobre la población palestina durante su vida, tanto en su carrera militar como en la política.

En 1982, durante la guerra del Líbano, se perpetró la masacre de Sabra y Chatila, que ha sido calificada como genocidio por las Naciones Unidas en su Resolución 37/123. Según una comisión de investigación del propio Estado israelí, las Fuerzas de Defensa de Israel fueron indirectamente responsables de dicho genocidio al no haber evitado las matanzas. Ariel Sharon, Ministro de Defensa de Israel durante el citado conflicto era el máximo responsable de las fuerzas israelíes y, por tanto, colaborador necesario en la masacre de Sabra y Chatila.

Según testimonios documentados, el propio Sharon incitó a las milicias falangistas a perpetrar el genocidio. Durante casi 48 horas, esta milicia, asesinó, torturó y violó. El ejército israelí permitió y colaboró, llegando a iluminar los campamentos durante la noche para facilitar que las milicias falangistas masacraran a las 2 500 víctimas registradas hasta el momento. Lamentar la muerte de Ariel Sharon supone emplear a las instituciones europeas para enaltecer su figura, lo cual podría ser considerado como «apología pública» o «trivialización flagrante», según lo estipulado en la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI.

¿Considera el Presidente del Consejo Europeo que tal declaración podría poner en entredicho el compromiso internacional de la UE con los derechos humanos? ¿Se retracta el Presidente del Consejo Europeo de su declaración ante la muerte de Ariel Sharon?

¿Considera que dicha declaración podría suponer un acto de enaltecimiento del reconocido genocidio de Sabra y Chatila según lo dispuesto en la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI?

Ante la muerte de Ariel Sharon, ¿dirige alguna palabra a los familiares de las víctimas palestinas del genocidio de Sabra y Chatila, ocurrido bajo sus órdenes, que han visto cómo los verdugos siguen impunes?

Respuesta
(22 de abril de 2014)

En su declaración sobre el fallecimiento de Ariel Sharon, el Presidente Van Rompuy se refirió al cometido de este como Primer Ministro de Israel, un país con el que la Unión Europea y sus Estados miembros están estrechamente vinculados.

También hay que subrayar que el Presidente Van Rompuy recuerda de forma permanente la importancia de los derechos humanos en todas sus reuniones y mensajes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000272/14
to the Council (President of the European Council)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(14 January 2014)

Subject: PCE/PEC — Statement by Herman Van Rompuy on the death of Ariel Sharon

On 11 January 2014, the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, published a press release on the death of the former Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon. This statement did not contain any condemnation whatsoever with regard to the Sabra and Shatila massacre or the continuous offensives that he carried out on the Palestinian people over the course of his life, during both his military and political career.

The Sabra and Shatila massacre was perpetrated in 1982, during the Lebanese Civil War, and was described as an act of genocide by the United Nations in Resolution No 37/123. A committee of enquiry set up by the Israeli Government itself found that the Israel Defence Forces were indirectly responsible for this genocide as they did not prevent the slaughter. Ariel Sharon, who was Israel's Minister of Defence at the time of this conflict, held ultimate responsibility for the Israeli forces and, therefore, was necessarily a collaborator in the Sabra and Shatila massacre.

According to documented evidence, Sharon himself incited the Phalangist militias to perpetrate the genocide; for almost 48 hours, these militias murdered, tortured and raped their victims. The Israeli army allowed and colluded in this, by illuminating the night sky over the camps and thus helping the Phalangist militias to massacre the 2500 victims who are hitherto known to have died. To mourn the death of Ariel Sharon would be tantamount to using the European institutions to exalt him, which could be considered as 'publicly condoning' or 'grossly trivialising' the genocide, under the wording of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA.

Does the President of the European Council consider that such a statement could call into question the EU's international commitment to human rights? Does the President of the European Council intend to withdraw his statement on the death of Ariel Sharon?

Is the President of the European Council of the opinion that this statement could imply an act of exalting the acknowledged Sabra and Shatila genocide under the provisions of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA?

On the death of Ariel Sharon, does the President of the European Council have any comment for the relatives of the Palestinian victims of the Sabra and Shatila genocide, which occurred under Sharon's orders, as they have seen that the executioners continue to go unpunished?

Reply
(22 April 2014)

In his statement on the passing away of Ariel Sharon, President Van Rompuy referred to Ariel Sharon's role as former Prime Minister of Israel, a country with which the European Union and its Member States are closely linked.

It is also emphasised that President Van Rompuy consistently upholds the importance of human rights in his meetings and messages.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000274/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(14 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Repregunta sobre obligaciones de servicio financiero

Acabo de recibir una respuesta de esa Comisión Europea a mi pregunta sobre la posible introducción de algunas obligaciones mínimas a determinadas entidades financieras para facilitar la concesión de créditos a pequeñas y medianas empresas. Se me señala que en el denominado Memorándum de entendimiento del sector financiero no se prevé ninguna obligación de servicio. De ahí que vuelva a preguntar el parecer de esa Comisión ante esta situación.

A mi juicio, el Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea y los Estatutos del Banco Central Europeo otorgan suficientes facultades para modular las condiciones de las subastas que realiza o los depósitos que ofrece.

No obstante, también considero que la Comisión podría promover una regulación con el fin de precisar algunas obligaciones de financiación de las entidades de crédito. He leído el nuevo Programa COSME para la Competitividad de las Empresas y para las Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas que acaba de presentar esa Comisión. Sin embargo, podrían arbitrarse otras líneas de actuación. Si las entidades financieras han conseguido una ingente cantidad de fondos públicos porque se invocó hasta el hartazgo su trascendencia y el símil del sistema circulatorio, esas ayudas deberían compaginarse con el establecimiento de algunas obligaciones. Otras muchas empresas privadas prestan «servicios económicos de interés general» y han de satisfacer «obligaciones de servicio». Resulta ocioso que recuerde a esa Comisión las obligaciones que el Derecho de la Unión Europea impone, por ejemplo, a las empresas de telecomunicaciones o a las suministradoras de energía.

En vista de lo expuesto:

¿Ha considerado la Comisión la posibilidad de establecer unas obligaciones mínimas de servicio para, por ejemplo, obligar a aquellas entidades que superaran un porcentaje de beneficios anuales a reservar una cantidad para créditos a pequeñas y medianas empresas o para fines sociales? ¿O a situar un pequeño establecimiento financiero en los núcleos de población que han quedado sin oficinas, como ha ocurrido debido a la drástica reestructuración de las cajas de ahorro españolas? ¿O a facilitar créditos en determinadas condiciones a las pequeñas empresas locales? Por último, en los casos en los que la falta de liquidez de una pequeña empresa se deba a las cuantiosas deudas generadas por la morosidad de las administraciones, ¿no sería otra opción promover la novación de esos créditos?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de abril de 2014)

Corresponde a cada banco decidir cómo enfocar sus políticas de préstamo. A través de programas como el COSME, la Comisión Europea incentiva a los bancos para que concedan préstamos a las PYME. Este programa puede proporcionar, previa solicitud, cobertura de riesgo parcial, mediante garantías e inversiones en capital, a los intermediarios financieros (es decir, a los bancos, fondos de inversión, etc.) para que mejoren su oferta para las PYME.

Además, el Instrumento de Riesgos Compartidos ha ofrecido hasta el momento más de 1 200 millones de euros en garantías y contragarantías a 23 bancos y sociedades de garantía, que podrán así financiar a unas 3 000 PYME y pequeñas empresas de capitalización media, todas ellas de carácter innovador, a través de préstamos, arrendamientos financieros y garantías de préstamo.

El programa Horizonte 2020 hace un uso mayor de estos instrumentos financieros para atraer aun más inversiones, tanto públicas como privadas, en I+D+i. Este programa ayudará a los inversores, incluidos los inversores informales y los de capital de riesgo, a invertir en capital de empresas innovadoras (principalmente PYME) en sus fases de desarrollo inicial. Asimismo, dispondrá de un sistema de coinversión con fondos y oficinas de transferencia de tecnología. De un presupuesto de 2 840 millones de euros, se prevé que al menos un tercio lo reciban PYME y pequeñas empresas de capitalización media.

El nuevo Reglamento sobre requisitos de capital, en vigor desde enero de 2014, mejora las condiciones relativas a los requisitos de capital en lo referente a créditos para las PYME. La Directiva 2011/7/UE sobre morosidad, que todos los Estados miembros debían incorporar antes del 16 de marzo de 2013, pretende mejorar la liquidez de las PYME mediante la armonización del plazo de pago por parte de las autoridades públicas europeas en sus transacciones comerciales.

La Comunicación sobre la financiación a largo plazo de la economía europea, COM(2014) 168, de 27 de marzo de 2014, contiene información y detalles adicionales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000274/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(14 January 2014)

Subject: Follow-up question on financial services obligations

I have just received a reply from the European Commission to a question I asked about the possible introduction of certain minimum obligations on given financial institutions with a view to facilitating loans for small and medium-sized enterprises. I am told that the memorandum of understanding on the financial sector does not provide for any minimum service requirements. Accordingly, I now ask again for the Commission's views on this situation.

In my opinion, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Statute of the European Central Bank provide sufficient powers to regulate the conditions of the auctions it undertakes or the deposits it offers.

However, I am also of the view that the Commission could promote a regulation specifying certain financing obligations for lending institutions. I have read the new COSME Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs that the Commission recently presented. Other approaches could be taken, however. If the financial institutions have obtained huge amounts of public funds because we were reminded ad nauseam of their transcendence and comparisons were made with the human circulatory system, this aid should be counterbalanced by the establishment of certain obligations. Many other private companies provide 'economic services of general interest' and are required to meet 'service obligations'. I hardly need to remind the Commission of the obligations that EC law imposes, for example, on telecommunications companies or energy providers.

In light of the above:

Has the Commission considered the possibility of laying down some minimum service obligations, such as making financial institutions whose annual profits exceed a certain percentage to reserve funds for loans to SMEs or for social purposes? Or of placing small financial institutions in neighbourhoods that have been left without local bank branches, as has happened in Spain as a result of the drastic restructuring of Spanish savings banks? Or of providing loans under certain specified terms to small local businesses? Finally, in cases where small companies lack liquidity due to the substantial debts generated by the slowness of settlements from government institutions, would another option not be to promote novation of these loans?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2014)

It is for the individual banks to decide how they focus their lending policies. Through programmes like COSME the European Commission provides incentives to banks to lend to SMEs. This programme, if requested, can provide partial risk coverage (through guarantees and equity investments) to financial intermediaries (i.e. banks, investment funds), who then improve their product offer to the SMEs.

In addition, the Risk-Sharing Instrument has so far provided over EUR 1.2 billion in guarantees and counter-guarantees to 23 banks and guarantee societies: this will enable them to support up to an estimated 3 000 innovative SMEs and small midcaps via loans, financial leases and loan guarantees.

Horizon 2020 makes greater use of such financial instruments to attract yet more investment, both public and private, into RDI. This programme will support equity investments, including by business angels and venture capitalists, into innovative firms (mainly SMEs) at the early stage of development. It will also pilot a scheme to co-invest with technology transfer funds and offices. From a budget of EUR 2.84 billion, at least one-third is likely to be absorbed by SMEs and small midcaps.

The new Capital Regulation Requirements in place since January 2014 improves capital requirement treatment on credit to SMEs. The late payment Directive 2011/7/EU that had to be transposed by all Member States by 16 March 2013 aims to improve SMEs liquidity by harmonising for the first time the payment period of European public authorities in their commercial transactions.

Further aspects and detail are addressed by the communication on long-term Financing of the European Economy, COM(2014) 168 of 27 March 2014.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000278/14
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Kosten der Herrichtung des Gebäudes „Europa“

In seiner Antwort auf die Anfrage E-002198/2013 ([1]) von Hans-Peter Martin bezifferte der Rat die Kosten für die Herrichtung des Gebäudes „Europa“ auf der Grundlage von Berechnungen vom Januar 2013 mit 303 Mio. EUR. Ursprünglich wurde im Januar 2004 eine Kostenhöhe von 220 Mio. EUR geschätzt, und der Rat hatte eine Höchstgrenze von 240 Mio. EUR festgelegt.

1. Wie hoch sind nach den aktuellsten Schätzungen die Gesamtkosten für die Herrichtung des Gebäudes „Europa“?

2. Welcher Betrag davon wurde bereits an den belgischen Staat als Bauherrn überwiesen?

3. Welcher Betrag wurde im Jahr 2013 an den belgischen Staat überwiesen, und welcher Betrag ist für die Jahre von 2014 bis zur vollständigen Abzahlung der Kosten vorgesehen?

4. Kann das Übergabedatum 15. April 2014 eingehalten werden? Verlaufen die Herrichtungsmaßnahmen nach Plan, oder gibt es Verzögerungen? Wenn ja, wie ist der neue Zeitplan, und wird dies die Kosten beeinflussen?

Antwort
(14. April 2014)

Die Kostenschätzung (in Preisen von Oktober 2013) beträgt 301 Mio. EUR bzw. (in Preisen von Januar 2004) 218 Mio. EUR.

Bislang ist ein Betrag in Höhe von 275 164 147,59 EUR an den belgischen Staat überwiesen worden.

Im Jahr 2013 wurden keine Beträge an den belgischen Staat überwiesen. Im Voranschlag der Ausgaben des Rates für das Jahr 2014 sind Mittel in Höhe von 5 000 000 EUR zur Zahlung an den belgischen Staat vorgesehen. Derzeit sind bis zur Übergabe des Gebäudes keine weiteren Zahlungen vorgesehen.

Die belgische Gebäudeverwaltung, die vom belgischen Staat mit den Bauarbeiten beauftragt wurde, hat das Generalsekretariat des Rates ersucht, die Übergabe auf Februar 2015 zu verschieben.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2013-002198&language=DE

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000278/14
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 January 2014)

Subject: Costs of construction of the Europa building

In its answer to Question E-002198/2013 ([1]) by Hans-Peter Martin, the Council estimated the costs of constructing the Europa building to be EUR 303 million on the basis of calculations made in January 2013. The costs were originally estimated to be EUR 220 million in January 2004 and the Council set a ceiling of EUR 240 million.

1. What are the total costs of constructing the Europa building according to the most up-to-date estimates?

2. How much of this has already been transferred to the Belgian state as the main contractor?

3. How much was transferred to the Belgian state in 2013 and what sums does the EU plan to transfer in the years from 2014 until all costs have been settled?

4. Is it possible to meet the handover deadline of 15 April 2014? Are the construction measures progressing according to plan, or are there any delays? If so, what is the new schedule and will this affect the costs?

Reply
(14 April 2014)

The cost estimate at October 2013 prices is EUR 301 million or, at January 2004 prices, EUR 218 million.

The amount so far transferred to the Belgian state is EUR 275 164 147.59.

No amounts were transferred to the Belgian state in 2013. The estimate of expenditures for 2014 for the Council contains a EUR 5 000 000 appropriation earmarked for payment to the Belgian state. No more payments are currently foreseen before the handover of the building.

The Belgian Buildings Agency, charged by the Belgian state with the construction of the building, has submitted a request to the General Secretariat of the Council to delay the handover to February 2015.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2013-002198&language=DE

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000279/14
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Dienstfahrzeuge des Rates

Wie viele Dienstfahrzeuge wurden in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils im Rat angeschafft, und wie hoch waren die diesbezüglichen Kosten?

Über wie viele Dienstfahrzeuge (letzter verfügbarer Stand) verfügt des Rat, und wie hoch waren die damit verbundenen Aufwendungen jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 und 2013?

Wie viele Chauffeure beschäftigt der Rat, und wie hoch waren die Aufwendungen insgesamt für geleistete Chauffeurdienste jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 und 2013?

Antwort
(14. April 2014)

Der Fuhrpark des Rates besteht aus 23 Fahrzeugen (4 eigenen und 19 geleasten Fahrzeugen).

Alle Ausgaben im Zusammenhang mit Dienstfahrzeugen fallen unter den Haushaltsposten 213200 „Anmietung, Unterhaltung und Reparatur von Dienstwagen". Dieser Haushaltsposten belief sich in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 und 2013 auf insgesamt jeweils 209 000 EUR, 134 000 EUR, 128 000 EUR, 136 000 EUR und 398 000 EUR.

Die Erhöhung des Haushaltsposten 213200 im Jahr 2013 ist auf den neuen Leasing-Vertrag zurückzuführen, da die Fahrzeuge nicht mehr gekauft sondern geleast werden. Der Haushaltsposten 213100 (Ankauf von Dienstwagen) belief sich dementsprechend auf 0 EUR.

Die Anzahl der beschäftigten Chauffeure und die Ausgaben für Chauffeurdienstleistungen sind der nachstehenden Tabelle zu entnehmen:

Jahr	Anzahl der Chauffeure	Gesamtausgaben EUR
2009	21	1 665 083,28
2010	21	1 713 516,45
2011	20	1 618 636,07
2012	19	1 594 821,51
2013	20	1 562 192,28

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000279/14
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 January 2014)

Subject: Official cars of the Council

How many official cars were purchased by the Council in each of the years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 and what were the costs associated with these purchases?

How many official cars (most recent available figure) does the Council have in its possession and what was the expenditure associated with these vehicles in each of the years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013?

How many chauffeurs are employed by the Council and what was the total expenditure for chauffeur services rendered during each of the years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013?

Reply
(14 April 2014)

The Council has 23 vehicles in its fleet: 4 are owned and 19 are on lease.

All the expenses associated with official cars are covered by budget item 213200: 'Rental, maintenance and repair of the vehicle fleet'. This budget item totalled EUR 209 000 in 2009, EUR 134 000 in 2010, EUR 128 000 in 2011, EUR 136 000 in 2012 and EUR 398 000 in 2013.

The increase in budget item 213200 for 2013 was generated by the new lease contract, since cars are no longer purchased but leased instead. Budget item 213100 (purchase of the vehicle fleet) has accordingly been set at 0.

The number of drivers employed and the expenditure for chauffeur services are set out in the table below:

Year	Number of drivers	Total expense EUR
2009	21	1 665 083.28
2010	21	1 713 516.45
2011	20	1 618 636.07
2012	19	1 594 821.51
2013	20	1 562 192.28

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000284/14
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Krankenstände der EU-Beamten im Rat

1. Wie viele Beamte des Rates gingen in den Jahren 2010, 2011, 2012 und 2013 in den Krankenstand? Wie hoch ist der prozentuale Anteil gemessen an der Gesamtanzahl der Beamten im Rat?

2. Wie hoch waren die Gesamtkosten, die durch den Krankenstand der Beamten des Rates in den Jahren 2010, 2011, 2012 und 2013 entstanden? Wie hoch waren die Durchschnittskosten pro erkranktem Beamten im Rat in diesen Jahren?

3. Wie viele Tage befand sich ein Beamter des Rates durchschnittlich in den Jahren 2010, 2011, 2012 und 2013 im Krankenstand? Wie viele Beamte fehlten wegen Krankheit jeweils a) null bis fünf Tage, b) fünf bis 20 Tage und c) mehr als 20 Tage?

Antwort
(14. April 2014)

2010 gingen 2 841 Beamte, Bedienstete auf Zeit und Vertragsbedienstete des Rates in den Kranken-stand. Im Jahr 2011 belief sich diese Zahl auf 2 615, im Jahr 2012 auf 2 661 und im Jahr 2013 auf 2 635. Gemessen an der Gesamtanzahl der Beamten im Rat ergibt dies einen prozentualen Anteil von jeweils 75 % in den Jahren 2010 und 2011 und von jeweils 76 % in den Jahren 2012 und 2013.

Durch die krankheitsbedingte Abwesenheit von Ratsbeamten entstehen dem Rat keine zusätzlichen Kosten, da die anfallende Arbeit dann im Allgemeinen umverteilt und somit von den anwesenden Kollegen erledigt wird. Nur bei Langzeiterkrankungen haben die Generaldirektionen die Möglichkeit, Ersatz für die Erkrankten zu beantragen.

Die durchschnittliche Zahl der Krankentage (Arbeitstage, d. h. ohne Wochenenden und Feiertage) der Beamten, Bediensteten auf Zeit und Vertragsbediensteten des Rates betrug 11,2 Tage im Jahr 2010, 10,4 Tage im Jahr 2011, 10,7 Tage im Jahr 2012 und 11,1 Tage im Jahr 2013.

Die folgende Tabelle zeigt, wie viele Beamte und Bedienstete des Rates in den Krankenstand gingen und wie lange sie krankheitsbedingt fehlten (Kollegen ohne krankheitsbedingte Fehltage sind nicht erfasst; in der letzten Spalte sind auch die Langzeiterkrankungen erfasst).

Jahr	0,5 bis 5 Tage	>5 bis 20 Tage	>20 Tage
2010	1 215	1 106	520
2011	1 066	1 098	451
2012	1 159	1 064	438
2013	1 066	1 131	438

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000284/14
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 January 2014)

Subject: Number of absences due to illness among EU officials within the Council

1. How many officials of the Council reported sick during the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013? What was the percentage rate measured against the total number of officials in the EEAS?

2. What were the total costs incurred as a result of the absence of officials of the Council due to illness during the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013? What were the average costs within the Council per official who was absent due to illness during these years?

3. For how many days, on average, was an official of the Council absent due to illness during the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013? How many officials were absent due to illness for

(a) zero to five days,

(b) five to twenty days and

(c) more than twenty days respectively?

Reply
(14 April 2014)

In 2010, 2 841 Council officials, temporary agents and contractual agents took sick leave. In 2011, the number was 2 615, in 2012, the number was 2 661, and in 2013, 2 635 staff members took sick leave. The percentage rate measured against the total number of officials in the Council was 75% in 2010 and 2011, and 76% in 2012 and 2013.

Absences due to illness of Council officials do not mean additional costs for the Council, as sickness absences are in general covered by the redistribution of the workload to the staff present. Only in cases of long-term illness can the Directorates-General ask for replacement arrangements.

The average number of days of absence due to sick leave (working days, i.e. excluding weekends and public holidays) taken by Council officials, temporary agents and contractual agents was 11.2 days in 2010, 10.4 days in 2011, 10.7 days in 2012 and 11.1 days in 2013.

The following table shows how many Council officials and agents took sick leave for how many days (colleagues with 0 days are not included; the last column includes also the cases of long-term illness):

Year	0.5-5 days	>5-20 days	>20 days
2010	1 215	1 106	520
2011	1 066	1 098	451
2012	1 159	1 064	438
2013	1 066	1 131	438

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000294/14
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Kosten der Pensionierung von EU-Beamten

1. Wie hoch war das durchschnittliche Ruhegehalt, netto und brutto, eines nach Anhang XIII Artikel 22 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften in den Ruhestand getretenen Beamten im Jahr 2013, und wie viele EU-Beamte sind insgesamt in diesem Jahr in den Ruhestand getreten?

2. Wie hoch war das durchschnittliche Ruhegehalt, netto und brutto, eines nach Anhang XIII Artikel 23 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften in den Ruhestand getretenen Beamten im Jahr 2013, und wie viele EU-Beamte sind insgesamt in diesem Jahr in den Ruhestand getreten?

3. Wie viele ehemalige EU-Beamte aus Deutschland und Österreich sind derzeit im Ruhestand?

4. Wie viele EU-Beamte sind nach Artikel 41 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften im Jahr 2013 in den einstweiligen Ruhestand versetzt worden, und wie hoch ist deren durchschnittliches Ruhegehalt netto und brutto?

5. Wie hat sich das Durchschnittsalter der pensionierten EU-Beamten im Jahr 2013 im Vergleich zu den Vorjahren entwickelt?

6. Wie haben sich die gesamten Versorgungskosten der pensionierten Beamten der Kommission im Jahr 2013 entwickelt?

7. Die Verbindlichkeiten im Rahmen des Versorgungssystems der Gemeinschaften lagen im Jahr 2011 bei 30,6 Mrd. EUR. Wie entwickelten sich diese Verbindlichkeiten in den Jahren 2012 und 2013?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(14. April 2014)

Die Kommission verweist auf ihre Antworten auf die parlamentarischen Anfragen E-1362/2013, E-177/2013, E-11106/12 und E-6860/2010 und übermittelt folgende aktuelle Angaben:

1. Das durchschnittliche Ruhegehalt im Jahr 2013 betrug rund 4 300 EUR.

2. Im Jahr 2013 sind 1 152 Beamte nach Artikel 22 des Anhangs XIII des Statuts in den Ruhestand getreten. Nach Artikel 23 des Anhangs XIII des Statuts traten 35 EU-Beamte in den Ruhestand; das durchschnittliche Ruhegehalt betrug rund 2 400 EUR.

3. Gegenwärtig befinden sich 1 706 EU-Beamte mit deutscher und 51 mit österreichischer Staatsangehörigkeit im Ruhestand.

4. Nach Artikel 41 des Statuts sind im Jahr 2013 keine Beamten in den Ruhestand getreten.

5. Das Durchschnittsalter aller pensionierten Beamten betrug nach wie vor rund 71 Jahre.

6. Die Gesamtkosten des Versorgungssystems für das Jahr 2013 sind dem EU-Haushaltsplan für das betreffende Jahr zu entnehmen.

7. Im Jahr 2012 beliefen sich die Pensionsverbindlichkeiten aufgrund des deutlichen Rückgangs des angewandten Abzinsungssatzes (Differenz zwischen dem langfristigen Zinssatz für Staatsanleihen im Euro-Gebiet zum 31.12. und der erwarteten Inflation für denselben Zeitraum; dieser Abzinsungssatz ist überaus schwankungsanfällig) auf 37,5 Mrd. EUR. Die endgültigen Zahlen für 2013 liegen noch nicht vor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000294/14
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 January 2014)

Subject: Retirement costs of EU officials

1. What was the average pension, net and gross, of an official who retired in 2013 in accordance with Annex XIII Article 22 of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities, and how many EU officials retired in this year overall?

2. What was the average pension, net and gross, of an official who retired in 2013 in accordance with Annex XIII Article 23 of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities, and how many EU officials retired in this year overall?

3. How many former EU officials from Germany and Austria are currently retired?

4. How many EU officials entered temporary retirement in accordance with Article 41 of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities in 2013, and what is their average pension, net and gross?

5. How has the average age of retired EU officials in 2013 changed compared to previous years?

6. How have the overall care costs of retired officials of the Commission changed in 2013?

7. In 2011 the obligations within the care system of the Communities were EUR 30.6 billion. How have these obligations changed in 2012 and 2013?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(14 April 2014)

The Commission refers to its replies to PQ E-1362/2013, E-177/2013, E-11106/12 and E-6860/2010 and updates the following:

1. The average pension in 2013 was around 4 300 Euros.

2. In 2013, 1 152 EU officials retired in accordance with Article 22 of Annex XIII of the Staff Regulations. 35 EU officials retired in accordance with Article 23 of Annex XIII of the Staff Regulations; the average pension was around 2 400 Euros.

3. There are currently 1 706 EU retired officials with German and 51 with Austrian nationality.

4. In 2013, no EU officials retired in accordance with Article 41 of the Staff Regulations.

5. The average age of all retired staff was still around 71.

6. The overall costs related to the EU staff pension scheme for 2013 are included in the annual EU budget of the corresponding year.

7. In 2012, the pension liabilities amounted to EUR 37.5 billion due to the sizeable decrease in the discount rate applied (difference between the long-term interest rate for Euro-area government bonds at 31/12 and the expected inflation over the same duration; it is therefore a punctual rate whose volatility is very high). Final figures for 2013 are not yet available.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000298/14
al Consejo
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(14 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Acuerdo de Asociación Mercosur-UE: valoración y voluntad política

Durante la Reunión Ministerial UE-Mercosur que tuvo lugar en Santiago de Chile en enero de 2013, ambos bloques de países acordaron fijar «el último trimestre de 2013» como plazo para presentar un intercambio de ofertas concretas.

Contrariamente a lo pactado, tal intercambio no ha tenido lugar.

En vista de ello, ¿qué valoración hace el Consejo sobre la posposición de este intercambio de ofertas?

¿Considera el Consejo que sigue existiendo voluntad política por ambas partes para concluir este acuerdo?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000379/14
al Consejo
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(16 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Mercosur: obstáculos

Tras iniciarse formalmente en el año 2000 y suspenderse en el año 2004, las negociaciones del posible Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Mercosur se retomaron el 17 de mayo de 2010 en la Cumbre de los dos bloques celebrada en Madrid.

Nueve han sido las rondas de negociación que han tenido lugar, centrándose todas ellas en la parte «normativa» del Acuerdo.

El 26 de enero de 2013, durante la Reunión Ministerial UE-Mercosur celebrada en Santiago de Chile, ambas partes acordaron que la manera adecuada para ahondar en el desarrollo del Acuerdo fuese el intercambio de ofertas concretas en lo relativo a las obligaciones aduaneras y las cuotas, intercambio que habría de producirse no más tarde del último trimestre de 2013.

Sin embargo, finalizado el año 2013, tal intercambio de ofertas no ha tenido lugar y parece haber sido pospuesto a una fecha no determinada.

Teniendo en cuenta todo lo anterior,

¿Podría el Consejo valorar, desde su punto de vista, cuáles han sido y siguen siendo los obstáculos principales para lograr un Acuerdo cuyas negociaciones empezaron hace más de 12 años?

Respuesta conjunta
(13 de mayo de 2014)

La UE sigue plenamente comprometida con la negociación de un Acuerdo de Asociación general con Mercosur equilibrado y ambicioso, para fortalecer la colaboración en los ámbitos político, comercial y de cooperación. El intercambio de ofertas de acceso al mercado acordado con Mercosur en enero de 2013 representa un paso importante en esa dirección. Este primer intercambio de ofertas desde 2004, cuando se suspendieron las negociaciones durante varios años, será importante para dirigir el proceso de negociación. No obstante, ambas partes han de asegurarse de que el contenido sea correcto y de que se den las condiciones para un intercambio fructífero.

Durante 2013, las Partes se han preparado para el intercambio de ofertas. El Consejo ya ha sido consultado respecto a una parte de la oferta de la UE. En la actualidad ambas partes están en la fase de finalización de sus ofertas. A comienzos de año se fijará de común acuerdo una fecha concreta para el intercambio de ofertas, dependiendo de los avances de los trabajos de ambas partes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000298/14
to the Council
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(14 January 2014)

Subject: EU-Mercosur Association Agreement: opinion and political will

During the EU-Mercosur Ministerial Meeting that was held in Santiago de Chile in January 2013, both blocs of countries agreed on 'the last quarter of 2013' as the deadline for presenting an exchange of specific offers.

In spite of this agreement, the exchange never took place.

What is the Council's opinion on the postponement of this exchange of offers?

Does the Council believe that both parties still have the political will to conclude this agreement?

Question for written answer E-000379/14
to the Council
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(16 January 2014)

Subject: Obstacles to the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement

After formally being launched in 2000 and subsequently suspended in 2004, negotiations on the possible EU-Mercosur Association Agreement resumed on 17 May 2010 at the Summit that was held between the two blocs in Madrid.

There have been nine rounds of negotiations, which have all focused on the 'regulatory' part of the Agreement.

On 26 January 2013, during the EU-Mercosur Ministerial Meeting held in Santiago in Chile, both parties agreed that the appropriate way to further develop the Agreement was an exchange of specific offers in relation to customs duties and quotas. This exchange was supposed to have taken place by the last quarter of 2013, at the latest.

However, 2013 has now ended and this exchange of offers did not take place; it seems to have been postponed to an unspecified date.

Bearing in mind all of the above, would the Council be able to assess what, from its perspective, have been, and continue to be, the main obstacles to reaching an Agreement, which has been the subject of negotiation for more than 12 years?

Joint reply
(13 May 2014)

The EU remains fully committed to negotiate a balanced and ambitious Association Agreement with Mercosur in order to strengthen the partnership in the political, trade and cooperation fields. The exchange of market access offers agreed with Mercosur in January 2013 represents an important step in that direction. A first exchange of offers since 2004, when the negotiations were suspended for several years, will be important for driving the negotiation process forward. However, both sides need to ensure that the substance is right and that conditions exist for a successful exchange.

During 2013, both parties have prepared for the exchange of offers. The Council has already been consulted on part of the EU offer. Currently, both sides are in the process of finalising their offers. A precise date for the exchange of offers early this year will be fixed by common agreement, depending on progress in the work on both sides.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-000327/14
komissiolle
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(14. tammikuuta 2014)

Aihe: VP/HR – Tuki miehitetyillä palestiinalaisalueilla sijaitseville pakolaisleireille

Syyrian kriisi on aiheuttanut kolmannen palestiinalaisten pakolaisaallon ja inhimillisiä tragedioita, kuten nälkiintymistä, sattumanvaraisia kranaattitulituksia ja Yarmoukin pakolaisleirin piirityksen Damaskoksessa. EU ilmoitti oikeutetusti antavansa 16 miljoonaa euroa lisää YK:n Lähi-idässä olevien palestiinalaispakolaisten avustus- ja työelimelle (UNRWA) Syyrian kriisistä palestiinalaisille pakolaisille aiheutuneiden seurausten takia.

Sosiaaliset ongelmat ovat myös yleistymässä miehitetyillä palestiinalaisalueilla sijaitsevilla pakolaisleireillä, ja leirien johtajien mukaan on yhä haasteellisempaa saada rahoitusta sosiaalisille ohjelmille kyseisillä leireillä. Yafa Cultural Centre -kulttuurikeskus, joka järjestää sosiaalisia ja kulttuurisia toimintoja Länsirannan suurimmalla pakolaisleirillä Balatalla, on saanut ison osan rahoituksestaan kansalaisjärjestöiltä, jotka ovat kanavoineet EU:n tukia pakolaisille suunnattuihin toimintoihin. Kulttuurikeskuksen johtajan mukaan EU:n rahoitus Balatan leirin pakolaisille suunnatuille toiminnoille on vähentynyt huomattavasti viime vuosina.

Tällä hetkellä Balatan leirin työttömyysaste on yli 25 prosenttia. Toisen intifadan vaikutukset ovat alkaneet näkyä nuorten aikuisten vakavina mielenterveysongelmina, joista on osoituksena esimerkiksi kesällä 2013 tapahtunut kahden nuoren miehen välinen tappelu, jossa molemmat miehet kuolivat. Pakolaiset kärsivät myös vaikeuksista päästä Israelin työmarkkinoille, huonosta vedestä ja viemäriverkosta, suuresta asukastiheydestä ja liian täysistä kouluista. Siirtokuntalaisten ja armeijan lukuisat yllätyshyökkäykset eivät helpota tilannetta.

1. Onko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja tehnyt tietoisen päätöksen vähentää miehitettyjen palestiinalaisalueiden pakolaisille kohdistettua rahoitusta?

2. Onko mitään lukuja saatavilla miehitettyjen palestiinalaisalueiden palestiinalaisille pakolaisille kohdistetusta sekä suorasta että epäsuorasta rahoituksesta?

3. Kun otetaan huomioon, että EU on UNRWAn suurin rahoittaja, kuinka varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja aikoo varmistaa, että palestiinalaisten pakolaisleireillä esiintyvät yhteiskunnalliset jännitteet eivät kärjisty enempää rahoituksen vähentymisen takia?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(4. huhtikuuta 2014)

Korkea edustaja, komission varapuheenjohtaja Ashton kiinnittää parlamentin jäsenen huomion siihen seikkaan, että EU:n tuki YK:n Lähi-idässä olevien palestiinalaispakolaisten avustus- ja työelimen (UNRWA) yleisrahastoon ei ole vähentynyt vuodesta 2002. UNRWA:lle on itse asiassa myönnetty lisätukea, joka liittyy suoraan Syyrian kriisiin.

EU:n UNRWA:lle myöntämän rahoituksen kokonaismäärä oli yli 150 miljoonaa euroa vuonna 2013. Se on suurin määrä Gazassa vuonna 2009 toteutetun Cast Lead -operaation vuoksi myönnetyn hätäavun jälkeen. UNRWA:lle sen PEGASE-rahoitusmekanismin kautta myönnetyn tuen lisäksi EU ohjaa kipeästi tarvittavia varoja myös heikossa asemassa oleville palestiinalaisperheille, joista puolet asuu Gazassa.

EU arvostaa suuresti UNRWA:n erittäin vaikeissa olosuhteissa tekemää työtä ja antaa jatkossakin täyden tukensa tälle YK:n järjestölle, joka tuo vakautta alueelle. EU kannustaa myös muita avunantajia tukemaan järjestön erittäin tärkeää työtä.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000327/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(14 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Support for refugee camps in the occupied Palestinian territories

The Syrian crisis has sparked a third wave of Palestinian refugees, as well as humanitarian tragedies such as starvation, arbitrary shelling and the siege of the Yarmouk refugee camp in Damascus. The EU rightfully announced that it would contribute a further EUR 16 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) on account of the effects of the Syrian crisis on the Palestinian refugee population.

Social problems are also on the rise in refugee camps in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt), and their administrators claim that it is becoming increasingly challenging to obtain funds for social programmes in these camps. For example, the Yafa Cultural Centre (YCC), which organises social and cultural activities in the largest refugee camp in the West Bank, Balata, has obtained much of its funding from NGOs channelling EU aid to refugee activities. According to the YCC Director, in recent years EU funding for refugee activities in Balata has become increasingly scarce.

Currently, the unemployment rate in Balata Camp is more than 25%. The effects of the second intifada are now revealing themselves in the form of serious mental health issues among the young adults, as evidenced by incidents such as a fight between two young men in the summer of 2013 in which both men died. The refugees also suffer from the inaccessibility of the Israeli labour market, a bad water and sewage network, high population density and overcrowded schools. Frequent settler and army raids are not making the situation easier.

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative made the conscious decision to reduce funding to refugee populations in the oPt?

2. Are there any figures available on both direct and indirect funding to Palestinian refugee populations within the oPt?

3. Given that the EU is the largest funder of UNRWA, how will the Vice-President/High Representative ensure that social tensions in Palestinian refugee camps are not further exacerbated by a reduction in funding?

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

The HR/VP would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that EU financial support to the General Fund of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has not decreased since 2002. To the contrary additional support has been mobilised for UNRWA directly related to the crisis in Syria.

The EU's total funding to UNRWA amounted to over EUR 150 million in 2013, the highest figure since the emergency aid provided in response to the Cast Lead operation in Gaza in 2009. In addition to the the support provided to UNRWA, through its PEGASE mechanism, the EU also channels crucial payments to vulnerable Palestinian families, half of whom are in Gaza.

The EU is greatly appreciative for UNRWA's work in very difficult circumstances and will continue to fully support the UN agency, which is a force for stability in the region. The EU also will continue to encourage other donors to support the agency's crucial work.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000453/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(20. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Wahrung der Menschenrechte — Schubhaftanstalt Vordernberg in Österreich

Die Schubhaftanstalt Vordernberg in Österreich ist bereits vermehrt von den nationalen Medien aufgegriffen worden, da dort 200 Menschen untergebracht werden sollen, während sie auf ihre Abschiebung warten. Es wird betont, dass es sich hierbei nicht um ein Gefängnis handele und dass man auf möglichst humane Unterbringung achte. Die Skepsis der österreichischen Bürgerinnen und Bürger wird hauptsächlich durch die Tatsache ausgelöst, dass im Schubhaftzentrum 55 Polizeibeamte und 68 Mitarbeiter der privaten Sicherheitsfirma G4S beschäftigt sind. Es wurden erstmals Aufgaben einer derartigen öffentlichen Einrichtung in private Hände gegeben. Nun stellt sich die Frage, ob Angestellte einer privaten Sicherheitsfirma dieselben Ausbildungsstandards erfüllen können wie geschulte Polizeibeamte und ob es vertretbar ist, dass die Zahl der privaten Angestellten die der Polizeibeamten übertrifft.

1. Gedenkt die Kommission eine Verordnung zu erlassen, in der die Anforderungen bezüglich des Sicherheitspersonals von Schubhaftanstalten genau festgelegt werden?

2. Wenn ja, wie gedenkt die Kommission sicherzustellen, dass die privaten Angestellten, die in Schubhaftanstalten eingesetzt werden, den Anforderungen gewachsen sind und notwendige Schulungen für den Umgang mit Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund erhalten haben?

3. Wie gedenkt die Kommission diese notwenigen Schulungen genau festzulegen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(8. April 2014)

Artikel 16 der Rückführungsrichtlinie ([1]) enthält eine Reihe von Garantien im Zusammenhang mit den Haftbedingungen von Rückkehrern, einschließlich der Verpflichtung, dass die Inhaftierung grundsätzlich in speziellen Hafteinrichtungen erfolgt, eine medizinische Notfallversorgung und die unbedingt erforderliche Behandlung von Krankheiten gewährt werden und die spezifischen Bedürfnisse schutzbedürftiger Personen zu berücksichtigen sind. In der Richtlinie werden keine Einzelheiten geregelt, etwa hinsichtlich der Qualifikation des Personals, das in Hafteinrichtungen arbeitet.

Das bedeutet jedoch nicht, dass die Mitgliedstaaten bei der Wahl des Personals völlig frei sind. Gemäß der Rückführungsrichtlinie sollten in Haft genommene Drittstaatsangehörige eine menschenwürdige Behandlung unter Beachtung ihrer Grundrechte und im Einklang mit dem Völkerrecht erfahren. In diesem Zusammenhang müssen die Mitgliedstaaten die vom Europäischen Komitee zur Verhütung von Folter des Europarates festgelegten Normen („CPT-Standards" ([2])) berücksichtigen, damit bei der Anwendung des EU-Rechts sichergestellt ist, dass die in der Europäischen Menschenrechtskonvention verankerten Verpflichtungen und die Verpflichtungen, die aus der EU-Charta resultieren, eingehalten werden. Nach den CPT-Standards (Ziffer 29 Absatz 3) ist darauf zu achten, „dass das Aufsichtspersonal in solchen Zentren sorgfältig ausgesucht wird und eine angemessene Ausbildung erhält. Die Mitglieder des Personals sollten gut entwickelte Qualitäten im Bereich zwischenmenschlicher Kommunikation besitzen sowie mit den verschiedenen Kulturen der Inhaftierten vertraut sein, und zumindest einige von ihnen sollten über einschlägige Sprachkenntnisse verfügen. Darüber hinaus sollten sie darin unterrichtet werden, mögliche Symptome von Stressreaktionen, die inhaftierte Personen zeigen, zu erkennen (seien sie nun post-traumatisch oder durch soziokulturelle Veränderungen verursacht) und geeignete Maßnahmen zu ergreifen."

Die Kommission wird diese CPT-Standards bei ihrer Bewertung der Hafteinrichtungen in den Mitgliedstaaten als Maßstab heranziehen.

([1]) Richtlinie 2008/115/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 16. Dezember 2008 über gemeinsame Normen und Verfahren in den Mitgliedstaaten zur Rückführung illegal aufhältiger Drittstaatsangehöriger, ABl. L 348 vom 24.12.2008, S. 98.

([2]) Dokument CPT/Inf/E (2002) 1 — Rev. 2011, abrufbar unter: http://www.cpt.coe.int/lang/deu/deu-standards.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000453/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(20 January 2014)

Subject: Upholding human rights — Vordernberg Immigration Detention Centre, Austria

The Vordernberg Immigration Detention Centre in Austria has already featured in national media on a number of occasions, as 200 people are apparently being held there while they await deportation. It is emphasised that the Centre is not a prison and that care is taken to provide the most humane accommodation possible. Scepticism about this amongst the Austrian public is prompted primarily by the fact that the detention centre is staffed by 55 police officers and 68 employees of the private security firm G4S. This is the first time that duties in a public institution of this kind have been put in private hands. The question arises as to whether employees of a private security firm can meet the same training standards as trained police officers and whether it is acceptable that the number of private staff exceeds the number of police.

1. Does the Commission intend to issue a regulation to lay down precise requirements for security staff in immigration detention centres?

2. If so, how does the Commission intend to ensure that private staff employed in immigration detention centres are capable of meeting those requirements and have received the necessary training in dealing with people from immigrant backgrounds?

3. How does the Commission intend to lay down what specific training is necessary?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2014)

Articles 16 of the Return Directive ([1]) contains a number of safeguards relating to detention conditions of returnees, including the obligation to keep detainees, as a rule, in specialised detention facilities, to provide for emergency healthcare and essential treatment of illness and to pay special attention to the situation of vulnerable persons. It does not regulate details such as the qualification of staff working in detention facilities.

This does not imply that Member States are entirely free in their choice of staff. According to the Return Directive, detainees must be treated in a humane and dignified manner with respect for their fundamental rights and in compliance with international law. In this respect, the standards established by the Council of Europe Committee on the Prevention of Torture ('CPT standards' ([2])) must be taken into account by Member States, in order to ensure compliance with European Convention on Human Rights obligations and obligations resulting from the EU Charter when applying EC law. According to these standards (par 29-3), 'the supervisory staff in such centres needs to be carefully selected and receive appropriate training. As well as possessing well-developed qualities in the field of interpersonal communication, the staff concerned should be familiarised with the different cultures of the detainees and at least some of them should have relevant language skills. Further, they should be taught to recognise possible symptoms of stress reactions displayed by detained persons (whether post-traumatic or induced by socio-cultural changes) and to take appropriate action'.

The Commission will use these CPT standards as a benchmark in its evaluation of detention facilities in Member States.

([1]) Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals; OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 98-107.
([2]) Document CPT/Inf/E (2002) 1 — Rev. 2011, available at: www.cpt.coe.int/en/docsstandards

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000465/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(20 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Spionaggio SMS

Nuove agghiaccianti rivelazioni giungono praticamente quotidianamente da parte della talpa della National Security Agency americana, alla base dello scandalo Datagate. Secondo le ultimissime rivelazioni, rilasciate dal noto quotidiano inglese che si sta occupando della vicenda, la NSA avrebbe raccolto fino a 200 milioni di sms scambiati tra utenti nel mondo, usandoli per estrarne dati che vanno dalla localizzazione al network di contatti, fino a dettagli sulle carte di credito e i piani di viaggio personale. Secondo il giornale, un'agenzia d'intelligence britannica avrebbe anche usato le informazioni raccolte.

Mentre l'NSA continua lungo la linea difensiva secondo cui le operazioni condotte dall'agenzia non sarebbero indiscriminate e slegate dalle indagini in corso per combattere e sventare la minaccia del terrorismo, non si può che esprimere sempre maggiore preoccupazione di fronte alla penetrazione di queste attività nella vita dei cittadini europei.

Alla luce di queste ultime rivelazioni, può la Commissione rendere noto se:

1. intende presentare una propria opinione sulle proposte che il Presidente Obama dovrebbe presentare nelle prossime ore in relazione all'operato dell'NSA?

2. intende avviare uno studio su quali strumenti cibernetici potrebbero essere adottati per rafforzare la sicurezza dei cittadini europei e difenderne la privacy?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(24 aprile 2014)

La Commissione è consapevole dell'impatto che hanno sui diritti fondamentali i programmi americani di raccolta di intelligence su larga scala, e sta delineando i provvedimenti da prendere per rispondere alle preoccupazioni dei cittadini, anche, fra l'altro, con la comunicazione «Ripristinare un clima di fiducia negli scambi di dati fra l'UE e gli USA» ([1]). Le preoccupazioni riguardano in particolare l'accesso, da parte degli organismi di intelligence statunitensi, ai dati trasferiti nell'ambito dell'accordo UE-USA sull'approdo sicuro (Safe Harbour). La Commissione invita gli USA a individuare rimedi a questo problema entro l'estate 2014, e provvederà in seguito a valutare le soluzioni proposte.

La Commissione ha proposto una sostanziosa riforma del quadro giuridico per la protezione dei dati personali ([2]) al fine di rafforzare i diritti individuali. Ciò apporterà la necessaria stabilità giuridica, garantendo, con sanzioni dissuasive, che le società extra-europee, nell'offrire servizi ai consumatori dell'UE, rispettino le norme dell'Unione europea sulla protezione dei dati. La Commissione ha inoltre avviato uno studio sulla direttiva 2002/58/EC ([3]), concentrandosi sull'attuazione e l'efficacia delle sue disposizioni. L'eventuale revisione di questa direttiva terrà conto dei negoziati relativi al quadro per la protezione dei dati.

Per aumentare la soglia di sicurezza nell'UE, la Commissione ha intrapreso varie iniziative nell'ambito della Strategia dell'Unione europea per la cibersicurezza ([4]): ha adottato una direttiva sugli attacchi informatici per contrastare le *botnet* ([5]); ha proposto una direttiva ([6]) per rafforzare la cibersicurezza nel settore pubblico e privato dell'UE; ha creato una nuova piattaforma pubblico/privato per individuare le migliori pratiche nel campo della sicurezza informatica e ha previsto misure per promuoverne l'integrazione; ha annunciato attività per sensibilizzare maggiormente gli utenti finali alle minacce alla cibersicurezza ([7]), e ha organizzato inviti a presentare progetti di ricerca e innovazione nel settore della privacy, della cibersicurezza e della fiducia nell'ambito del nuovo Programma quadro dell'UE per la Ricerca e l'innovazione, Orizzonte 2020 ([8]).

([1]) COM(2013) 846 final del 27.11.2013.
([2]) Proposta della Commissione di regolamento concernente la tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali e la libera circolazione di tali dati, COM(2012) 11 final, considerando 135.
([3]) Direttiva concernente la tutela della vita privata e le comunicazioni elettroniche.
([4]) JOIN(2013) 1, Comunicazione congiunta della Commissione europea e dell'Alto Rappresentante dell'Unione per gli affari esteri e la politica di sicurezza, «Strategia dell'Unione europea per la cibersicurezza: un ciberspazio aperto e sicuro».
([5]) Direttiva 2013/40/UE del 12 agosto 2013 relativa agli attacchi contro i sistemi di informazione e che sostituisce la decisione quadro 2005/222/GAI del Consiglio.
([6]) COM(2013) 48, Proposta di direttiva recante misure volte a garantire un livello comune elevato di sicurezza delle reti e dell'informazione nell'Unione.
([7]) Organizzando il «Mese europeo di sensibilizzazione alla sicurezza informatica», http://cybersecuritymonth.eu/
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000465/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(20 January 2014)

Subject: SMS espionage

New and disturbing revelations are reaching us practically on a daily basis from the mole at the American National Security Agency in the context of the Datagate scandal. According to the latest revelations, reported by the well-known English paper covering this affair, the NSA has collected up to 200 million text messages exchanged by users throughout the world and used them to extract data ranging from location detection to contact networks, credit card details and personal travel plans. According to the paper, a British intelligence agency has also made use of the information collected.

Although the NSA is continuing to present its line of defence that the Agency's operations are not indiscriminate or dissociated from investigations currently in progress, the aim of which is to combat and frustrate the threat of terrorism, one cannot but express increasing concern in the face of the penetration of such activities into the lives of European citizens.

In the light of these recent revelations, can the Commission tell us whether:

1. It intends to present an opinion on proposals imminently to be presented by President Obama in relation to the actions of the NSA?

2. It intends to launch a study on the cybernetic tools available to strengthen the security and defend the privacy of European citizens?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2014)

The Commission is concerned about the impact of US large-scale intelligence collection programmes on fundamental rights. It set out the steps to be taken to address citizens' concerns, including in a communication on 'Rebuilding Trust in EU-US Data Flows' ([1]). In particular, this responds to concern regarding access by US intelligence agencies to data transfer under the EU-US Safe Harbour and it calls on the US to identify remedies by summer 2014 after which the Commission shall assess any such US-proposed remedies.

The Commission has proposed a major reform of the legal framework for the protection of personal data ([2]) to strengthen individual rights. This will provide the necessary legal stability by ensuring that non-EU companies, when offering services to EU consumers, respect EU data protection law, with dissuasive sanctions. The Commission has also launched a study on Directive 2002/58/EC ([3]), focusing on the transposition and effectiveness of its provisions. Any revision of that directive will take into account the negotiations on the data protection framework.

To raise the security bar in the EU, the Commission has several activities under the EU Cybersecurity Strategy ([4]). It has adopted a directive on cyber-attacks, targeting botnets ([5]); proposed a directive ([6]) to strengthen EU cybersecurity in the public and private sectors; set up a new public-private platform to identify cybersecurity best practices and incentives for their uptake; announced activities to raise end users' awareness of cybersecurity threats ([7]); and launched calls for research and innovation projects in the field of privacy, cybersecurity and trust under the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon2020 ([8]).

([1]) COM(2013) 846 final, 27.11.2013.
([2]) Commission Proposal for a regulation on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, COM(2012) 11 final, Recital 135.
([3]) on privacy and electronic communications.
([4]) JOIN(2013) 1, Joint Communication of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, 'EU Cybersecurity Strategy — An open, safe and secure cyberspace'.
([5]) Directive 2013/40/EU of 12 August 2013 on attacks against information systems and replacing Council Framework Decision 2005/222/JHA.
([6]) COM(2013) 48, Proposal for a directive concerning measures to ensure a high common level of network and information security across the Union.
([7]) via the European Cybersecurity Awareness Month: http://cybersecuritymonth.eu/
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000477/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(20 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Uso de animales salvajes en entornos circenses de carácter itinerante en los Estados miembros

Los circos que emplean animales son la cara más amarga de la fauna salvaje en la Unión Europea: animales obligados a malvivir en los remolques de un camión, sometidos a condiciones de vida irreales y antinaturales, y cuyo entrenamiento refuerza con comportamientos agresivos y violencia física las funciones que deben hacer para divertir a los potenciales asistentes.

Los circos, que basan toda su publicidad en embaucar a los niños y niñas europeos, suponen un atraso histórico en el campo del bienestar animal en la práctica totalidad de los Estados miembros, gracias al poder de ciertos grupos de presión que han inutilizado y pretendido inmovilizar cualquier avance para prohibir el uso de seres vivos en espectáculos antinaturales. Resulta surrealista pensar que un tigre se dedique a saltar aros de fuego, que viva en una jaula, y que especies como los elefantes y los rinocerontes, que en su hábitat natural caminan decenas de kilómetros cada día y se organizan de forma gregaria, puedan tener una vida digna en un circo.

La alternativa es un nicho de empleo y fama de espectáculos de factura internacional, como el Cirque du Soleil, que fomentan la creatividad y el espíritu de superación de los profesionales sin lastimar ni explotar a ningún animal salvaje.

1. ¿Piensa la Comisión desarrollar alguna medida para restringir el uso de fauna salvaje en espectáculos circenses?

2. ¿Conoce la Comisión los estudios que cuestionan el uso de animales en circos, como el elaborado por investigadores de la Universidad de Bristol?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de abril de 2014)

La Comisión conoce la existencia del estudio «Are wild animals suited to a travelling circus life?» (¿Están los animales salvajes adaptados a la vida en un circo itinerante?) realizado por investigadores de la Universidad de Bristol ([1]).

La Comisión es consciente de que los Estados miembros tienen diferentes políticas en relación con el empleo de animales salvajes por parte de circos. Sin embargo, la Comisión considera que, en aras de una correcta aplicación de los principios de subsidiariedad y proporcionalidad, es preciso que la prohibición del empleo de animales salvajes por los circos con vistas a proteger el bienestar de los animales no sea un tema que se decida a nivel de la legislación de la Unión Europea, sino que debe dejarse en manos de los Estados miembros interesados.

A la vista de todo ello, la Comisión no tiene la intención de presentar propuestas legislativas destinadas a prohibir el uso de animales salvajes en circos y otras empresas similares por motivos de defensa del bienestar de los animales.

Las principales condiciones zoosanitarias para el desplazamiento de animales empleados en circos se establecen en la Directiva 92/65/CEE del Consejo ([2]) y se detallan en el Reglamento (CE) n° 1739/2005 de la Comisión ([3]).

([1]) Iossa, G; Soulsbury, CD; Harris, S, 2009, Animal Welfare, volumen 18, número 2, mayo de 2009, páginas 129 a 140.

([2]) Directiva 92/65/CEE del Consejo, de 13 de julio de 1992, por la que se establecen las condiciones de policía sanitaria aplicables a los intercambios y las importaciones en la Comunidad de animales, esperma, óvulos y embriones no sometidos, con respecto a estas condiciones, a las normativas comunitarias específicas a que se refiere la sección I del anexo A de la Directiva 90/425/CEE (DO L 268 de 14.9.1992, p. 54).

([3]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1739/2005 de la Comisión, de 21 de octubre de 2005, por el que se establecen los requisitos zoosanitarios para el desplazamiento de animales de circo entre Estados miembros (DO L 279 de 22.10.2005, p. 47).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000477/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(20 January 2014)

Subject: Use of wild animals in travelling circuses in Member States

Circuses that employ animals represent the most unacceptable face of treatment of wild animals in the European Union: the animals are forced to survive in lorry trailers, in unreal and unnatural surroundings, and trained using aggressive and physically violent behaviour to do their job of entertaining the spectators.

These circuses, whose publicity is based solely on misleading European boys and girls, lag far behind on other animal welfare issues in nearly all Member States. This is due to the strength of a number of pressure groups that have done all they can to prevent progress towards banning the use of live animals in unnatural spectacles. It is bizarre to think that a tiger who lives in a cage and spends its days jumping through hoops of fire, or gregarious species such as elephants and rhinoceros who, in their natural habitat, walk miles every day, could have a decent life in a circus.

The alternative is the reputable employment niche of international shows such as the Cirque du Soleil, which encourages creativity and a spirit of professional improvement without harming or exploiting wild animals.

1. Is the Commission considering the implementation of any measures restricting the use of wild animals in circus shows?

2. Is the Commission aware of studies questioning the use of animals in circuses, such as the study conducted by researchers from Bristol University?

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

The Commission is aware of the study 'Are wild animals suited to a travelling circus life?' conducted by researchers from Bristol University ([1]).

The Commission is informed that Member States have different policies regarding the keeping of wild animals in circuses. However, the Commission is of the opinion that the correct application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality requires that the banning of wild animals kept in circuses for purposes of animal welfare is not a subject matter that should be decided upon at the European Union law level but rather should be left to the Member States concerned.

In view of the above, the Commission does not intend to make legislative proposals aimed at banning the use of wild animals in circuses and other similar enterprises for reasons of animal welfare.

The principle animal health conditions for the movement of animals kept in circuses are laid down in Council Directive 92/65/EEC ([2]) and are detailed in Commission Regulation (EC) No 1739/2005 ([3]).

([1]) Iossa, G; Soulsbury, CD; Harris, S, 2009, Animal Welfare, Volume 18, Number 2, May 2009, pp. 129-140.

([2]) Council Directive 92/65/EEC of 13 July 1992 laying down animal health requirements governing trade in and imports into the Community of animals, semen, ova and embryos not subject to animal health requirements laid down in specific Community rules referred to in Annex A (I) to Directive 90/425/EEC (OJ L 268, 14.9.1992, p. 54).

([3]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1739/2005 of 21 October 2005 laying down animal health requirements for the movement of circus animals between Member States (OJ L 279, 22.10.2005, p. 47).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000492/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(20 janvier 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Arrêt de la mission Eujust LEX-Iraq

La mission européenne de renforcement de l'État de droit en Iraq, Eujust LEX, a été mise en place en juillet 2005. Son objectif, depuis le début, était clair: aider l'Iraq à se reconstruire après la guerre, en contribuant à la formation de fonctionnaires iraquiens des services de police, de la justice et de l'administration pénitentiaire. Les avantages de cette mission ne sont plus à démontrer. En à peine dix ans, ce sont des milliers de juges et de fonctionnaires iraquiens qui ont été formés.

Cette mission a pris fin le 31 décembre 2013. Aux dires de certains dirigeants européens, elle s'est terminée «avec succès». Peut-on réellement parler de succès lorsque l'on sait que l'année 2013 aura été la plus meurtrière en Iraq depuis 2008? Selon Irak Body Count, une ONG basée en Grande-Bretagne, 9 475 civils ont été tués en 2013 en Iraq, contre 10 130 en 2008.

Nous avons une responsabilité vis-à-vis des Iraquiens. Comment expliquer à la population iraquienne qu'à peine dix années auront suffi à remettre leur système judiciaire et pénal sur pied? Faut-il rappeler l'importance de la justice et des forces de l'ordre pour établir un État de droit solide et reconnu?

Madame la haute représentante pour les affaires étrangères peut-elle nous informer des programmes qui vont être mis en œuvre dorénavant par l'Union européenne en Iraq, pour prendre le relais de la mission Eujust LEX et continuer à participer à la construction d'un État de droit stable et démocratique?

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

Comme indiqué par l'Honorable Parlementaire, les réalisations de la mission européenne de renforcement de l'État de droit en Iraq (Eujust LEX) ont, depuis 2005, répondu aux besoins des Iraquiens. Elles ont porté sur des activités de formation, d'encadrement, de suivi et de conseil à l'intention de toutes les branches du système de justice pénale iraquien. Les autorités iraquiennes ont également soutenu le travail de la mission Eujust LEX-Iraq. La promotion d'une culture de respect des Droits de l'homme et la création d'un système d'État de droit s'inscrit dans le cadre d'un effort continu. Depuis 2003, l'UE apporte son soutien dans ce domaine et continuera à le faire dans le futur.

L'UE, les États membres et d'autres acteurs internationaux se penchent actuellement sur la suite à donner aux activités d'Eujust LEX-Iraq. Un programme de l'UE relatif au «Soutien à la bonne gouvernance en Iraq» sera bientôt mis en œuvre. Il s'appuiera sur les activités précédentes d'Eujust LEX-Iraq et contribuera au renforcement du système de justice pénale iraquien. Enfin, l'accord de partenariat et de coopération fournit également un cadre propice au renforcement de notre coopération et du dialogue dans ce domaine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000492/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(20 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — End of the EUJUST LEX-Iraq mission

The European Union Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX) was set up in July 2005. Its objective, from the outset, was clear: to help Iraq to rebuild after the war, by contributing to the training of Iraqi civil servants in the police, justice and prison administration services. The benefits of this mission are self-evident: in barely 10 years, thousands of Iraqi judges and civil servants have been trained.

This mission came to an end on 31 December 2013. Statements by some European directors say that it ended 'successfully'. But is it really possible to talk about success when 2013 claimed the most victims in Iraq since 2008? According to Iraq Body Count, a UK-based NGO, 9 475 civilians were killed in 2013 in Iraq, compared with 10 130 in 2008.

We have a responsibility with respect to the Iraqi people. How do we explain to them that all it took was barely 10 years to rebuild their judicial and penal systems? Are we forgetting the importance of justice and law enforcement agencies in establishing a strong and recognised rule of law?

Can the High Representative tell us what plans are going to be implemented from now on in Iraq by the European Union, in order to take over where the EUJUST LEX mission left off and continue the Union's involvement in the construction of a stable and democratic rule of law?

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

The benefits of the EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX), as noted by the Honourable Member, have since 2005 responded to Iraqi needs with training, mentoring, monitoring and advising activities involving all branches of the Iraqi criminal justice system. EUJUST LEX-Iraq work was also supported by the Iraqi authorities. The promotion of a culture of respect for human rights and the creation of a rule of law system is an on-going effort. Since 2003, the EU has been providing support in this area and will continue in the future.

Work is currently underway for the follow-up to EUJUST LEX-lraq's activities by the EU, Member States and other international actors. Implementation of an EU programme on 'Support to Good Governance in Iraq', will start soon, building on EUJUST LEX-Iraq previous activity and assisting the development of the Iraq criminal justice system. Finally, the partnership and cooperation agreement provides also a valuable framework for enhancing our cooperation and dialogue in this area.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000493/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(20 janvier 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Suppression du poste de représentant spécial pour le processus de paix au Moyen-Orient

Le statut de représentant spécial pour l'Union européenne a été créé en 1996, pour représenter l'Union européenne dans des régions ou pays qui connaissent des troubles importants, et dans le but de participer activement à la consolidation de la paix, de la stabilité et de l'état de droit. M. Andreas Reinicke est le représentant spécial de l'Union européenne pour le processus de paix au Moyen-Orient depuis février 2012.

En 2009, avec la ratification du traité de Lisbonne et la création du Service européen pour l'action extérieure, le pouvoir de créer et de nommer les représentants spéciaux a été conféré à la haute représentante pour les affaires étrangères, pouvoir jusqu'alors accordé aux États membres. M[me] Ashton a récemment décidé de supprimer le poste de représentant spécial au Moyen-Orient. Malgré les protestations importantes des États membres, sa position n'a pas changé.

Je m'interroge pour plusieurs raisons: à l'heure où le processus de paix pour le conflit Israël/Palestine connaît des avancées notables, grâce notamment aux efforts continus des États-Unis, ou encore à la participation désormais active de la diplomatie chinoise, quel signal envoyons-nous en supprimant ce poste dédié à un conflit planétaire et sans précédent? L'Union européenne se résigne-t-elle à n'avoir plus aucun rôle décisif sur la scène internationale? Et quel message d'espoir cela envoie-t-il aux peuples?

Cette suppression de poste affaiblit la fonction de représentant spécial, elle ne peut pas rester sans réaction. C'est pourquoi je demande à la haute représentante pour les affaires étrangères de donner aux citoyens que je représente les raisons précises de cette décision, et de les informer des outils d'influence de substitution de l'Union européenne au Moyen-Orient suite à l'abandon de cette fonction.

Réponse donnée par M[me] Asthon, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(24 mars 2014)

L'UE a contribué fréquemment à la reprise des négociations de paix actuelles entre Israël et la Palestine, facilitées par les États-Unis. Elle continue de soutenir ces efforts par tous les moyens à sa disposition. La paix et la stabilité au Moyen-Orient font partie des intérêts fondamentaux et des principales priorités en matière de politique étrangère de l'UE. Dans ses conclusions du 16 décembre 2013, le Conseil des affaires étrangères a souligné ce fait et promis aux deux parties un ensemble sans précédent de mesures de soutien en matière politique, économique et de sécurité, dans le cadre d'un accord sur le statut définitif.

M[me] Ashton coopère pleinement avec Israël et l'Autorité palestinienne, ainsi qu'avec les États-Unis et les autres membres du Quatuor. Elle a toujours soutenu sur la scène internationale une solution au conflit fondée sur la coexistence de deux États.

Dans le cadre de ces efforts, elle a bénéficié de l'appui du secrétaire général adjoint H. Schmid et d'autres hauts fonctionnaires du SEAE, et a travaillé en étroite collaboration avec l'ambassadeur A. Reinicke, en sa qualité de représentant spécial de l'Union européenne (RSUE), pendant presque deux ans. Le travail de l'ambassadeur A. Reinicke est certes très apprécié, comme en témoignent les conclusions du Conseil de décembre 2013, mais un accord sur la prolongation de son mandat n'a pas pu être trouvé en novembre 2013, à la suite d'une évaluation générale similaire des représentants spéciaux de l'UE en juin dernier.

À ce moment clé du processus de paix, Madame Ashton continue de s'engager, à titre personnel et au nom de l'équipe du SEAE, à renforcer la contribution et le soutien de l'UE au processus de paix au Moyen-Orient.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000493/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(20 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Abolition of the post of EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process

The role of EU Special Representative was created in 1996, in order to represent the European Union in regions or countries that are experiencing major unrest and with the aim of actively participating in building peace, stability and the rule of law. Mr Andreas Reinicke has held the office of EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process since February 2012.

In 2009, with the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon and the formation of the European External Action Service, the power to create and appoint special representatives has been granted to the High Representative for Foreign Affairs, and no longer to Member States. Baroness Ashton recently decided to do away with the position of Special Representative for the Middle East and, despite fierce opposition from Member States, her position has not changed.

I am wondering about a number of things: at a time when the peace process for the Israel/Palestine conflict is making significant progress, thanks in particular to the continued efforts of the United States of America, or to the future active involvement of Chinese diplomacy, what kind of signal are we sending out by doing away with this post, which is dedicated to resolving an unprecedented global conflict? Is the European Union resigning itself to no longer playing a decisive role on the international scene? And what message of hope does this send to the people?

The abolition of this post weakens the role of special representative; it cannot pass by unchallenged. It is for that reason that I am asking the High Representative to explain to the citizens that I represent exactly why this decision has been made and to tell them what tools of influence the European Union is replacing this role with in the Middle East?

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

The EU has consistently contributed to the resumption of the present — US brokered — peace negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian sides and continues to support these efforts by all means at its disposal. Peace and stability in the Middle East belong to the EU's fundamental interests and key foreign policy priorities. The Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 16 December 2013 underlined this fact and promised an unprecedented package of European political, economic and security support to both parties in the context of a final status agreement.

The HR/VP has been fully engaged with both Israel and the Palestinian Authority as well as the US and other members of the Middle East Quartet and has consistently supported the two-state solution to the conflict on the international scene.

In these efforts, she has been assisted by Deputy Secretary General H. Schmid and other EEAS senior officials, working in close coordination with Ambassador A. Reinicke, in his function of the EU Special Representative (EUSR) for almost two years. Ambassador A. Reinicke's work has been appreciated as expressed in December 2013 Council Conclusions. Nevertheless an agreement on extension of his mandate was not found in November 2013, following a similar general review of EUSRs in June.

At this key time in the peace process, the HR/VP will pursue her personal engagement and that the EEAS team to reinforce the EU role and support to the Middle East Peace Process.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000497/14
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(20 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Casi di rinvio pregiudiziale — rispetto delle norme UE

Premesso che:

— la supremazia del diritto dell'Unione sugli ordinamenti nazionali è stata ribadita dalla Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea non solo nei confronti dei giudici nazionali (cfr. Simmenthal), ma anche di tutti gli organi dell'amministrazione (cfr. F.lli Costanzo), abbiano le disposizioni di diritto interno natura legislativa, ovvero amministrativa (cfr. Ciola);

— la giurisprudenza consolidata della Suprema Corte di cassazione (da ultimo Sent. ss.uu. 9151/2008) riconosce natura giurisdizionale alla funzione di autodichia svolta dalle Camere del Parlamento attraverso propri organi e rimette alla competenza giurisdizionale esclusiva delle Camere ogni questione concernente le operazioni elettorali, escludendo in proposito qualsivoglia ulteriore possibilità di ricorso giurisdizionale di diritto interno;

considerato che:

— l'articolo 258 TFUE attribuisce alla Commissione la funzione di controllo al fine di garantire il rispetto e l'effettiva applicazione del diritto dell'Unione da parte degli Stati membri e che, nell'esercizio di tale funzione, la Commissione vigila anche alla salvaguardia del ruolo che in materia è stato affidato alle autorità nazionali e in particolare a quelle giurisdizionali;

— l'articolo 267, terzo comma, TFUE dispone nel senso che quando una questione pregiudiziale di diritto dell'Unione è sollevata in un giudizio pendente davanti a un organo giurisdizionale nazionale, avverso le cui decisioni non possa proporsi un ricorso giurisdizionale di diritto interno, tale organo giurisdizionale è tenuto a rivolgersi alla Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea;

— il rinvio pregiudiziale alla Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea da parte delle giurisdizioni nazionali ha rappresentato uno dei più significativi strumenti che il diritto dell'Unione predispone al fine della sua attuazione e della sua corretta applicazione;

può la Commissione far sapere se, quando è sollevata una questione pregiudiziale sull'interpretazione del diritto dell'Unione, gli organi che hanno all'interno delle Camere funzioni giurisdizionali sono tenuti a rivolgersi alla Corte a norma dell'articolo 267, terzo comma, TFUE?

Risposta di José Manuel Barroso a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2014)

Non spetta alla Commissione stabilire se un organo nazionale costituisca o meno un «organo giurisdizionale nazionale» ai sensi dell'articolo 267 TFUE né, in caso affermativo, valutare se si tratta di un organo avverso le cui decisioni non possa proporsi un ricorso giurisdizionale di diritto interno ai sensi del terzo comma della medesima disposizione.

Spetta alla Corte di giustizia, qualora sia adita in via pregiudiziale, stabilire se la domanda soddisfa i criteri di cui all'articolo 267 TFUE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000497/14
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(20 January 2014)

Subject: Referrals for a preliminary ruling — compliance with EU regulations

Given that:

— as reasserted by the Court of Justice of the European Union, the supremacy of EC law over national law applies not just to national courts and tribunals (cf. Simmenthal) but also to all administrative authorities (cf. F.lli Costanzo), and provisions of national law may be legislative or administrative (cf. Ciola);

— settled case-law of the Italian Court of Cassation (most recently judgment 9151/2008 of the Joint Chambers) recognises the legal right of the Italian Houses of Parliament to exercise legal powers through their own offices, and places under their sole jurisdiction any issue concerning the election process, thereby ruling out any possible judicial remedy under national law;

and considering that:

— Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) grants powers of control to the Commission in order to ensure that EC law is adhered to and properly applied in the Member States, and that, in exercising such powers, the Commission seeks to preserve the responsibilities entrusted to the national authorities and in particular to the courts and tribunals;

— pursuant to Article 267(3) TFEU, where any question of EC law referred for a preliminary ruling is raised in a case pending before a court or tribunal of a Member State against whose decisions there is no judicial remedy under national law, that court or tribunal shall bring the matter before the Court of Justice of the European Union;

— when a court or tribunal of a Member State refers to the Court of Justice of the European Union for a preliminary ruling, this constitutes one of the most powerful instruments available under EC law to ensure its implementation and proper application;

can the Commission state whether, when any question concerning the interpretation of EC law referred for a preliminary ruling is raised, the offices fulfilling judicial roles within the Italian Houses of Parliament are required to bring the matter before the Court of Justice of the European Union, pursuant to Article 267(3) TFEU?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(27 mars 2014)

La Commission n'est pas compétente pour déterminer si un organe national constitue ou non une «juridiction nationale» au sens de l'article 267 TFUE ni, dans l'affirmative, pour apprécier s'il s'agit d'un organe dont les décisions ne sont pas susceptibles d'un recours juridictionnel de droit interne au sens du troisième alinéa de la même disposition.

C'est la Cour de justice qui, lorsqu'elle est saisie à titre préjudiciel, détermine si l'auteur de la demande satisfait aux critères de l'article 267 TFUE.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000509/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(21 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Programma Erasmus+ e traduzioni

La Federazione esperantista italiana ha evidenziato un problema nel bando Erasmus+. Finora, solo l'invito a presentare proposte è stato tradotto nelle 23 lingue ufficiali, mentre il programma, il regolamento e i documenti di presentazione sono stati pubblicati soltanto in inglese. Le traduzioni nelle altre 23 lingue ufficiali dell'Unione non saranno disponibili prima dell'aprile 2014.

Tuttavia, la prima scadenza per presentare progetti nel quadro di Erasmus+ è il 17 marzo 2014, quasi un mese prima della scadenza in questione. Il programma Erasmus+ distribuisce somme importanti pari a più di 14 miliardi di euro e questi fondi sono stati versati da tutti i cittadini europei, non solo dai madrelingua inglese. La mancata traduzione del bando offre un vantaggio a tutti coloro che parlano inglese, ma soprattutto rappresenta una contraddizione rispetto al motto e ai fondamenti dell'Unione europea: «Uniti nella diversità».

Può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se reputa che occorra tradurre i testi in questione in tutte le lingue ufficiali prima della scadenza;

2. perché i documenti non siano stati tradotti almeno nelle altre lingue di lavoro dell'UE;

3. quanta parte del budget destinato a Erasmus+ è utilizzato per le traduzioni?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(11 marzo 2014)

La Commissione può confermare di avere indetto l'invito a presentare proposte per Erasmus+ nelle 23 lingue ufficiali dell'UE. La pubblicazione è avvenuta il 12/12/2013, il giorno successivo all'adozione del nuovo regolamento Erasmus+ dal parte del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio.

La Commissione ha dato istruzioni a tutte le agenzie nazionali chiamate ad attuare per suo conto il programma Erasmus+ a livello nazionale di fornire ai potenziali richiedenti, nelle rispettive lingue, tutte le necessarie informazioni sull'invito a presentare proposte. Le candidature possono essere presentate in una qualsiasi delle lingue ufficiali. Pertanto la Commissione non ritiene che alcun gruppo di candidati potenziali sia stato posto in una situazione di svantaggio.

La Guida del programma Erasmus+, che fornisce informazioni dettagliate su tutte le azioni previste nell'ambito del programma, è per il momento disponibile soltanto in inglese. È un documento lungo attualmente in via di traduzione ad opera dei servizi della Commissione che stanno traducendo simultaneamente guide analoghe in relazione ad altri nuovi programmi dell'UE. La Guida sarà messa a disposizione in tutte le lingue il prima possibile.

Considerato che l'invito presentare proposte per Erasmus+ è stato tradotto in tutte le lingue ufficiali dell'UE e considerato l'aiuto che possono fornire le agenzie nazionali, la Commissione non ha ravvisato nessun motivo per ritardare il primo invito in attesa della traduzione della Guida del programma. In effetti, un simile ritardo avrebbe un impatto negativo sostanziale sui cittadini e sulle organizzazioni dell'UE che desiderino partecipare al programma.

Il bilancio per la traduzione della Guida del programma Erasmus+ ammonta a meno dello 0,02 % del bilancio complessivo disponibile per Erasmus+ nel 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000509/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(21 January 2014)

Subject: Erasmus+ programme and translations

The Italian Esperanto Federation has pointed out a problem with the Erasmus+ tender. So far, only the call for proposals has been translated into the 23 official languages, while the programme, regulations and submission documents have been published in English alone. Translations into the other 23 official EU languages will not be available before April 2014.

However, the first deadline for submission of projects under Erasmus+ is 17 March 2014, almost one month earlier than that date. Erasmus+ distributes substantial sums, more than 14 billion euros, and these funds have been paid by all European citizens, not just English native speakers. Failure to translate the tender gives an advantage to everyone who speaks English but, more importantly, stands in contradiction of the motto and founding principles of the European Union: 'United in diversity'.

Can the Commission clarify:

1. whether it thinks that the texts in question should be translated into all the official languages before the deadline;

2. why the documents have not been translated at least into the other working languages of the EU;

3. what proportion of the budget for Erasmus+ is used for translation?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2014)

The Commission can confirm that it launched the call for proposals for Erasmus+ in the 23 official EU languages. This launch took place on 12.12.2013, the day after the adoption by the European Parliament and Council of the new Erasmus+ Regulation.

The Commission has instructed all National Agencies, which implement Erasmus+ on behalf of the Commission at national level, to provide potential applicants with all necessary supporting information on the call in their own language. Applications can be submitted in any official language. Thus the Commission does not consider that any group of potential applicants has been put at a disadvantage.

The Erasmus+ Programme Guide, which provides detailed information about all actions under the Programme, is as yet only available in English. It is a long document that is currently being translated by the Commission's services, which are also simultaneously translating similar guides in respect of the other new EU programmes. The Guide will be made available in all languages as soon as possible.

Given that the Erasmus+ call for proposals was translated into all official EU languages and given the support available from National Agencies, the Commission saw no justification for delaying the first call while awaiting translation of the Programme Guide. Indeed, any such delay would have had a substantial negative impact on EU citizens and organisations wishing to participate in the programme.

The budget for the translation of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide amounts to less than 0,02% of the total budget available for Erasmus+ for 2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000536/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(21 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Navi da guerra iraniane dirette verso l'Atlantico

Il 21 gennaio 2014 i notiziari iraniani e occidentali hanno riportato la notizia secondo cui l'Iran ha inviato delle navi da guerra nell'Oceano Atlantico. Secondo la televisione di Stato iraniana, è la prima volta nella storia della Repubblica islamica che l'Iran invia delle navi in missione nell'Atlantico. L'agenzia di stampa Tasnim, legata al corpo delle Guardie della rivoluzione, ha annunciato che la 29a flotta iraniana è partita per l'Atlantico al fine di proteggere navi da carico, tra cui il cacciatorpediniere Salaban e la nave d'appoggio Kharg, in grado di trasportare elicotteri.

La flotta è salpata il 21 gennaio dal porto dalla città portuale di Bandar Abbas e sarà utilizzata a fini di intelligence, combattimento e formazione. Secondo l'Associated Press, l'Iran spera di dimostrare la sua potenza militare in tutto il Medio Oriente, dal momento che invia già regolarmente le sue navi da guerra nel golfo di Aden. Nel 2012 il governo iraniano si era addirittura vantato di mirare a portare le sue navi nelle acque internazionali al largo della costa statunitense.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza della decisione dell'Iran di inviare le sue navi nell'Atlantico e qual è la sua posizione al riguardo?

2. È l'Unione pronta a chiedere alle autorità iraniane di spiegare i motivi della decisione di inviare la 29a flotta, che comprende un cacciatorpediniere?

3. Ritiene l'Unione che, alla luce dell'ammorbidimento delle relazioni tra l'Iran e l'Occidente, Teheran possa cogliere l'opportunità di ampliare la sua presenza in tutto il Medio Oriente e oltre?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è stata informata della presenza di navi da guerra iraniane nell'Oceano Atlantico, annunciata dai media iraniani e internazionali.

L'articolo 90 della Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sul diritto del mare sancisce che ogni Stato ha il diritto di far navigare nell'alto mare navi battenti la sua bandiera.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000536/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(21 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Iranian warships head to the Atlantic

On 21 January 2014 both Western and Iranian news services reported that Iran had deployed warships to the Atlantic Ocean. According to Iranian state television, this is the first time in the history of the Islamic Republic that Iran has sent ships on a mission to the Atlantic. The news service Tasnim, which is linked to Iran's Revolutionary Guards, announced that Iran's 29th fleet of warships departed for the Atlantic in order to protect cargo ships. These include the destroyer ship the Salaban and the Kharg logistic warship, which is capable of carrying helicopters.

The fleet set sail on 21 January from the port city of Bandar Abbas, and will be used for intelligence, combat and training purposes. According to the Associated Press, Iran hopes to demonstrate its military power across the Middle East. It already regularly deploys warships to the Gulf of Aden. In 2012, the Iranian government even boasted that it aimed to put ships in international waters off the US coast.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of Iran's decision to deploy ships to the Atlantic, and what is her position on the issue?

2. Is the EU prepared to ask the Iranian authorities to explain the reasons behind their decision to deploy the 29th fleet, which includes a naval destroyer?

3. Does the EU believe that, in light of softening relations between Iran and the West, Tehran may take the opportunity to expand its military presence across the Middle East and beyond?

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

The HR/VP is aware of reports of the deployment of Iranian warships to the Atlantic Ocean, as announced in the Iranian and international media.

Article 90 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea codifies the right of every State to sail ships flying its flag on the high seas.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000550/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(21 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Bando «Erasmus +»

Il 12 dicembre 2013 è stato pubblicato il primo bando riguardante «ERASMUS +», il nuovo programma 2014-2020 dell'Unione europea di finanziamento per l'istruzione, la formazione, la gioventù e lo sport.

— Sul sito della Commissione, la guida al programma è attualmente disponibile solo in inglese e non nelle altre 23 lingue ufficiali dell'Unione;

— il bando ha grande importanza visto che, nella sua nuova formulazione, coinvolgerà fino a 4 milioni di persone che potranno beneficiare di opportunità di istruzione e formazione all'estero tra il 2014 e il 2020;

— la pubblicazione del bando, ancorché non ancora adottato dall'autorità legislativa europea, risponde all'esigenza di permettere ai potenziali beneficiari delle sovvenzioni unionali di preparare le loro proposte in tempo utile;

— la prima scadenza è fissata per il 17 marzo 2014 e ciò, in assenza di una tempestiva traduzione del testo, rappresenta uno svantaggio per chi non conosce la lingua inglese;

— tenuto conto del principio di non discriminazione e dell'esigenza di rispettare le diversità linguistiche, enunciati negli articoli 21 e 22 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea;

premesso quanto sopra, si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai quesiti seguenti:

1. reputa la Commissione che quanto sopra riportato incida negativamente, nell'immediato, sulle pari opportunità di partecipazione al programma «Erasmus +»?

2. reputa la Commissione di dover elaborare una nuova pianificazione delle scadenze del programma, tale da consentire a tutti gli interessati a partecipare al bando di prendere visione della guida al programma nella propria lingua, e di presentare in tal modo le proposte in tempo utile?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(12 marzo 2014)

La Commissione può confermare di avere indetto l'invito a presentare proposte per Erasmus+ nelle 23 lingue ufficiali dell'UE. La pubblicazione è avvenuta il 12/12/2013, il giorno successivo all'adozione del nuovo regolamento Erasmus+ dal parte del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio.

La Commissione ha dato istruzioni a tutte le agenzie nazionali chiamate ad attuare per suo conto il programma Erasmus+ a livello nazionale di fornire ai potenziali richiedenti, nelle rispettive lingue, tutte le necessarie informazioni sull'invito a presentare proposte. Le candidature possono essere presentate in una qualsiasi delle lingue ufficiali. Pertanto la Commissione non ritiene che alcun gruppo di candidati potenziali sia stato posto in una situazione di svantaggio.

La Guida del programma Erasmus+, che fornisce informazioni dettagliate su tutte le azioni previste nell'ambito del programma, è per il momento disponibile soltanto in inglese. È un documento lungo attualmente in via di traduzione ad opera dei servizi della Commissione che stanno traducendo simultaneamente guide analoghe in relazione ad altri nuovi programmi dell'UE. La Guida sarà messa a disposizione in tutte le lingue il prima possibile.

Considerato che l'invito presentare proposte per Erasmus+ è stato tradotto in tutte le lingue ufficiali dell'UE e considerato l'aiuto che possono fornire le agenzie nazionali, la Commissione non ha ravvisato nessun motivo per ritardare il primo invito in attesa della traduzione della Guida del programma. In effetti, un simile ritardo avrebbe un impatto negativo sostanziale sui cittadini e sulle organizzazioni dell'UE che desiderino partecipare al programma.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000550/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(21 January 2014)

Subject: Call for proposals for 'Erasmus +'

On 12 December 2013 the first call for proposals for 'ERASMUS +', the new European Union 2014-2020 programme for the funding of education, training, youth and sport was announced.

— On the Commission's website, the guide to this programme is currently available in English only, and not the other 23 official languages of the Union;

— the call for proposals is of prime importance given that, in its new formulation, it will target up to 4 million people who may be eligible for educational and training opportunities abroad between 2014 and 2020;

— although not yet adopted by the European legislative authority, the publication of this call for proposals is a response to the need to allow prospective beneficiaries of Union grants to prepare their proposals in good time;

— the first deadline has been set at 17 March 2014 which, unless a translation of the call for proposals is provided in good time, places persons unfamiliar with the English language at a disadvantage;

— in view of the principle of non-discrimination and the need to respect linguistic diversity laid down in Articles 21 and 22 of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights;

in consideration of the above, the Commission is asked to answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission consider that the situation described above will, in the immediate future, impact negatively on equality of opportunities for participation in the 'Erasmus +' programme?

2. Does the Commission consider it necessary to draw up a new schedule of deadlines for the programme to enable all persons interested in participating in the call for proposals to access a guide to the programme in their own language, and hence submit proposals in good time?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2014)

The Commission can confirm that it published the call for proposals for Erasmus+ in the 23 official EU languages on 12/12/2013, the day after adoption of the new Erasmus+ Regulation by the European Parliament and Council.

The Commission has instructed all National Agencies, which implement Erasmus+ on behalf of the Commission at national level, to provide potential applicants with all necessary supporting information on the call in their own language. Applications can be submitted in any official EU language. Thus the Commission does not consider that any group of potential applicants has been put at a disadvantage.

The Erasmus+ Programme Guide, which provides detailed information about all actions under the Programme, is as yet only available in English. It is a long document that is currently being translated by the Commission's services, which are also translating similar guides for the other new EU programmes. The Guide will be made available in all languages as soon as possible.

Given that the Erasmus+ call for proposals was translated into all official EU languages and given the support available from National Agencies, the Commission saw no justification for rescheduling the deadlines of the first call while awaiting translation of the Programme Guide. Indeed, any such delay would have had a substantial negative impact on EU citizens and organisations wishing to participate in the programme.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000551/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(21 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Informazioni sulla scomparsa di due cittadini italiani

Due cittadini italiani, Francesco Scalise e Luciano Gallo, operai edili di origini calabresi, sono stati rapiti in Libia da un gruppo armato nei pressi del villaggio di Martuba, tra le città di Derna e Tobruk. I due operai si trovavano da cinque mesi nel paese nordafricano per eseguire dei lavori con una società edile, la General World, quando nella giornata di venerdì 17 gennaio sono stati vittime dell'aggressione.

— Considerando che la notizia, riportata dall'agenzia libica «Lana» (che ha citato il racconto dell'autista dei due cittadini italiani), è stata confermata dal consolato italiano a Bengasi e dal ministero degli Esteri italiano;

— considerando che la crisi economica che ha interessato molti paesi europei spinge sempre di più i lavoratori delle regioni più colpite, in particolar modo quelle del Sud Italia, a cercare sbocchi professionali in altri paesi del Nord Africa e del Medio Oriente, dove tuttavia è più alto il rischio per la sicurezza dei lavoratori;

— considerando gli strumenti in materia di diritti dell'uomo che la Libia ha firmato, tra cui la Convenzione internazionale del 2004 per la tutela dei diritti di tutti i lavoratori migranti e dei membri delle loro famiglie;

— considerando la cooperazione pratica in materia di migrazione UE-Libia e l'agenda sulla cooperazione in materia di migrazione firmata dalla Commissione e dalla Libia il 5 ottobre 2010;

tutto ciò premesso, ritiene la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante opportuno attivare tutti i canali istituzionali e investigativi di cui dispone, in collaborazione con le autorità italiane e libiche, al fine di giungere quanto prima alla liberazione dei due cittadini italiani?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/VicepresidenteCatherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(26 giugno 2014)

I due cittadini italiani (Francesco Scalise e Luciano Gallo), rapiti vicino alla città di Derna nel gennaio 2014, sono stati rilasciati nel febbraio 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000551/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(21 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Information on the disappearance of two Italian citizens

Two Italian citizens, Francesco Scalise and Luciano Gallo, construction workers of Calabrian origin, were kidnapped in Libya by an armed gang near the village of Martuba between the towns of Derna and Tobruk. The two workers had been in the North African country for five months, working for a construction company, General World, when they were the victims of the attack on Friday 17 January.

— In view of the fact that news of the attack, reported by the Libyan news agency 'Lana' (which cites the account provided by the driver of the two Italian citizens) has been confirmed by the Italian Consulate in Bengasi and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

— In view of the fact that the economic crisis which has affected many European countries is driving increasing numbers of workers in the regions most affected, in particular in the south of Italy, to seek employment opportunities in countries in North Africa and the Middle East, in which however there is the highest risk to their safety;

— In view of the human rights instruments of which Libya is a signatory, including the 2004 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families;

— In view of the practical cooperation agreement on the matter of EU-Libya migration and the agenda on migration cooperation signed by the Commission and Libya on 5 October 2010;

In full consideration of the above, does the Vice-President/High Commissioner consider it appropriate to activate all the institutional and investigative channels at her disposal, in collaboration with the Italian and Libyan authorities, to achieve the release of these two Italian citizens as soon as possible?

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

The two Italian citizens, Mr Francesco Scalise and Mr Luciano Gallo, who were kidnapped close to the city of Derna in January 2014, were released in February 2014.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000562/14
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(21 janvier 2014)

Objet: Macro-région Méditerranée: une résolution, et après?

Le 3 juillet 2012, le Parlement européen a approuvé la résolution portant sur «l'évolution des stratégies macro-régionales de l'UE: pratiques actuelles et perspectives d'avenir, notamment en Méditerranée» (2011/2179(INI)). Le Comité économique et social européen et le Comité des régions ont, depuis, publié un avis sur la question (ECO/342; COTER-V-042). Les régions concernées ont, elles aussi, affirmé leur intérêt d'avoir un outil permettant de coordonner des actions entre les pays du sud de l'Europe et ceux du voisinage. Bien que la situation politique de certains pays soit instable, elle ne doit pas être un frein à l'élaboration d'une stratégie pour cette région. Le dynamisme politique et économique engendré par une stratégie macro-régionale structurerait cet espace essentiel pour le développement de l'Europe et de son voisinage méditerranéen.

Quelle suite la Commission envisage-t-elle de donner à cette ambition?

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(25 mars 2014)

La Commission a souligné, dans son rapport concernant la valeur ajoutée des stratégies macrorégionales ([1]), que de nouvelles initiatives ne devraient être entreprises que s'il existe des besoins spécifiques d'une coopération renforcée et à haut niveau, démontrant clairement une valeur ajoutée au niveau de l'UE et au niveau macrorégional, qui devrait ensuite se traduire par un nombre limité d'objectifs bien définis. Sur la base de ces recommandations et des conclusions du Conseil d'octobre 2013, le Conseil a chargé la Commission de préparer deux nouvelles stratégies macrorégionales, pour la région de l'Adriatique et de la mer Ionienne ainsi que pour la région alpine, toutes deux ayant de forts liens politiques et une longue tradition de coopération dans leurs régions respectives.

Les pays qui souhaitent coopérer de façon plus étroite et qui remplissent certains critères, notamment ceux qui sont mentionnés dans le rapport de 2013, peuvent demander une stratégie macrorégionale par l'intermédiaire du Conseil. Comme condition préalable fondamentale, les pays participants doivent être prêts à traduire leur engagement politique en ressources administratives et à faire la preuve de leur capacité de produire des résultats concrets et clairs.

La Commission accueille favorablement toutes les initiatives en faveur d'une utilisation plus efficace des nombreuses sources de financement existantes pour la région méditerranéenne, notamment les nombreux programmes de coopération territoriale 2014-2020 qui seront mis en œuvre dans la région, et encourage les partenaires de programme à maximiser les synergies avec les autres bailleurs de fonds et à faire une utilisation optimale de l'Union pour la Méditerranée.

([1])Juin 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000562/14
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(21 January 2014)

Subject: Mediterranean macro-region: next steps

On 3 July 2012, Parliament adopted a resolution on the evolution of EU macro-regional strategies: present practice and future prospects, especially in the Mediterranean (2011/2179(INI)). The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions have since published an opinion on the subject (ECO/342; COTER-V-042). The regions concerned have also expressed an interest in a system for coordinating measures taken by southern European and neighbouring countries. Although the political situation in some countries is unstable, this would not necessarily be an impediment to the development of a strategy for this region. The political and economic impetus generated by a macro-regional strategy would help to create a structure for an area which is essential to the development of Europe and its Mediterranean neighbours.

What action does the Commission plan to take to achieve this goal?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

The Commission has stressed in its report on the added value of macro-regional strategies ([1]) that new initiatives should only be launched if there are particular needs for improved and high-level cooperation, demonstrating a clear added value at EU and macro-regional level, which should then be translated into a limited number of well-defined objectives. Based on these recommendations and the Council conclusions of October 2013, the Council mandated the Commission to prepare two new macro-regional strategies, for the Adriatic & Ionian Region and the Alpine Region, both with strong political ties and a history of cooperation in their respective regions.

Countries which wish to cooperate more closely and fulfill certain criteria, in particular those stipulated in the 2013 report, may request a macro-regional strategy through the Council. As a key pre-requisite, the participating countries must be ready to translate the political commitment into administrative resources, and to demonstrate their capacity to bring forward practical and clear results.

The Commission welcomes any moves towards a better use of the many existing sources of funding for the Mediterranean area, including the numerous 2014-2020 territorial cooperation programmes which will operate there, and encourages programme partners to maximise synergies with the other donors and making best use of the Union for the Mediterranean.

([1]) June 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000582/14
ao Conselho
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(22 de janeiro de 2014)

Assunto: Cortes nas bolsas de doutoramento e pós-doutoramento em Portugal

Realiza-se hoje em Portugal uma concentração nacional de membros da comunidade científica, em protesto contra os cortes recentes nas bolsas de investigação e, em geral, no orçamento da ciência e da investigação.

O mais recente concurso para atribuição de bolsas individuais, da Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, determinou uma redução das bolsas de doutoramento em 50 % (dos 3 416 candidatos para bolsas de doutoramento, só 298 receberam a bolsa) e das bolsas de pós-doutoramento em 70 % (só 233 de 2 305 cientistas candidatos receberam bolsa). Está assim em causa a vida de milhares de candidatos e o desenvolvimento e continuidade de milhares de projetos de investigação, agora seriamente comprometidos. Muitos centros de investigação ficarão esvaziados do enorme potencial de massa crítica e de trabalhadores que, em muitos casos, garantem o funcionamento destes centros, sendo peças essenciais do sistema científico nacional. Para muitos destes investigadores, a emigração será a única hipótese. Outros mudarão de área. Em qualquer dos casos, estamos perante um desperdício de todo o investimento que o país fez na sua formação. É muito provável que o país acabe por perder uma grande percentagem dos investigadores que formou e financiou durante vários anos.

Esta situação contraria frontalmente todos os discursos sobre uma alegada aposta na ciência e na inovação no período 2014-2020. Como sabemos, Portugal ainda não atingiu as metas há muito estabelecidas relativamente ao nível do investimento em ciência e naqueles que trabalham em ciência. Agora, corre o risco de se afastar mais ainda dessas metas.

Perguntamos ao Conselho:

1. Tendo em conta a importância que tem sido atribuída às questões da ciência e inovação, discutiu ou pretende discutir este assunto numa próxima reunião?

2. Em que outros países a evolução da atribuição de bolsas de investigação tem paralelo com o que sucedeu em Portugal?

Resposta
(14 de abril de 2014)

O Conselho não debateu nem tenciona debater a questão levantada pelos senhores deputados, uma vez que não se trata de assunto da sua competência. O financiamento dos sistemas de investigação nacionais é da competência dos Estados-Membros, incluindo o financiamento de doutoramentos e pós-doutoramentos.

Para obter informações completas e atualizadas sobre as políticas nacionais e a sua execução pelas organizações que financiam e realizam investigação em cada Estado-Membro, os senhores deputados são convidados a dirigir-se à Comissão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000582/14
to the Council
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(22 January 2014)

Subject: Cuts in the funding for doctorate and post-doctorate degrees in Portugal

There is today, in Portugal, a national rallying of members of the scientific community protesting against the recent cuts in research funding and, in general, in the budget for science and research.

The most recent competition for the awarding of individual funding, from the Foundation for Science and Technology, showed a reduction of 50% in funding for doctorates (of the 3416 candidates for doctorate funding, only 298 received funding) and of 70% in post-doctorate funding (only 233 out of 2 305 candidate scientists received funding). The lives of thousands of candidates and the development and continuation of thousands of research projects are thus now seriously compromised. Many research centres will be stripped of the enormous critical mass and workforce potential which, in many cases, guarantee the functioning of these centres, constituting essential elements in the national scientific system. For many of these research workers, emigration will be the only option. Others will move to a different area. In either of these events we would be wasting all the investment which the country made in training them. It is very probable that the country will end up losing a large percentage of the research workers which it trained and funded over several years.

This situation would be in direct conflict with all the talk of a supposed backing of science and innovation in the period 2014-2020. As we are already aware, Portugal has not yet reached the targets established long ago in respect of the level of investment in science and in those who work in the scientific field. It now runs the risk of being even further away from achieving these targets.

We would ask the Council:

1. Taking into consideration the importance which has been attributed to matters of science and innovation, has the Council discussed or does it intend to discuss this matter in a forthcoming meeting?

2. In which other countries has the progress in awarding funding for research followed a path similar to that in Portugal?

Reply
(14 April 2014)

The Council has not discussed and does not intend to discuss the issue raised by the Honourable Members, as it does not fall within its sphere of competence. Funding of national research systems falls within the Member States' competence, including the funding of doctoral and post-doctoral degrees.

For detailed and up-to-date information on national policies and their implementation by organisations that fund and perform research in individual Member States, the Honourable Members are kindly invited to turn to the Commission.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000606/14
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(22 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Nielegalna eksploatacja bogactw naturalnych w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej

W dniu 5 grudnia 2013 r. Rada Bezpieczeństwa ONZ jednogłośnie przyjęła rezolucję 2127(2013) w sprawie Republiki Środkowoafrykańskiej, w której *„potępia nielegalną eksploatację bogactw naturalnych w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej, która sprzyja przedłużającemu się konfliktowi, a także podkreśla znaczenie położenia kresu tej nielegalnej działalności, w tym również poprzez wywarcie odpowiedniej presji na ugrupowania zbrojne, handlarzy i wszystkie inne zamieszane podmioty"*. Rada Bezpieczeństwa wyraziła również zdecydowaną wolę nałożenia ukierunkowanych sankcji na tych, którzy zakłócają pokój oraz działają na szkodę stabilności i bezpieczeństwa m.in. poprzez wspieranie nielegalnych ugrupowań zbrojnych lub siatek przestępczych dzięki nielegalnej eksploatacji bogactw naturalnych, w tym diamentów.

Czy w związku z powyższym Komisja zamierza wywrzeć presję na ugrupowania zbrojne i inne podmioty zamieszane w nielegalną eksploatację bogactw naturalnych w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej?

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

UE opracowała kompleksowe podejście koncentrujące się przede wszystkim na stabilności, ale także na budowaniu zdolności instytucjonalnej państwa i poprawie zarządzania. W celu zagwarantowania, by broń z UE nie trafiała do ugrupowań zbrojnych w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej, UE przyjęła decyzję Rady 2013/798/WPZiB z dnia 23 grudnia 2013 r. w sprawie środków ograniczających wobec Republiki Środkowoafrykańskiej ([1]) zmienioną decyzją Rady 2014/125/WPZiB z dnia 10 marca 2014 r. ([2]). Akt ten wdraża rezolucję Rady Bezpieczeństwa ONZ (RB ONZ) nr 2127 (2013) z dnia 5 grudnia 2013 r. i nr 2134 (2014) z dnia 28 stycznia 2014 r., poprzez wprowadzenie embarga na handel bronią wobec Republiki Środkowoafrykańskiej oraz zamrożenie funduszy i zasobów gospodarczych pewnych osób, które prowadzą albo wspierają działania zagrażające pokojowi, bezpieczeństwu i stabilności w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej.

UE przyjęła FLEGT (plan działań Unii Europejskiej na rzecz egzekwowania prawa, zarządzania i handlu w dziedzinie leśnictwa) w roku 2003 r. Dnia 28 listopada 2011 r. podpisano z Republiką Środkowoafrykańską dwustronną dobrowolną umowę o partnerstwie, na mocy której strony dążą do zagwarantowania, że tylko produkty z drewna pochodzącego z legalnego źródła przywożone są do UE z Republiki Środkowoafrykańskiej.

W wyniku kryzysu górnictwo Republiki Środkowoafrykańskiej zostało czasowo zawieszone w ramach systemu certyfikacji procesu Kimberley (SCPK), w drodze decyzji administracyjnej w sprawie Republiki Środkowoafrykańskiej z dnia 23 maja 2013 r. Republika Środkowoafrykańska nie ma więc prawa do prowadzenia handlu surowcem diamentowym. Decyzja administracyjna PK w sprawie Republiki Środkowoafrykańskiej została przywrócona na posiedzeniu plenarnym SCPK, które odbyło się w Johannesburgu w listopadzie 2013 r. Sytuacja poddana będzie ponownej ocenie podczas międzysesyjnego posiedzenia PK w Szanghaju (Chiny) w czerwcu 2014 r. Na posiedzeniu plenarnym zwrócono się do grupy roboczej ds. monitorowania (obecnie pod przewodnictwem UE), aby monitorowała sytuację, w porozumieniu z pozostałymi organami roboczymi PK.

([1]) Dz.U. L 352 z 24.12.2013, s. 51.
([2]) Dz.U. L 70 z 11.3.2014, s. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000606/14
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(22 January 2014)

Subject: Illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Central African Republic

On 5 December 2013, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2127(2013) on the Central African Republic (CAR), which 'condemns the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the CAR which contributes to the perpetuation of the conflict, and underlines the importance of bringing an end to these illegal activities, including by applying the necessary pressure on the armed groups, traffickers and all other actors involved'. The Security Council also expressed its strong intent to impose targeted sanctions against those who undermine peace, stability and security by, among other things, 'supporting the illegal armed groups or criminal networks through the illicit exploitation of natural resources, including diamonds'.

In the light of the above, does the Commission intend to apply pressure on armed groups and other actors involved in the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the CAR?

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

The EU has a comprehensive approach focusing on stability first, but also on building state capacity and improving governance. In order to ensure that arms do not flow to armed groups in CAR from the EU, the EU has concluded Council Decision 2013/798/CFSP of 23 December 2013 concerning restrictive measures against the CAR ([1]) as amended by Council Decision 2014/125/CFSP of 10 March 2014 ([2]). This implements UNSC Resolution (UNSCR) 2127 (2013) of 5 December 2013 and UNSCR 2134 (2014) of 28 January 2014, by providing for an arms embargo against the CAR, and the freezing of funds and economic resources of certain persons engaging in or providing support for acts that undermine the peace, stability or security of the CAR.

The EU adopted its FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) Action Plan in 2003. A bilateral Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) has been signed with CAR on 28 November 2011, through which parties aim to ensure that only legally-sourced timber products originating in the CAR are imported into the EU.

For mining industries, as a result of the crisis, CAR was temporarily suspended from the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) by the Administrative Decision on Central African Republic dated 23 May 2013. So, CAR does not have the right to trade in rough diamonds. The KP's Administrative Decision on CAR was re-instated by the KPCS Plenary meeting in Johannesburg in November 2013.The situation will be reviewed again at the KP Inter-sessional meeting in Shanghai, China in June 2014. The plenary has requested the Working Group on Monitoring (currently chaired by the EU) to keep the situation under review, in consultation with the other working bodies of the KP.

([1]) OJ L 352, 24.12.2013, p. 51.
([2]) OJ L 70, 11.3.2014, p 22.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000610/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(22 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Denunce per reati contro le donne

La procura di Roma ha registrato, nell'ultimo anno, un forte incremento del numero di denunce contro reati di genere. Le denunce sono passate da 5475 a 7295, un aumento del 33 %.

Le denunce per violenza sessuale, compresa quella di gruppo, sono aumentate da 712 a 742, i maltrattamenti in famiglia da 892 notizie di reato a 1156 (+30 %). I casi di stalking denunciati sono saliti da 1118 casi a 1184.

L'aumento di denunce può essere collegato a un aumento dei reati, ma non è da escludere che siano le vittime a decidere di denunciare in un maggior numero di casi che in passato. Un dato di fatto è però l'aumento dei fermi e degli arresti in flagranza di reato, passati da 155 a 218. In totale, sono state emesse 317 misure cautelari contro le 208 del 2012, quasi il 50 % in più.

Alla luce di questi dati, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza di questo trend in Italia e se altri paesi europei registrano un mutamento simile;

2. dispone di dati aggiornati sugli altri Stati membri e se dispone di dati mediani per l'intero territorio dell'Unione;

3. se in altri Stati membri esistono esempi di legislazione e/o buone pratiche in relazione all'educazione, la rieducazione e le misure cautelari che hanno apportato una significativa riduzione dei reati di genere.

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(1º aprile 2014)

Il piano d'azione per l'attuazione del programma di Stoccolma, la Carta per le donne e la strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015 dimostrano l'impegno della Commissione nella lotta contro la violenza sulle donne.

Nell'ambito dei programmi Progress e Daphne la Commissione ha erogato fondi ad autorità pubbliche e ad organizzazioni della società civile a sostegno di iniziative contro la violenza sulle donne. Il programma «Diritti, uguaglianza e cittadinanza» sovvenziona, come ha fatto in precedenza il programma Daphne, attività volte a combattere le violenze contro bambini, giovani e donne, come anche nei confronti di altri gruppi a rischio, in particolare quelli a rischio di violenza in relazioni strette.

Non sono disponibili a livello unionale dati ufficiali comparabili sulla violenza contro le donne. Per conoscere meglio la diffusione del fenomeno, la Commissione sta studiando il modo di utilizzare le statistiche Eurostat esistenti e partecipa attivamente ai lavori dell'Istituto europeo per l'uguaglianza di genere. Il 5 marzo 2014 la FRA ([1]) ha inoltre pubblicato un'indagine su come le donne vivono la violenza.

([1]) Agenzia dell'Unione europea per i diritti fondamentali (Fundamental Rights Agency).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000610/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(22 January 2014)

Subject: Reported crimes against women

Over the past year, the Public Prosecution Service in Rome has recorded a sharp rise in reported crimes of this kind, with the number rising from 5 475 to 7 295 — an increase of 33%.

Reported incidents of sexual assault, including gang rape, have risen from 712 to 742, of domestic abuse from 892 to 1 156 (+30%), and of stalking from 1 118 to 1 184.

The rise in the number of reported cases could be linked to an increase in the number of crimes, but it might also be that more victims are deciding to report cases now than have done in the past. It is however an undisputed fact that the number of people arrested and detained having been caught in the act of committing a crime has risen from 155 to 218. A total of 317 supervision orders were issued in 2013, compared with 208 in 2012 — a rise of almost 50%.

In the light of these data, please could the Commission clarify whether:

1. it is aware of this trend in Italy and whether other European countries are experiencing a similar trend;

2. it has up-to-date figures for other Member States and averages for the entire European Union;

3. there are examples of legislation and/or good practices in other Member States concerning education, re-education and preventive measures that have led to a significant reduction in these types of crime?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

The action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme, the Women's Charter and the strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 show the Commission's commitment to combating violence against women.

The Commission has provided funding to governments and civil society organisations to support initiatives to tackle violence against women, under the Daphne and Progress programmes. The Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme will now provide funding just as Daphne did for activities that aim to fight 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.

There are no official and comparable data available at EU level on violence against women. To improve knowledge of the prevalence of this phenomenon, the Commission is exploring ways to use current Eurostat surveys and is actively participating in the work of the European Institute for Gender Equality. In addition on 5 March 2014, the FRA ([1]) released a survey on women's experiences of violence.

([1]) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000613/14
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(22 januari 2014)

Betreft: EU hypocriet bij Israelbeleid

Tijdens zijn jaarlijkse nieuwjaarstoespraak op 16 januari jl. noemde de premier van Israël, Benjamin Netanyahu, de EU hypocriet. Hij kwam tot deze uitspraak omdat de ambassadeur van Israël door de EU op het matje is geroepen vanwege het Israëlisch nederzettingenbeleid op de westelijke Jordaanoever. Dit terwijl de Palestijnse ambassadeur nog nooit is ontboden voor het propageren van de vernietiging van de staat Israël door de Palestijnse Autoriteit (PA) ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van dit verwijt aan haar adres door de heer Netanyahu?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven of en hoe vaak de EU de Palestijnse ambassadeur heeft ontboden vanwege een oproep van de Palestijnse Autoriteit om Israël te vernietigen?

3. Als de EU de Palestijnse ambassadeur hierover nooit heeft ontboden, wat is daarvan de reden? Vindt u wellicht een oproep van de PA tot de vernietiging van een bevriende staat niet erg?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven of de EU de Palestijnse ambassadeur ooit heeft ontboden vanwege een laakbare handeling onder de verantwoordelijkheid van de PA jegens Israël, bij voorbeeld vanwege een aanval vanuit Palestijns gebied op het grondgebied van Israël in welke vorm dan ook?

5. Als blijkt dat de Palestijnse ambassadeur nauwelijks ter verantwoording wordt geroepen door de EU, kunt u dan stellen dat er een onevenwichtigheid is bij het beoordelen van het beleid van enerzijds de Israëlische regering en anderzijds de PA?

6. Denkt de Commissie dat een dergelijke onevenwichtigheid bevorderlijk is voor het vredesproces?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(10 april 2014)

De HV/VV is op de hoogte van de door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde kwestie.

De EU heeft in verschillende conclusies van de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken herhaaldelijk beide partijen ertoe opgeroepen om acties te voorkomen die de huidige vredesonderhandelingen ondermijnen, waaronder ook het doen van opruiende uitspraken.

De strijd tegen opruiing is één van de prioritaire doelstellingen van het nieuwe ENB-actieplan dat de EU met de Palestijnse Autoriteit heeft gesloten en dat in 2013 in werking is getreden. De kwestie komt ook regelmatig ter sprake in het kader van de dialoog over mensenrechtenkwesties tussen de EU en de Palestijnse Autoriteit.

([1]) http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/israel-pm-slams-eu-hypocrisy-on-settlements.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000613/14
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(22 January 2014)

Subject: The EU's hypocritical policy towards Israel

During his annual New Year's address on 16 January 2014, the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, called the EU hypocritical. He did so because the EU had called the Ambassador of Israel to account for Israel's settlements policy in the West Bank while the Palestinian Ambassador had never been summoned to account for the Palestinian Authority (PA)'s propagation of the destruction of the State of Israel.

1. Is the Commission aware of Mr Netanyahu's criticism of the Commission?

2. Can the Commission indicate whether and how many times the EU has summoned the Palestinian Ambassador because of a call by the PA for the destruction of Israel?

3. If the EU has never summoned the Palestinian Ambassador for this reason, why not? Does the Commission not consider there to be anything wrong with a call by the PA for the destruction of a friendly State?

4. Can the Commission indicate whether the EU has ever summoned the Palestinian Ambassador because of a reprehensible action against Israel for which the PA was responsible, for example because of an attack on Israeli territory launched from Palestinian territory, in whatever form?

5. If it becomes clear that the Palestinian Ambassador is hardly called to account by the EU, can there be said to be an imbalance in the ways in which the respective policies of the Israeli Government and the PA are judged?

6. Does the Commission think that the peace process benefits from such an imbalance?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the issue mentioned by the Honourable Member.

The EU, in various Foreign Affairs Council conclusions, has repeatedly called on both parties to prevent actions that undermine the current peace negotiations, including incitement.

The need to fight incitement is one of the priority objectives outlined in the new ENP Action Plan concluded between the EU and the Palestinian Authority which entered into force in 2013. The matter is also regularly raised in the framework the EU-Palestinian dialogue on human rights issues.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000614/14
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(22 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Polenizarea naturală

În luna decembrie 2013, un studiu al Universității din Gottingen a relevat faptul că polenizarea făcută de albine crește calitatea și termenul de valabilitate al căpșunilor, ceea ce înseamnă economisirea a milioane de euro, cât costă procesul polenizării pe cale artificială.

Având în vedere efectele benefice ale polenizării naturale, consideră Comisia oportună derularea unei campanii de informare a agricultorilor în legătură cu beneficiile polenizării de către albine și poate îndemna statele membre ca din bugetul privind inovarea să aloce finanțare pentru polenizarea naturală?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(4 aprilie 2014)

Comisia este la curent cu lucrarea științifică publicată în revista „Natura" în decembrie 2013 privind polenizarea naturală.

Pentru următoarea perioadă de programare 2014-2020, politica de dezvoltare rurală [Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1305/2013 ([1])] prevede, în ceea ce privește statele membre, diferite măsuri menite să vină în sprijinul transferului de cunoștințe și al acțiunilor de informare (articolul 14), al practicilor în domeniul agromediului (articolul 28), precum și al activităților de cooperare, inclusiv acțiuni de animare și proiecte (pilot) (articolul 35).

Mai mult, în conformitate cu Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1308/2013, sprijinul acordat de Uniune pentru apicultură este oferit și prin intermediul programelor apicole naționale, prin luarea de măsuri diverse având efecte pozitive asupra coloniilor de albine. Programele apicole vor continua să fie cofinanțate în perioada 2014-2016 în toate cele 28 de state membre.

Aceste măsuri pot fi utilizate de statele membre, în funcție de prioritățile lor, pentru a contribui la creșterea gradului de sensibilizare a agricultorilor cu privire la efectul benefic al polenizării naturale.

În plus, la 30 ianuarie 2014, Comisia a adoptat o propunere ([2]) care ar urma să permită statelor membre să crească gradul de sensibilizare al elevilor cu privire la agricultură, sănătate și aspecte legate de mediu. Propunerea, care este în curs de examinare de către colegislatori, ar oferi statelor membre posibilitatea de a include teme educaționale, cum ar fi avantajele polenizării, sau chiar de a distribui miere în școli cu diverse ocazii, în temeiul măsurilor educaționale de sprijin.

În fine, Regulamentul privind plățile directe [(Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1307/2013] introduce o serie de bune practici ecologice noi. Aceste practici vor avea efecte benefice asupra conservării habitatelor naturale și a biodiversității (agricole) și vor contribui la conservarea albinelor sănătoase și a altor polenizatori.

([1]) JO L 347, 20.12.2013.
([2]) COM(2014) 32.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000614/14
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(22 January 2014)

Subject: Natural pollination

In December 2013, a study conducted by the University of Göttingen revealed that pollination by honey bees increases the quality and shelf life of strawberries, thereby saving millions of euros in artificial pollination costs.

Given the beneficial effects of natural pollination, is the Commission in favour of a campaign to raise farmers' awareness of the benefits of pollination by honey bees and can it call on the Member States to earmark appropriations from the innovation budget to promote natural pollination?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2014)

The Commission is aware of the scientific paper published in Nature in December 2013 on natural pollination.

For the next programming period 2014-2020, Rural Development Policy (Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 ([1])) provides Member States with different measures to support knowledge transfer and information actions (Article 14), agro-environmental practices (Article 28) as well as cooperation activities including animation and (pilot) projects (Article 35).

Moreover, under Regulation (EU) No 1308/13, the Union support for beekeeping is also provided through the national apiculture programmes via different measures that have positive effects on colonies of honeybees. Apiculture programmes will continue to be co-funded for 2014-2016 in all 28 Member States.

These measures can be used by Member States, in accordance with their priorities, to contribute to raise farmers' awareness on the benefit of natural pollination.

Additionally, the Commission has adopted on 30 January 2014 a proposal ([2]) that would enable Member States to increase the awareness of school children about agriculture, health and environment-related topics. The proposal, which is under examination by the co-legislators, would give Member States a possibility to include educational topics, such as the benefits of pollination, or even occasionally distribute honey in schools under the supporting educational measures.

Finally, the Direct Payment Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013) introduces new mandatory green practices. These practices will have beneficial effects on the preservation of natural environments and of (agricultural) biodiversity and will contribute to the conservation of healthy bees and other pollinators.

([1]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.
([2]) COM(2014)32.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000646/14
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(23. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Steigende Zahl von Asylbewerbern aus Serbien

Die Zahlen von Asylsuchenden aus Serbien (vorwiegend Roma) sind im vergangenen Jahr massiv angestiegen: Alleine in Deutschland wurde 2013 ein Anstieg der Asylwerberzahlen aus Serbien um rund 40 % verzeichnet. Ob es sich dabei tatsächlich um Asylsuchende handelt, ist äußerst fraglich, zumal Serbien als offizielles EU-Beitrittskandidatenland eigentlich als sicheres Herkunftsland eingestuft werden müsste. Selbst Serbiens Ministerpräsident Ivica Dacic räumte ein, dass die „Asylsuchenden" aus Serbien hauptsächlich von den in Aussicht gestellten Sozialleistungen angelockt werden.

1. Am 20.1.2014 starteten die offiziellen EU-Beitrittsgespräche mit Serbien. Wie kann es sein, dass immer mehr Asylanträge aus einem offiziellen Beitrittskandidatenland gestellt werden? Gibt es in Serbien politische Verfolgungen, die Asylanträge in der EU rechtfertigen würden? Stecken dahinter nicht vielmehr, wie selbst der serbische Ministerpräsident einräumt, Wirtschafts- und Sozialmigranten?

2. Wird Serbien offiziell als sicheres Herkunftsland eingestuft? Wenn nein, warum nicht? Wie beurteilt die Kommission das Vorhaben der deutschen Bundesregierung, künftig Bürgern aus sämtlichen Westbalkanstaaten und somit auch Serbien den Asylstatus abzuerkennen?

3. Sieht die Kommission Handlungsbedarf, um gegen missbräuchliche Asylanträge aus dem Westbalkan vorzugehen? Wenn ja, wie gedenkt die Kommission vorzugehen? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(4. April 2014)

In den fünf Mitgliedstaaten, die von serbischen Asylanträgen am meisten betroffen sind, ist deren Zahl in den ersten 11 Monaten des Jahres 2013 im Vergleich zum selben Zeitraum 2012 um 10 % gefallen, und während der ersten neun Monate betrug die Ablehnungsquote 98,7 %. Dies ist tatsächlich ein Hinweis darauf, dass die meisten Asylanträge unbegründet sind.

Nach der Nichtigerklärung von Artikel 29 Absatz 1 der Asylverfahrensrichtlinie ([1]) durch den Gerichtshof ([2]) gibt es keine bestimmte Rechtsgrundlage, nach der ein Drittstaat auf EU-Ebene als sicheres Herkunftsland gilt. Nach der Asylverfahrensrichtlinie ist es den Mitgliedstaaten gestattet, einen Drittstaat als sicher einzustufen, wenn er gemäß den in der Richtlinie festgelegten Kriterien als solcher angesehen werden kann. Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen darüber vor, dass die deutschen Behörden diese Kriterien bei der Entscheidung darüber, ob sie diese Möglichkeit in Bezug auf die Westbalkanstaaten anwenden, nicht einhalten. Wenn ein Drittstaat als sicheres Herkunftsland eingestuft wird, können die Mitgliedstaaten von der Sicherheit dieses Herkunftslandes für den jeweiligen Antragsteller ausgehen, außer besondere Umstände des Antragstellers lassen anderes vermuten.

Was sonstige Schritte zur Verhinderung unbegründeter Asylanträge betrifft, so verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-011658/2013 ([3]) zum Überwachungsmechanismus für die Zeit nach der Visaliberalisierung. Die Kommission fordert Serbien weiterhin dazu auf, zielgerichtete Maßnahmen umzusetzen, unter anderem durch angemessene Strategien zur sozioökonomischen Integration der am meisten gefährdeten Gruppen. Am 9. Januar 2014 trat außerdem die Verordnung Nr. 1289/2013 ([4]) in Kraft, die einen Aussetzungsmechanismus festlegt, der zu genau festgelegten Bedingungen und nach gründlicher Prüfung durch die Kommission die vorübergehende Wiedereinführung von Visumbestimmungen für Bürger aus Drittstaaten in einer Notlage gestattet, die auf den Missbrauch der Befreiung von der Visumpflicht zurückzuführen ist.

([1]) Richtlinie 2005/85/EG des Rates vom 1. Dezember 2005 über Mindestnormen für Verfahren in den Mitgliedstaaten zur Zuerkennung und Aberkennung der Flüchtlingseigenschaft, ABl. L 326 vom 13.12.2005, S. 13-34.
([2]) Rechtssache C-133/06.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-011658&language=DE
([4]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1289/2013 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 11. Dezember 2013 zur Änderung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 539/2001 des Rates zur Aufstellung der Liste der Drittländer, deren Staatsangehörige beim Überschreiten der Außengrenzen im Besitz eines Visums sein müssen, sowie der Liste der Drittländer, deren Staatsangehörige von dieser Visumpflicht befreit sind, ABl. L 347 vom 20.12.2013, S. 74-80.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000646/14
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(23 January 2014)

Subject: Increasing number of asylum-seekers from Serbia

The number of asylum-seekers from Serbia (predominantly Roma) has increased enormously in the past year: In Germany alone the number of asylum-seekers from Serbia increased by some 40% in 2013. Whether the people in question are actually asylum-seekers is extremely questionable, since Serbia, as an official EU candidate country, would have to be classified as a safe country of origin. Even Serbia's Prime Minister, Ivica Dacic, acknowledged that the 'asylum-seekers' from Serbia are mainly attracted by the prospect of social benefits.

1. The official EU entry discussion with Serbia began on 20/1/2014. How can it be that more and more asylum applications are coming from an official candidate country? Are there political persecutions in Serbia that would justify asylum applications in the EU? Are the applicants not instead, as even the Serbian Prime Minister acknowledges, economic and social migrants?

2. Is Serbia officially classified as a safe country of origin? If not, why not? What is the Commission's view of the German Federal Government's intention to disqualify from eligibility citizens from all Western Balkan countries, and therefore also Serbia, in the future?

3. Does the Commission see a need for action to prevent improper asylum applications from the western Balkans? If so, how does the Commission intend to proceed? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2014)

In the five Member States (MS) most affected the number of Serbian asylum applications dropped by 10% during the first 11 months of 2013 compared to the same time period in 2012 with a refusal rate of 98.7% during the first nine months, which is indeed an indicator that most are unfounded.

Following the annulment of Article 29 (1) Asylum Procedures Directive (APD) ([1]) by the Court of Justice ([2]) there is no specific legal basis providing for the designation of a third country as a safe country of origin at EU level. The APD allows MS to designate a third country as safe where it can be regarded as such in accordance with the criteria established in the APD. The Commission has no indication that the German authorities are not respecting these criteria when deciding on using this possibility in respect of Western Balkans countries. Where a third country is designated as a safe country of origin MS are able to presume its safety for a particular applicant unless the specific circumstances of the applicant indicate otherwise.

As regards other steps taken towards preventing unfounded asylum applications the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-011658/2013 ([3]) on the post visa liberalisation monitoring mechanism. The Commission continues to encourage Serbia to implement targeted measures, including through adequate policies for the socioeconomic integration of most vulnerable groups. Also, on 9 January 2014 Regulation 1289/2013 ([4]) entered into force establishing a suspension mechanism allowing, under strict conditions and after thorough assessment by the Commission, for the temporary reintroduction of visa requirements for citizens of third countries in case of an emergency situation caused by the abuse of the visa-free regime.

([1]) Council Directive 2005/85/EC of 1 December 2005 on minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status; OJ L 326, 13.12.2005, p. 13-34.
([2]) Case C-133/06.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-011658&language=EN
([4]) Regulation (EU) No 1289/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement; OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 74-80.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-000664/14
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2014. január 23.)

Tárgy: Az EU Izraellel történő partnerségének megerősítése

A zsidó hagyományok Európában nagy múltra tekintenek vissza, az uniós tagállamok kultúráinak pedig szerves részét képezik az izraelita kulturális és vallási szokások. Az európai kultúra kialakulásában (zeneművészet, festészet, közgazdaságtan, orvostudomány stb.) nélkülözhetetlen szerepet játszanak az európai zsidó emberek, akik nélkül nem teremtődhetett volna meg ezen sokszínű és fejlett társadalmi környezet.

Számos tagállamban, mint például Franciaországban, Magyarországon, Nagy-Britanniában, Svédországban és Belgiumban jelentős számú zsidó kisebbség él, amelyek számottevően hozzájárulnak az adott ország és ezzel együtt Európa gazdasági gyarapodásához és általános fejlődéséhez. Izrael a nehéz körülmények ellenére a Közel-Kelet legfejlettebb demokratikus államává alakult és jelentős gazdasági versenyképességgel rendelkezik, illetve számos európai ország fontos kereskedelmi partnere.

Európának nemcsak tradicionális érdeke fűződik az Izraellel való szorosabb szövetség kialakításához.

Véleményem szerint az EU-nak erkölcsi kötelessége a fentebb említett tényezők alapján szorosabbra fognia az Izraellel folytatott gazdasági és társadalmi kooperációt, amely mindkét partner részére kölcsönös előnyökkel járna.

A Bizottságnak milyen intézkedési tervei vannak 2014 és 2020 között az Izraellel való kapcsolat erősítése érdekében?

Catherine Ashton főképviselő/alelnök válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. április 15.)

Az Európai Unió és Izrael közötti kapcsolatok erősek és a 2005-ben elfogadott cselekvési terv alapján jól alakulnak. A közelmúlt sikerei közé tartozik, hogy aláírták az átfogó légi közlekedési megállapodást, hatályba lépett az ipari termékek megfelelőségértékeléséről és elfogadásáról szóló megállapodás a gyógyszerekre vonatkozóan, valamint megállapodás született arról, hogy Izrael részt vesz a „Horizont 2020” uniós kutatási programban. Izrael számára az Európai Unió az első számú kereskedelmi partner. Ami a politikai kapcsolatokat illeti, 2013-ban Izraelbe látogatott Catherine Ashton főképviselő/alelnök, valamint Antonio Tajani és Siim Kallas, a Bizottság alelnökei, Izrael elnöke pedig Brüsszelben tett látogatást.

Mindkét fél szándékában áll a kétoldalú kapcsolatok további elmélyítése. Ennek során az a 60 konkrét tevékenység áll majd a középpontban, amelyeket az EU–Izrael Társulási Tanács 2012. július 24-én még végrehajtandóként határozott meg. Ezenfelül a jelenlegi béketárgyalásokkal összefüggésben a Külügyek Tanácsa 2013 decemberében jelezte, hogy egy végleges békemegállapodás megkötése esetén az Európai Unió különleges kiemelt partnerséget ajánl Izrael és a jövőbeli palesztin állam számára, mely partnerség magába foglalja az európai piacokhoz való fokozott hozzáférés biztosítását, a kulturális és tudományos kapcsolatok szorosabbá fűzését, a kereskedelem és a beruházások előmozdítását, valamint a vállalkozások közötti kapcsolatok ösztönzését. Ugyancsak a tervek között szerepel a politikai párbeszéd elmélyítése és a biztonsági együttműködés fokozása.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000664/14
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(23 January 2014)

Subject: Strengthening the partnership between the European Union and Israel

Jewish traditions look back upon a great history in Europe and the Israelite cultural and religious customs form an integral part of the cultures of EU member states. European Jewish people have been playing a great part in the development of European culture (music, painting, economics, medicine, etc.) and have been a must for the emergence of such a versatile and developed social environment.

Several member states including France, Hungary, Great Britain, Sweden and Belgium host Jewish minorities with a significant number of members who provide a considerable contribution to the economic growth and general development of the country concerned and, as a result, to those of Europe. Despite its difficult circumstances Israel has become the most developed democratic state in the Middle East — the country shows considerable economic competitiveness while it is an important trading partner for many European countries.

Europe is not only traditionally interested in establishing close alliance with Israel.

I think that the European Union should assume a moral commitment to strengthen the economic and social cooperation with Israel, which would produce mutual benefits to both partners.

What are the action plans the Commission intends to introduce for strengthening the relations with Israel between 2014 and 2020?

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

The EU-Israel relations are strong and are developing well on the basis of the action plan (AP) adopted in 2005. Recent successes are the signature of the Comprehensive Aviation agreement, the entry into force for pharmaceutical products of the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of industrial products (ACAA) and the conclusion of an agreement on the participation of Israel in the EU Horizon 2020 research programme. The EU is the first trading partner for Israel. At political level, the year 2013 was marked by visits to Israel by the HR/VP C. Ashton, Vice-Presidents of the Commission A. Tajani and S. Kallas and the visit of the President of Israel to Brussels.

Both sides intend to continue to deepen the bilateral relations, focusing on the 60 concrete activities in the AP which are still to be implemented as identified by the EU-Israel Association Council of 24 July 2012. In addition, in the context of the current peace talks, the Foreign Affairs Council in December 2013 indicated the EU would offer a Special Privileged Partnership to both Israel and the future state of Palestine in the event of a final peace agreement, which would encompass increased access to the European markets, closer cultural and scientific links, facilitation of trade and investments as well as promotion of business to business relations. An enhanced political dialogue and security cooperation is also foreseen.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-000665/14
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2014. január 23.)

Tárgy: Az egészségügyi adatok kezelése és az azokkal való visszaélés

A betegek egészségügyi adatait (megbetegedés, egészségügyi ellátás, szűrés stb.) tagállami és uniós jogszabály védi. Ezzel szemben a mostanában napvilágra jutott információk alapján az NHS brit egészségügyi hivatal egészségügyi információkat szolgáltatna ki egyes biztosítótársaságok és gyógyszergyártók számára azzal az indoklással, hogy a gyógyászat fejlődése érdekében történne az adatgyűjtés. A közös nyilvántartásba vétel aggodalomra adhat okot, mivel az adatbázis szabályozásának kérdése még nem megoldott.

Epidemiológiai és egyéb közegészségügyi megfontolásból támogatható lenne a rendszer kialakítása és európai szintű bevezetése megfelelő szabályozás kialakítása után. A rendszer számos előnye mellett (járványügy, rákregiszter, gyógyhatású készítmények mellékhatásainak mérése stb.) az adatvédelmi szakemberek nyugtalanságát az emberekről készült egészségügyi információk hozzáférhetősége adja.

Véleményem szerint a betegek és lakosok egészségügyi adatainak a megfelelő jogszabály szerinti védelme mellett ezen rendszerek egészségügyi ellátásba való bekapcsolódása hasznos lenne.

A Bizottságnak milyen intézkedési tervei vannak a betegek egészségügyi adatainak védelme érdekében?

Milyen formában próbálja a Bizottság az egészségügyi információkat felhasználni a gyógyító-megelőző eljárás során?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. április 9.)

A Bizottság számára ismert az NHS (az Egyesült Királyság nemzeti egészségügyi szolgálata) care.data nevű új rendszere. Úgy tűnik, hogy ez a rendszer lehetővé teszi az egészségre vonatkozó személyes adatok kutatási célú nyilvánosságra hozatalát akár gyógyszeripari vállalatok vagy biztosítótársaságok számára is. A care.data nemzeti kezdeményezés.

A rendelkezésre álló információ alapján az Egyesült Királyság adatvédelmi hatósága – az adatvédelmi biztos hivatala (Information Commissioner's Office, ICO) – már foglalkozik az üggyel ([1]). A Bizottság arról is értesült, hogy a polgárok információmegosztással kapcsolatos aggályaira való tekintettel az NHS England április helyett csupán ősszel kezdi az adatgyűjtést a háziorvosoktól, hogy több idő jusson az arra vonatkozó tájékoztatásra, milyen előnyökkel jár az információk felhasználása, milyen megfelelő biztosítékok vannak hatályban és az emberek – amennyiben úgy döntenek – hogyan maradhatnak ki az új rendszerből ([2]).

Ebben az összefüggésben a Bizottság nyomatékosítani kívánja, hogy a különleges adatok – így az egészségi állapotra vonatkozó személyes adatok – feldolgozása a 95/46/EK irányelvben ([3]) meghatározott különleges esetektől ([4]) eltekintve tilos, és az általános adatvédelmi rendeletre vonatkozó javaslatban ([5]) meghatározott különleges esetekben alkalmazandó eltérések kivételével továbbra is tilos marad. Ilyen eltérések többek között akkor alkalmazhatóak, amikor ezt egy adott tagállam nemzeti joga – megfelelő biztosítékok nyújtása mellett – alapvető közérdekből előírja ([6]).

A 2011/24/EU irányelv értelmében a Bizottság törekszik elősegíteni az egészségi állapotra vonatkozó információ közegészségügyi és kutatási célú felhasználásának hatékony módszereit az egészségügyi rendszerek minőségének, biztonságosságának és hatékonyságának javítása érdekében.

([1]) Lásd az ICO által 2013 októberében kibocsátott nyilatkozatot a care.data kapcsán, valamint két új ICO blogbejegyzést: http://ico.org.uk/news/blog
([2]) Az NHS England 2014. február 19-i bejelentése: http://www.england.nhs.uk/2014/02/19/response-info-share/
([3]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 1995. október 24-i 95/46/EK irányelve a személyes adatok feldolgozása vonatkozásában az egyének védelméről és az ilyen adatok szabad áramlásáról, HL L 281., 1995.11.23., 31. o.
([4]) Az irányelv 8. cikkének (1) bekezdése.
([5]) COM(2012) 11.
([6]) Az irányelv 8. cikkének (4) bekezdése.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000665/14
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(23 January 2014)

Subject: Handling healthcare data and the abuse of such

Patient health data (concerning illnesses, health provision, check-ups) are protected by national and EU legislation. However, information released recently suggests that the NHS (the British health agency) plans to disclose health data to certain insurance companies and pharmaceutical manufacturers, as it maintains that such data collection would, it maintains, contribute to the development of medical science. Keeping joint records would give rise to concerns, since the issue of database regulation has not been resolved.

As far as epidemiology and other public health issues are concerned, the development and introduction of the system in Europe could be supported after appropriate regulations have been introduced. While the system may bring numerous benefits with regard to epidemics, the cancer register, monitoring the side effects of medicinal products, etc., data protection specialists are concerned about the accessibility of healthcare data.

I think the introduction of the above systems in health provision would be useful if the health data of patients and the population in general were given appropriate protection by legislation.

What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure the protection of patient health data?

How does the Commission intend to make use of the information in the therapeutic and preventive process?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

The Commission is aware about the new NHS system called Care.data. It appears that this scheme might involve the disclosure of personal data concerning health for research purposes also to pharmaceutical and insurance companies. Care.data is a national initiative.

According to the available information, the UK Data Protection Authority — the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) — is already dealing with this issue ([1]). We have also learned that in view of citizens' concerns about information sharing NHS England will begin collecting data from GP surgeries in the autumn, instead of April, to allow more time to build understanding of the benefits of using the information, what suitable safeguards are in place and how people can opt out if they choose to ([2]).

In this context, the Commission would like to stress that the processing of special categories of data such as personal data concerning health is prohibited, with some derogations in specified cases ([3]) under Directive 95/46/EC ([4]) and will continue to be prohibited with some derogations in specified cases under the proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([5]) (see also our answer to Parliamentary Question E-000846/2013). Such derogations could *inter alia* apply when laid down by national law of a Member State for reasons of substantial public interest, and subject to the provision of suitable safeguards ([6]).

Under Directive 2011/24/EU the Commission seeks to facilitate effective methods for the use of medical information for public health and research to increase quality, safety and efficiency of the healthcare systems.

([1]) See statement of ICO on care.data of October 2013 and two recent ICO blogs http://ico.org.uk/news/blog
([2]) Announcement of NHS England of 19 February 2014. http://www.england.nhs.uk/2014/02/19/response-info-share/
([3]) Article 8(1) of the directive.
([4]) Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.
([5]) COM 2012 (12).
([6]) Article 8(4) of the directive.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000677/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de janeiro de 2014)

Assunto: Investigação no domínio dos comportamentos aditivos e dependências

A «European Federation of Addiction Societies» (EUFAS), que integra associações de diversos países desenvolvendo ação no âmbito da problemática das drogas e das dependências, expressou num documento recente um conjunto de preocupações sobre a importância da investigação em matéria de Comportamentos Aditivos e Dependências.

Nesse documento, a EUFAS apela à Comissão, e em particular a vários comissários (justiça, direitos fundamentais e cidadania; investigação, inovação e ciência; assuntos internos; saúde), para que se reconheça a necessidade de um quadro consistente e sustentável para o desenvolvimento de conhecimento e ferramentas para combater os comportamentos aditivos e as dependências.

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que esforços estão a ser desenvolvidos tendo em vista a criação deste quadro consistente e sustentável?

2. Que medidas estão a ser consideradas, para o período 2014-2020, no âmbito da investigação sobre adições?

3. Que outras medidas estão a ser consideradas no domínio do combate aos comportamentos aditivos e às dependências?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(7 de abril de 2014)

A Comissão tem apoiado a investigação em matéria de dependências através dos programas no domínio da Saúde, do programa Informação e Prevenção em matéria de Droga (2007-2013), do programa Justiça (2014-2020) e do Sétimo Programa-Quadro de atividades em matéria de investigação e desenvolvimento tecnológico (7.° PQ, 2007-2013) da UE. Um dos projetos apoiados, o projeto «Dependência e estilos de vida na Europa Contemporânea — Projeto de reenquadramento da dependência ([1])» (2011-2016), tem por objetivo consolidar e divulgar provas científicas, assim como estimular o debate sobre as abordagens atuais e alternativas às formas de dependência.

O Horizonte 2020 — Programa Quadro de Investigação e Inovação ([2]) (2014-2020) pode também prestar apoio suplementar à investigação sobre as dependências através do seu desafio no plano social «saúde, alterações demográficas e bem-estar».

Um dos temas prioritários da estratégia da UE para combater o alcoolismo de 2006 é desenvolver uma base de dados comum a nível da UE e mantê-la atualizada. A Comissão está também a cooperar com a OCDE e a OMS, a fim de melhorar os conhecimentos sobre o consumo do álcool e sobre os seus efeitos nocivos.

A Estratégia da UE de Luta contra a Droga (2013-2020) ([3]) identifica a investigação como um elemento-chave da política da UE de combate à droga e prevê o investimento em atividades de investigação sobre todos os aspetos deste fenómeno. Realça a necessidade de garantir o financiamento adequado para projetos de investigação e de desenvolvimento no domínio da luta contra a droga a nível da UE e a nível nacional.

O Observatório Europeu da Droga e da Toxicodependência proporciona uma visão global e de caráter factual dos problemas relacionados com as drogas na Europa para apoiar o debate sobre a questão. A Comissão criou e presta apoio a um Fórum da Sociedade Civil sobre a Droga, que reúne organizações não governamentais ativas neste domínio de intervenção, a fim de darem o seu contributo para as políticas da UE em matéria de luta contra a droga.

A Comissão não tenciona apresentar um novo quadro para além dos programas existentes.

([1]) http://www.alicerap.eu/
([2]) COM(2011) 808 final, COM(2011) 811 final.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:402:0001:0010:pt:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000677/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 January 2014)

Subject: Research into addictive behaviours and dependences

The European Federation of Addiction Societies (EUFAS), which is composed of associations of various countries developing strategies within the problem area of drugs and dependences, expressed in a recent document a series of concerns regarding the importance of research into addictive behaviours and dependences.

In this document, EUFAS appeals to the Commission, and in particular to various commissioners (justice, fundamental rights and citizenship; research, innovation and science; internal affairs; health), to recognise the need for a consistent and sustainable framework for the development of knowledge and tools to combat addictive behaviours and dependences.

In view of this, we request the Commission to inform us as to:

1. What efforts are being made with a view to the creation of this consistent and sustainable framework?

2. What measures are under consideration, for the period 2014-2020, in the area of research into addiction?

3. What other measures are under consideration in the area of combating addictive behaviours and dependences?

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

The Commission has supported research on addictions through the EU Health Programmes, the Drug Prevention and Information Programme (2007-2013), the Justice Programme (2014-2020) and the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). One of the supported projects, the Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe — Reframing Addictions Project ([1]), (2011-2016) aims to strengthen and disseminate scientific evidence and to stimulate the debate on current and alternative approaches to addictions.

Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation ([2]) (2014-2020), through its societal challenge 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' may also provide further support to research on addictions.

One of the priority themes of the 2006 EU Alcohol Strategy is to develop and maintain a common evidence base at EU level. The Commission is also cooperating with OECD and WHO to improve knowledge on alcohol use and alcohol related harm.

The EU Drugs Strategy (2013-2020) ([3]) identifies research as a key element of the EU drug policy, and foresees investment in research on all aspects of the drug phenomenon. It stresses the need to ensure adequate financing for drug-related research and development projects at EU and national level.

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction provides a factual overview of European drug problems to support the drugs debate. The Commission has created and provides support to a Civil Society Forum on Drugs, which brings together non-governmental organisations active in this policy area, to provide input for EU policies on drugs.

The Commission does not intend to introduce a new framework beyond the existing Programmes.

([1]) http://www.alicerap.eu/
([2]) COM(2011) 808 final, COM(2011) 811 final.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:402:0001:0010:en:PDF

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-000682/14
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(23 Eanáir 2014)

Ábhar: Sonraí á mbailiú i dtaca le heaspa dídine agus an tacaíocht atá á tabhairt ag AE d'iarrachtaí chun dul i ngleic leis an easpa dídine

De réir an daonáirimh a rinneadh an 10 Aibreán 2011 in Éirinn bhí 3 808 duine sa tír ag fanacht i gcóiríocht atá sainithe do dhaoine gan dídean nó ag codladh amuigh. Tá neart figiúirí agus meastacháin éagsúla ann dóibh siúd in Éirinn atá gan dídean, áfach, agus níl na daoine sin atá gan dídean agus i mbun suiteoireachta nó a bhogann ó chóiríocht amháin go ceann eile gan seoladh buan acu, mar shampla, san áireamh sa daonáireamh. Sa tslí chéanna, tá sé deacair teacht ar fhigiúirí cuimsitheacha don Aontas Eorpach ar an iomlán.

Cuireann an easpa sonraí sin isteach ar an anailís is féidir a dhéanamh ar shonraí déimeagrafacha daoine gan dídean agus bíonn sé deacair, mar sin, beartais spriocdhírithe a chur i bhfeidhm chun freastal ar na riachtanais atá ag daoine gan dídean agus chun dul i ngleic leis an easpa dídine. Chuir rúin de chuid Pharlaimint na hEorpa an 16 Eanáir 2014 maidir le straitéis Eorpach chun dul i gleic leis an easpa dídine béim ar an dtábhacht a bhaineann le bailiúchán sonraí i dtaca le cúrsaí easpa dídine mar bhunchloch beartas ar bith a bheadh sé mar aidhm aige deireadh a chur leis an easpa dídine. An bhfuil sé i gceist ag an gCoimisiún Eorpach bunachar sonraí a bhunú ar mhaithe leis na staitisticí atá ann i dtaca le rátaí easpa dídine agus déimeagrafaic daoine gan dídean in AE a bhailiú le chéile? An gcreideann an Coimisiún go mba chóir sainmhínithe comónta agus nósanna bailiúcháin sonraí comónta a chur i bhfeidhm chun tacú leis an bpróiseas sin?

Cé gur faoi na Ballstáit iad féin atá sé dul i ngleic le cúrsaí easpa dídine, an mbeadh an Coimisiún fós in ann cur síos a dhéanamh ar na bearta atá glactha aige nó a bheidh á nglacadh amach anseo aige chun tacaíocht a thabhairt do na Ballstáit sa mhéid seo? An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún eolas ar leith a thabhairt maidir leis an gcúnamh a bheidh ar fáil ag na Ballstáit faoi na Cistí Struchtúrtha don tréimhse 2014-2020 agus faoin gComhpháirtíocht Infheistíochta Sóisialta agus iad ag iarraidh aghaidh a thabhairt ar an easpa dídine?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Andor thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(18 Márta 2014)

Tabharfaidh an Coimisiún freagra ar an rún ón bParlaimint a ndearna an feisire onórach tagairt dó tríd an ngnáthnós imeachta.

Rinneadh cur chuige straitéiseach maidir le heaspa dídine a chur i láthair i bPacáiste Infheistíochta Sóisialta 2013 ([1]). Sa Phacáiste sin iarrann an Coimisiún ar na Ballstáit aghaidh a thabhairt ar easpa dídine trí bheartais choisctheacha agus beartais atá bunaithe ar thithíocht. Cuimsíonn cur chuige an Phacáiste Infheistíochta Sóisialta sraith gníomhaíochtaí lenar féidir leis an gCoimisiún cabhrú go héifeachtach leis na Ballstáit maidir lena bhfreagracht i dtaca le dul i ngleic le heaspa dídine. Ciallaíonn sé sin bunachar sonraí agus faisnéise a chruthú ar an gcéad dul síos maidir le heaspa dídine agus na bunchúiseanna a bhaineann leis, go háirithe trí staidéar a dhéanamh ar dhíshealbhú agus ar an tionchar a bhíonn aige sin ar easpa dídine agus trí chomhar atá beartaithe leis an Eagraíocht um Chomhar agus Forbairt Eacnamaíochta maidir le tithíocht comhtháite agus seirbhísí sóisialta. Cuirfidh an bunachar sonraí agus eolais sin leis an sainmhíniú ar easpa dídine atá leagtha síos ag an Tíopeolaíocht Eorpach maidir le hEaspa Dídine agus Eisiamh Tithíochta (ETHOS) cheana féin, agus cuirfear torthaí Dhaonáireamh agus Áireamh Tithíochta 2011 leis an mbunachar sin chomh maith. Tá an Coimisiún ag cur malartú dea-bheartas idir na Ballstáit chun cinn trí bhíthin seimineár agus ócáidí de réir téamaí, tríd an mBanc Eolais agus trí bhróisiúr ina ndéantar cur síos ar na treoracha atá le fáil sa Doiciméad Inmheánach Oibre maidir leis an bPacáiste Infheistíochta Sóisialta. Déanann na bearta sonracha sin comhlánú ar an bhfaireachán ar bheartais shóisialta laistigh den Seimeastar Eorpach agus ar chur chun cinn caiteachais ar infheistíocht shóisialta ó Chiste Sóisialta na hEorpa (CSE).

Déanfar measúnú ar éifeachtacht na hinfheistíochta ó CSE maidir le heaspa dídine trí na sonraí maidir le rannpháirtithe chláir CSE atá gan dídean nó a bhfuil eisiamh tithíochta ag goilleadh orthu. Fairis sin, cuirfidh maoiniú ó Chiste Forbraíochta Réigiúnaí na hEorpa le héifeachtúlacht fuinnimh agus le húsáid fuinnimh in-athnuaite, le cuimsiú na bpobal imeallaithe (na Romaigh san áireamh) agus le hathghiniúint uirbeach.

([1]) Féach an Teachtaireacht ón gCoimisiún 'I dTreo Infheistíochta Sóisialta le haghaidh Fáis agus Comhtháthú — lena n-áirítear Ciste Sóisialta na hEorpa 2014-2020 a chur chun feidhme' (COM(2013) 83 final agus na doiciméid a ghabhann leis, go háirithe an Doiciméad Inmheánach Oibre 'Aghaidh a thabhairt ar Easpa Dídine san Aontas Eorpach' (SWD(2013) 42 final).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000682/14
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(23 January 2014)

Subject: Data collection on homelessness and EU support for efforts to combat homelessness

The census of Ireland, conducted on 10 April 2011, reveals that 3 808 people in the country were staying in accommodation designated for the homeless or were sleeping rough. However, the figures and estimates for the homeless in Ireland are quite varied, and, for example, homeless people who are squatting or those of no fixed abode who move from one accommodation to another are not included in the census. Similarly, it is difficult to find comprehensive figures for the European Union as a whole.

The lack of such data affects any analysis on the demographic data on the homeless population and it is difficult, therefore, to implement targeted policies to meet the needs of homeless people and to tackle homelessness. European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2014 on an EU homelessness strategy stressed that data collection is a precondition for the development of policies leading ultimately to the eradication of homelessness. Is it the intention of the European Commission to establish a single database for the existing statistics on the rates of homelessness and on the demographics of homeless people in the EU? Does the Commission believe that common definitions and common data collection procedures should be applied to support this process?

Although combatting homelessness is a matter for individual Member States, could the Commission give an account of the measures it has taken or it intends to take to support Member States in this regard? Could the Commission provide details on the assistance available to Member States under the Structural Funds for the period of 2014-2020 and under the Social Investment Package as they try to address homelessness?

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

The Commission will respond to the Parliament's resolution referred to by the honourable member following the regular procedure.

A strategic approach to homelessness has been presented in the 2013 Social Investment Package (SIP) ([1]). There the Commission calls on Member States to confront homelessness through preventative and housing-led policies. The SIP approach encompasses a series of actions with which the Commission can effectively complement the Member States in their responsibility for tackling homelessness. It implies first the creation of a data and knowledge base on homelessness and on its root causes, notably through a study on eviction and its impact on homelessness and a planned cooperation with OECD on integrated housing and social services. This data and knowledge base will build on the existing ETHOS definition of homelessness definition and will also be fed by the results of the 2011 Population and Housing Census. The Commission is also promoting the exchange of good policies among the Member States through seminars and thematic events, the Knowledge Bank and a brochure disseminating the guidance contained in the SIP Staff Working Document. These specific actions complement the monitoring of social policies within the European Semester and the promotion of spending on social investment via the European Social Fund (ESF).

The effectiveness of ESF investment related to homelessness will be assessed through the data on ESF programs' participants who are homeless or affected by housing exclusion. Moreover funding from the European Regional Development Fund will support energy efficiency and renewable energy use, inclusion of marginalised communities (incl. Roma) and urban regeneration.

([1]) See Commission Communication 'Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion — including implementing the European Social Fund 2014 — 2020' (COM(2013) 83 final and its accompanying documents, especially the Staff Working Document 'Confronting Homelessness in the European Union' (SWD(2013) 42 final).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000691/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Tierversuche in der EU — Alternativen endlich fördern

1. Wie viele Alternativverfahren sind inzwischen EU-weit validiert, wie viele bereits im Arzneibuch aufgenommen?

2. Wie unterstützt die EU den allgemeinen Ersatz von Tierversuchen durch andere Methoden, bzw. wie unterstützt die EU die Umsetzung des RRR-Prinzips bei Tierversuchen?

3. Mit wie viel Euro werden konkrete wissenschaftliche Projekte zur Etablierung/Erforschung von Ersatz- und Refinementmethoden unterstützt?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(1. April 2014)

1. Das EU-Referenz-Laboratorium für Alternativen zu Tierversuchen ([1]) hat rund 50 Testverfahren validiert, darunter auch Verfahren, die in externen Studien bewertet wurden ([2]). Betroffen sind die toxikologischen Bereiche Hautreizungen/-ätzungen/-resorption/-penetration, Phototoxizität, Augenreizungen, schwere Augenschädigung, Hautsensibilisierungen, Genotoxizität, Kanzerogenität, Reproduktionstoxizität und akute orale Toxizität. Viele dieser Verfahren wurden in EU-Rechtsvorschriften und internationalen Programmen aufgegriffen, etwa dem OECD Test Guideline Programme und dem Europäischen Arzneibuch ([3]) ([4]).

2. Die EU erließ 2010 die Richtlinie 2010/63/EU zum Schutz der für wissenschaftliche Zwecke verwendeten Tiere ([5]). Mit der Richtlinie, in der auch mehr Mittel für die Entwicklung, Validierung und Verwendung alternativer Verfahren vorgesehen sind, wird das RRR-Prinzip ([6]) für Tierversuche im EU-Recht gesetzlich verankert.

In der 2005 ins Leben gerufenen Europäischen Partnerschaft für Alternativen zu Tierversuchen ([7]) sind fünf Generaldirektionen ([8]) und Vertreter der Industrie aus sieben Branchen ([9]) vertreten. Die Vision der Partnerschaft ist es, das RRR-Prinzip stärker zu unterstützen, damit die regulatorischen Anforderungen durch eine bessere und stärker prädiktiv ausgerichtete Wissenschaft erfüllt werden können.

3. Im Rahmen des FP7 wurden rund 200 Mio. EUR für tierversuchsfreie Toxikologieprojekte bereitgestellt, hauptsächlich im Gesundheitsbereich. Sechs große Projekte wurden mit insgesamt 140 Mio. EUR durch europäische Verbände im Rahmen von öffentlich-privaten Partnerschaften ([10]) kofinanziert.

Das Arbeitsprogramm 2014-2015 für Horizont 2020 ([11]) umfasst vier Bereiche zur prädiktiven Sicherheit. Für den Bereich Gesundheit ist im Arbeitsprogramm 2015 für den Bereich Gesundheit ein vorläufiges Budget von 30 Mio. EUR vorgesehen; er umfasst auch die tierversuchsfreie prädiktive Sicherheitsprüfung von chemischen Stoffen. Im Rahmen der erneuerten IMI-2-Partnerschaft können weitere Projekte im Zusammenhang mit tierversuchsfreien Sicherheitsbewertungen unterstützt werden.

([1]) EURL ECVAM.
([2]) http://ihcp.jrc.ec.europa.eu/our_labs/eurl-ecvam/eurl-ecvams-validation-process
([3]) http://www.edqm.eu/en/Alternatives_to_Animal_Testing-1483.html?aMotsCles=a%3A1 %3A%7Bs%3A0 %3A%22 %22 %3Ba%3A2 %3A%7Bi%3A0 %3Bs%3A11 %3A%22alternative%22 %3Bi%3A1 %3Bs%3A7 %3A%22methods%22 %3B%7D%7D
([4]) http://www.edqm.eu/en/Achievements-of-the-PhEur-Commission-for-3Rs-1533.html
([5]) ABl. L 276 vom 20.10.2010.
([6]) Grundsatz der Vermeidung, Verminderung und Verbesserung.
([7]) EPAA.
([8]) ENTR, SANCO, ENV, RTD, JRC.
([9]) Agrochemikalien, Tiergesundheit, Chemikalien, Kosmetika, Duftstoffe, Arzneimittel sowie Seifen und Detergentien.
([10]) SEURAT und IMI.
([11]) Veröffentlicht im Dezember 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000691/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23 January 2014)

Subject: Animal testing in the EU — Finally promote alternatives

1. How many alternative methods have now been validated EU-wide, and how many have already been added to the Pharmacopoeia?

2. How is the EU supporting the general replacement of animal testing with other methods, and/or how is the EU supporting the implementation of the RRR strategy in animal testing?

3. What amount in Euro is being spent in support of specific scientific projects for creating/conducting research into replacement and refinement methods?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

1. The EU Reference Laboratory for alternatives to animal testing ([1]) has validated ca. 50 test methods, including those evaluated in external studies ([2]). The toxicological areas are skin irritation/corrosion/absorption/penetration, phototoxicity, eye irritation, severe eye damage, skin sensitisation, genotoxicity, carcinogenicity, reproductive and acute oral toxicity. Many of these methods were taken up into EC law and international programmes, such as the OECD Test Guideline Programme and the European Pharmacopoeia ([3]) ([4]).

2. In 2010, the EU adopted Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes ([5]). The directive anchors the principle of the 3Rs ([6]) for animal testing in EC law as a legal obligation. It also foresees more resources for the development, validation and uptake of alternative approaches.

The European Partnership for Alternative Approaches to Animal Testing ([7]) launched in 2005, gathers 5 Directorates General ([8]) and industry representatives from 7 sectors ([9]). The vision of EPAA is to further the 3Rs for meeting regulatory requirements through better and more predictive science.

3. During FP7, roughly EUR 200 million has been dedicated to animal-free toxicology projects, mainly from the Health theme. Six large projects have been co-financed for a total of EUR 140 million by European federations within public-private partnerships ([10]).

The Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2014-15 ([11]) contains four topics addressing predictive safety. The topic in the Work Programme 2015 for Health, with an indicative budget of EUR 30 million, is on animal-free predictive safety testing of chemical substances. The renewed IMI-2 partnership may support other projects related to animal-free safety assessment.

([1]) EURL ECVAM.
([2]) http://ihcp.jrc.ec.europa.eu/our_labs/eurl-ecvam/eurl-ecvams-validation-process
([3]) http://www.edqm.eu/en/Alternatives_to_Animal_Testing-1483.html?aMotsCles=a%3A1%3A%7Bs%3A0%3A%22%22%3Ba%3A2%3A%7Bi%3A0%3Bs%3A11%3A%22alternative%22%3Bi%3A1%3Bs%3A7%3A%22methods%22%3B%7D%7D
([4]) http://www.edqm.eu/en/Achievements-of-the-PhEur-Commission-for-3Rs-1533.html
([5]) OJ L 276, 20.10.2010.
([6]) Replacement, Reduction and Refinement.
([7]) EPAA.
([8]) ENTR, SANCO, ENV, RTD, JRC.
([9]) agrochemicals, animal health, chemicals, cosmetics, fragrances, pharmaceuticals, and soaps and detergents.
([10]) SEURAT and the IMI.
([11]) published in December 2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000693/14
au Conseil
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 janvier 2014)

Objet: Accord de Genève et rétablissement des liens financiers avec l'Iran

Alors que l'Iran a gelé pour six mois à compter du lundi 20 janvier 2014 une partie de ses activités nucléaires, dans le cadre de l'Accord de Genève, et que les États-Unis, la Chine, la France, le Royaume-Uni, la Russie et l'Allemagne vont lever une partie de leurs sanctions équivalentes à près de 5 milliards d'euros, de nombreuses sociétés européennes qui ont des contrats avec l'Iran restent en difficulté.

Des sommes importantes ne peuvent circuler pour entrer en Iran ou en sortir suite aux sanctions décidées dans le cadre du règlement du Conseil du 23 mars 2012.

Dans ce contexte, le Conseil envisage-t-il, à terme, la levée de l'interdiction faite aux institutions iraniennes d'accéder aux transferts interbancaires SWIFT? Quelles autres actions l'Union européenne entreprend-elle en vue de rétablir les transferts financiers avec l'Iran et lui permettre d'honorer ses contrats avec ses clients européens? Quels moyens l'Union met-elle à disposition pour aider les entreprises européennes pénalisées par les sanctions contre l'Iran?

Réponse
(14 avril 2014)

Les mesures restrictives arrêtées par l'UE à l'encontre de l'Iran visent à porter atteinte au programme nucléaire iranien, aux personnes et aux entités qui soutiennent ce programme et aux recettes du gouvernement iranien qui peuvent être utilisés pour financer le programme. Elles sont ciblées de manière à avoir le plus grand impact possible sur les personnes dont l'UE souhaite influencer le comportement.

Bien qu'il existe des restrictions portant sur les échanges de certains biens et articles, aucune interdiction d'ordre général ne s'applique aux échanges commerciaux avec l'Iran en vertu du régime de sanctions instauré par l'UE. Les transactions autorisées peuvent donc se poursuivre avec l'autorisation des autorités des États membres, selon des procédures clairement définies.

En outre, l'accès à des services spécialisés de messagerie financière (tels que ceux fournis par Swift) n'est interdit qu'aux personnes et entités qui figurent sur les listes établies dans le cadre du régime de sanctions adopté à l'encontre de l'Iran.

Seules certaines grandes banques iraniennes — pas toutes — ont été inscrites sur la liste en raison de leur participation au programme nucléaire iranien. Par conséquent, il subsiste, pour les transferts financiers, un certain nombre de solutions, ce qui garantit la possibilité de poursuivre les transactions avec l'Iran.

L'accord conclu le 24 novembre 2013 à Genève (connu sous le nom de «plan d'action conjoint») concerne les premières étapes visant à parvenir à une solution globale à long terme en ce qui concerne le programme nucléaire iranien. En contrepartie de mesures concrètes prises par l'Iran dans le domaine nucléaire, les autres parties sont convenues de prendre pour une période de six mois des mesures volontaires, lesquelles incluraient, pour ce qui concerne l'UE, la suspension de certaines mesures restrictives.

Le 20 janvier 2014, qui est la date arrêtée pour le début de la mise en œuvre du plan d'action conjoint, l'Union européenne a suspendu l'interdiction de la fourniture de produits d'assurance et de services de transport pour le pétrole brut iranien, l'interdiction de l'importation, de l'achat ou du transport de produits pétrochimiques iraniens et de la fourniture de services associés, de la mise à disposition de navires pour le transport de pétrole brut et de produits pétrochimiques iraniens et l'interdiction du commerce d'or et de métaux précieux avec le gouvernement iranien. Afin de faciliter le commerce légitime avec l'Iran, les seuils d'autorisation en matière de transferts de fonds en provenance et à destination de l'Iran ont été multipliés par dix.

Toutes les autres mesures restrictives restent en place dans le cadre de cette première étape. Les négociations menées entre l'E3/EU+3 et l'Iran en vue de parvenir à une solution globale à long terme au problème nucléaire iranien se poursuivront.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000693/14
to the Council
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 January 2014)

Subject: Geneva Agreement and re-establishment of financial links with Iran

On 20 January 2014 Iran froze some of its nuclear work for six months under the Geneva Agreement, while the US, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United Kingdom are going to lift partial sanctions worth nearly EUR 5 million. However, a great many EU companies which have contracts with Iran remain in difficulty.

Large sums of money cannot be moved into or out of Iran, as a result of sanctions established in the Council's Regulation of 23 March 2012.

Is the Council considering lifting in the long-term the ban on Iranian institutions having access to inter-banking SWIFT transfers? What other action is the European Union taking to re-establish financial transfers with Iran and allow it to honour its contracts with its European customers? How can the European Union help EU businesses penalised by the sanctions imposed on Iran?

Reply
(14 April 2014)

The EU's restrictive measures against Iran are aimed at affecting Iran's nuclear programme, those persons and entities supporting the programme, and revenues of the Iranian government which can be used to fund the programme. They are targeted in such a way as to achieve the maximum impact on those whose behaviour the EU wants to influence.

While there are restrictions on trade in certain goods and items, there are no general prohibitions on trade with Iran under the EU's sanctions regime. Permitted transactions may therefore proceed with the authorisation of Member States' authorities under clearly defined procedures.

Furthermore, access to specialized financial messaging services (such as those provided by Swift) is prohibited only for persons and entities listed under the Iran sanctions regime.

Only certain major Iranian banks — not all — have been designated for their involvement in the Iranian nuclear programme. As a result there are still a number of alternatives for financial transfers. This ensures that such transactions with Iran can continue.

The agreement reached on 24 November 2013 in Geneva (known as the Joint Plan of Action) concerns the first steps aimed at reaching a long-term comprehensive solution regarding the Iranian nuclear programme. In return for concrete steps taken by Iran in the nuclear field, the other parties agreed to undertake certain voluntary measures for a period of six months, which would, for the EU, include the suspension of some restrictive measures.

On 20 January 2014, which was the date agreed for the beginning of the implementation of the Joint Plan of Action, the European Union suspended the prohibition on the provision of insurance and transport for Iranian crude oil, the prohibition on the import, purchase or transport of Iranian petrochemical products and related services, the provision of vessels for the transport of crude oil and petrochemical products, and the prohibition on trade in gold and precious metals with the Government of Iran. In order to ease legitimate trade with Iran, the thresholds for authorising transfers of funds to and from Iran were also increased tenfold.

All other restrictive measures remain in place within the framework of this first step. Negotiations between the E3/EU+3 and Iran with a view to reaching a long-term comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue will continue.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000695/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(23 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Inquinamento e problemi cardiaci

Una nota rivista scientifica britannica ha pubblicato uno studio compiuto da un'equipe internazionale per valutare quanto l'inquinamento atmosferico influisca su problemi di natura cardiaca.

Lo studio, condotto in sette città di cinque paesi europei, ha analizzato un campione di centomila persone, valutando che per ogni aumento nella media annuale di esposizione al particolato di 10 µg/m3 (scarichi di veicoli, industrie e impianti di riscaldamento) vi è un aumento del rischio di attacchi cardiaci del 12 per cento.

Lo studio è durato circa 12 anni e più di 5 mila persone hanno avuto un primo infarto o un ricovero per angina instabile. Soprattutto, i risultati dimostrano che il particolato è l'inquinante più dannoso, anche per concentrazioni sotto i limiti consentiti dall'attuale legislazione europea. Il dato diventa ancora più preoccupante se si considera che quasi il 90 per cento della popolazione mondiale vive in luoghi al di sopra delle linee guida dell'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità.

Alla luce di questi fatti, può la Commissione chiarire quanto segue:

1. è a conoscenza dello studio in questione?

2. È a conoscenza di ulteriori studi che possano confermare i risultati dello studio internazionale o smentirla?

3. Ritiene che le soglie previste dalla legislazione europea debbano essere ulteriormente ridotte al fine di preservare la salute dei cittadini europei?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(10 aprile 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio citato che rientra nello studio paneuropeo ESCAPE concernente gli effetti dell'inquinamento atmosferico sulla salute, finanziato nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro dell'UE per la ricerca e lo sviluppo ([1]). Lo studio ESCAPE comprende studi analoghi a quello menzionato e vari studi confermano gli esiti cui viene fatto riferimento.

L'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS) ha recentemente riesaminato l'insieme degli studi pertinenti sull'impatto dell'inquinamento atmosferico sulla salute ([2]) e ha confermato che esiste la prova scientifica di un nesso di causalità tra l'esposizione al particolato e l'aumento del rischio di cancro ai polmoni e di malattie cardiovascolari (mortalità e morbilità).

Sull'esame dell'OMS si fonda il pacchetto di misure dell'UE «Aria pulita» del 2013 proposto dalla Commissione ([3]). Per ulteriori informazioni, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole deputato alle risposte fornite alle interrogazioni scritte E-014016/2013 e E-002014/2014.

([1]) ESCAPE — European study of cohorts for air pollution effects — http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/88859_en.html
([2]) Cfr. pagine web dell'OMS, http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/air-quality/activities/health-aspects-of-air-pollution-and-review-of-eu-policies-the-revihaap-and-hrapie-projects
([3]) Un programma «Aria pulita» per l'Europa, COM(2013) 918 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000695/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(23 January 2014)

Subject: Pollution and heart problems

A well-known British scientific journal has published a study carried out by an international team to assess to what extent atmospheric pollution influences heart problems.

Carried out in seven cities in five European countries, the study analysed a sample of one hundred thousand people, assessing that for each increase in average annual exposure to particulates of 10 μg/m^3 (from vehicle exhausts, industries and heating installations) there is a 12% increase in the risk of heart attacks.

The study lasted for around 12 years and more than 5 000 people have had a first myocardial infarction or been hospitalised for unstable angina. Above all, the findings show that particulates are the most harmful pollutants, even in concentrations below the limits permitted by current European legislation. There is even greater cause for concern if one considers that almost 90% of the global population lives in places where World Health Organisation guideline levels are exceeded.

In the light of these facts, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. Is it aware of the study in question?

2. Is it aware of other studies that could confirm or deny the findings of the international study?

3. Does it think that the thresholds laid down in European legislation should be further reduced in order to preserve the health of European citizens?

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

The Commission is aware of the study in question. It is part of the pan-European study on air pollution health effects Escape, financed under the Seventh EU Framework Programme on research and Development ([1]). The Escape study includes similar studies to that mentioned and several studies corroborate the findings of this one.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has recently reviewed the full range of relevant studies on air pollution health effects ([2]) and confirmed that there is scientific evidence of a causal relationship between particulate matter exposure and increased risk for lung cancer and cardiovasular diseases (mortality and morbidity).

The WHO review underpins the Commission 2013 EU Clean Air Policy Package ([3]). For more information, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Question E-014016/2013 and E-002014/2014.

([1]) Escape — European study of cohorts for air pollution effects — http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/88859_en.html
([2]) See WHO web page, http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/air-quality/activities/health-aspects-of-air-pollution-and-review-of-eu-policies-the-revihaap-and-hrapie-projects
([3]) Clean Air Policy Programme COM(2013) 918 final.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000710/14
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(24 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Walka z przejawami polskości na Litwie

Na Liwie trwa narastająca walka z przejawami polskości. Litewski sąd zdecydował w ostatnich tygodniach o karaniu Polaków wywieszających tablice z polskimi nazwami ulic.

Zapis o dwujęzycznych tablicach z nazwami ulic obowiązywał do roku 2010 (do tego roku obowiązywała ustawa z roku 1989). Obecnie władze Litwy nie uchwaliły nowej ustawy o mniejszościach narodowych.

Zwracam się do Komisji z zapytaniem:

Czy według Komisji Litwa postępuje zgodnie z prawem w zakresie ochrony praw mniejszości narodowych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(2 maja 2014 r.)

Komisja przywiązuje wielką wagę do ochrony różnorodności językowej, uznając bogate i zróżnicowane dziedzictwo europejskich kultur i języków za nieodłączny element naszej tożsamości. Poszanowanie tej różnorodności jest zapisane w art. 3 Traktatu o Unii Europejskiej (TUE).

Zgodnie z art. 2 TUE poszanowanie praw osób należących do mniejszości jest jedną z podstawowych wartości UE, wspólnych dla wszystkich państw członkowskich. Ponadto art. 21 i 22 Karty praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej zakazują dyskryminacji ze względu na przynależność do mniejszości narodowej i przewidują poszanowanie przez Unię różnorodności kulturowej, religijnej i językowej. Komisja nie posiada jednak uprawnień ogólnych w odniesieniu do mniejszości. Komisja nie posiada także uprawnień w zakresie definiowania mniejszości narodowych, uznawania ich statusu, ich prawa do samostanowienia i autonomii ani posługiwania się językami regionalnymi lub językami mniejszości. Kwestie te należą do kompetencji państw członkowskich. Postanowienia Karty mają zastosowanie do państw członkowskich wyłącznie, gdy wdrażają one prawo Unii.

Na szczeblu europejskim ochronę praw do zachowania tożsamości narodowej, języka i kultury zapewnia Konwencja ramowa Rady Europy o ochronie mniejszości narodowych z dnia 1 lutego 1995 r., której Litwa jest stroną. W zakres mandatu Rady Europy wchodzi między innymi monitorowanie stosowania postanowień tej konwencji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000710/14
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(24 January 2014)

Subject: Attacks on Polish cultural expression in Lithuania

Attacks on Polish cultural expression in Lithuania are on the rise. In recent weeks, a Lithuanian court decided to punish Poles erecting signs with Polish street names.

Legal provisions concerning dual-language street signs ceased to be valid in 2010. Until that year, a 1989 law had been in force. The Lithuanian authorities have since failed to adopt a new law on national minorities.

Does the Commission feel that Lithuania is acting in accordance with laws on the protection of national minorities' rights?

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

The Commission attaches great importance to the protection of linguistic diversity, considering the rich and varied heritage of Europe's cultures and languages an essential component of our identity. Respect for such diversity is enshrined in Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU).

According to Article 2 TEU, the respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities constitutes one of the founding values of the EU that are common to all Member States. Furthermore, Articles 21 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU prohibit discrimination based on membership of a national minority and provide for the respect by the Union of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. However, the Commission has no general powers as regards minorities. In particular, the Commission has no competence over the definition and recognition of national minorities, their self-determination and autonomy or the use of regional or minority languages, which fall under the responsibility of the Member States. The provisions of the Charter are only addressed to the Member States when they are implementing Union law.

At European level, the protection of rights to the preservation of national identity, language and culture is covered by the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities on the Protection of Minority Rights of 1February 1995, to which the Lithuania is a Contracting Party. It falls within the mandate of the Council of Europe to monitor, among others, the application of this Convention.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000731/14
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Unfair fuel charging practices in the car rental sector

Is the Commission aware of abusive fuel charging practices in the car rental sector, whereby car rental companies insist that customers pay an unexpected charge for a full tank of fuel before they agree to release the hired vehicle?

Does the Commission agree that this practice, which is particularly prevalent in Spain, may be in breach of the directive on Unfair Commercial Practices (2005/29/EC)?

If so, can the Commission indicate what action it is taking to bring this practice to an end and to ensure that consumers get a fair deal when renting cars in Europe?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its response to his parliamentary Question E-011289/2011 ([1]), where it shares the view that it is unacceptable that as a result of the full/empty policy implemented by certain companies, consumers may end up paying for fuel they have not consumed. The obligation to pay a full tank before the car is released relates to this practice.

In addition to the response under Question E-011289/2011, the Commission would like to stress that Spanish authorities have issued a notice ([2]) on four practices which are susceptible of violating consumer economic interests in the car rental sector and which comprises this full/empty fuel practice. Traders in Spain have been informed of this notice and requested to correct their practices. If consumers are still faced with such practices in Spain, they should complain to the relevant local authorities, or when back home to the European Consumer Centre in their country ([3]). The European Commission has informed the European car rental association Leaseurope of this notice and is in regular contact with this association to discuss consumer complaints concerning car rental received by the Network of European Consumer Centres.

The communication on the application of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive ([4]) (*the UCPD Communication*) and its accompanying Report, adopted on 14 March 2013, identify key areas for action including travel and transport such as the car rental sector, in order to strengthen the enforcement and ensure a coherent implementation of the directive. In this connection, the Commission's services are currently working to ensure further guidance on the implementation and application of the UCPD .

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-011289&language=EN
([2]) http://consumo-inc.gob.es/informes/docs/CCC_CONSULTAS_2013.pdf, notice No 3
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/index_en.htm
([4]) COM(2013) 138 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000737/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione sull'attuazione della raccomandazione del Consiglio sul vaccino contro l'influenza stagionale

L'influenza stagionale è un problema di salute pubblica che si associa a tassi di mortalità e di morbilità elevati. A tale proposito, l'interrogante ha letto con interesse il documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione sull'attuazione della raccomandazione del Consiglio, del 22 dicembre 2009, sulla vaccinazione contro l'influenza stagionale (2009/1019/EU), che fa esplicito riferimento agli anziani, alle persone con patologie croniche, agli operatori sanitari, alle donne in gravidanza e ai bambini come gruppi a rischio per quanto riguarda l'influenza stagionale.

Tuttavia, né le donne in gravidanza né i bambini sono attualmente inclusi nella raccomandazione del Consiglio sull'influenza stagionale. L'interrogante ritiene che tutti questi gruppi dovrebbero essere coperti dai programmi di vaccinazione antinfluenzale, al fine di garantire la protezione di tutta la popolazione europea e affrontare efficacemente il problema dell'influenza stagionale.

Tra le azioni a livello di Unione individuate nel documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione per promuovere la vaccinazione delle categorie a rischio, figura la proposta di tenere un'audizione ad alto livello con tutte le parti interessate, che potrebbe rappresentare un'opportunità unica per condividere le migliori prassi a livello UE e nazionale e concordare modalità per migliorare i tassi di copertura della vaccinazione in tutta Europa.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— intende pubblicare una relazione definitiva sulla raccomandazione del Consiglio, e, in caso affermativo, quando?

— Non ritiene che la raccomandazione del Consiglio debba essere aggiornata per tenere conto delle conclusioni del documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione?

— Quando intende organizzare l'audizione ad alto livello sulla vaccino contro l'influenza stagionale, e quali tipologie di soggetti interessati saranno invitate a parteciparvi?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(18 marzo 2014)

Gli Stati membri sono incoraggiati a rendicontare su base volontaria alla Commissione l'attuazione della raccomandazione 2009/1019/UE del Consiglio sulla vaccinazione contro l'influenza stagionale ([1]). Come previsto nella raccomandazione, la Commissione riferisce regolarmente al Consiglio sulla sua attuazione in base alle informazioni fornite dagli Stati membri.

La recente pubblicazione del documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione sull'attuazione della raccomandazione del Consiglio sulla vaccinazione contro l'influenza stagionale fornisce un'analisi intermedia dello stato attuale dell'implementazione ed espone alcune idee volte ad aiutare gli Stati membri a raggiungere gli obiettivi fissati dalla raccomandazione ([2]). La Commissione intende convocare una riunione ad alto livello per scambiare punti di vista e pareri sulle risultanze di questo documento.

Questo evento riunirà rappresentanti degli Stati membri, delle associazioni per l'assistenza sanitaria, degli operatori sanitari, del mondo universitario, dei fabbricanti di vaccini, dell'Agenzia europea per i medicinali, del Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie e dell'Ufficio regionale per l'Europa dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità. L'incontro costituirà un'occasione per condividere le pratiche ottimali e concordare le modalità per migliorare i tassi di vaccinazione contro l'influenza stagionale.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:348:0071:0072:IT:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/vaccination/docs/seasonflu_staffwd2014_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000737/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Commission staff working document on the implementation of the Council recommendation on seasonal influenza vaccination — next steps

Seasonal influenza is a major public health issue which is associated with high mortality and morbidity rates. In this context, I have read with interest the Commission staff working document on the implementation of the Council recommendation of 22 December 2009 on seasonal influenza vaccination (2009/1019/EU), which explicitly refers to the elderly, people with chronic medical conditions, healthcare workers, pregnant women and children as at-risk groups for seasonal influenza.

However, neither pregnant women nor children are currently included in the Council Recommendation on seasonal influenza. I believe that all of these groups should be covered by influenza vaccination programmes in order to ensure the protection of the entire population of Europe and to effectively tackle the issue of seasonal influenza.

Among the actions at EU level identified in the staff working document to encourage vaccination among at-risk groups, I have noted the proposal to hold a high-level hearing with all the stakeholders involved. I think this would provide a unique opportunity to share best practice at EU and national level and agree on ways to improve vaccination coverage rates across Europe.

In light of the above, I would kindly ask the Commission to answer the following questions:

1. Will the Commission publish a final report on this Council recommendation, and, if so, when will it be released?

2. Does the Commission expect the Council recommendation to be updated to reflect the findings of the Commission staff working document?

3. When does the Commission intend to organise the high-level hearing on vaccination against seasonal influenza, and what types of stakeholder will be invited to participate?

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

The EU Member States are encouraged to report on a voluntary basis to the Commission on the implementation of the Council Recommendation 2009/1019/EU on seasonal influenza vaccination ([1]). As foreseen in the recommendation, the Commission reports regularly to the Council on the implementation of the recommendation, on the basis of information provided by the Member States.

The recent publication of the Commission staff working document on the implementation of the Council Recommendation on seasonal influenza vaccination provides an interim analysis of the current state of play of implementation, including ideas for helping Member States in reaching the targets set under the recommendation. ([2]) The Commission intends to convene a high-level meeting to exchange views and opinions on the findings of this document.

Such an event will bring together representatives from the Member States, healthcare associations, healthcare professionals, academics, vaccine manufacturers, the European Medicines Agency, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, and the World Health Organisation's Regional Office for Europe. The event will provide an opportunity to share best practices and agree on how to improve seasonal influenza vaccination coverage rates.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:348:0071:0072:EN:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/vaccination/docs/seasonflu_staffwd2014_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000748/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(27 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Violazione dei diritti umani in Ucraina

A seguito delle proteste contro il governo del presidente Viktor Yanukovich, in Ucraina, e in special modo nella capitale Kiev, si assiste ad una preoccupante escalation di violenze e disordini.

I media forniscono ogni giorno nuove testimonianze, anche attraverso documenti audiovisivi, della brutalità con cui la polizia sta reprimendo le manifestazioni di dissenso, e vi sono prove evidenti di maltrattamenti e torture subite dai manifestanti arrestati. Numerosi attivisti per i diritti civili risultano inoltre irreperibili e vi sono elementi per ritenere che siano stati rapiti e/o uccisi dalle forze filogovernative.

Considerata la gravità della situazione e le palesi violazioni dei diritti umani fondamentali, chiediamo alla Commissione quale strategia essa intenda adottare per fronteggiare questa grave emergenza alle porte dell'Unione; chiediamo inoltre se la Commissione non ritenga opportuno congelare a tempo indeterminato ogni iniziativa volta a favorire una eventuale adesione dell'Ucraina all'Unione europea.

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

Tutte le parti in causa devono portare avanti un dialogo costruttivo per venire incontro alle legittime aspirazioni democratiche del popolo ucraino. Occorre trovare una soluzione duratura alla crisi politica che includa la riforma costituzionale e la creazione delle condizioni per lo svolgimento di elezioni democratiche. Dopo l'accordo raggiunto fra le parti il 21 febbraio scorso, l'UE ribadisce la piena disponibilità a sostenere un processo politico inclusivo, a contribuire a ridurre le tensioni in atto e ad assistere l'Ucraina nel suo processo di riforma. L'accordo di associazione, comprendente una DCFTA, non costituisce l'obiettivo finale della cooperazione UE-Ucraina.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000748/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Abuse of human rights in Ukraine

Following the protests against the government of President Viktor Yanukovych, in Ukraine, and in particular in the capital, Kiev, we are witnessing an alarming escalation of violence and disorder.

The media provide new evidence on a daily basis, including in audiovisual documents, of the brutality with which the police are repressing demonstrations of dissent, and there is evident proof of mistreatment and torture suffered by arrested demonstrators. Numerous civil rights activists are also missing and there are grounds for believing that they have been abducted and/or killed by pro-government forces.

In view of the gravity of the situation and of the flagrant abuses of fundamental human rights, we ask the Commission what strategy it intends to adopt to deal with this grave emergency on the doorstep of the Union; we also ask whether the Commission considers it appropriate to suspend indefinitely all initiatives to encourage Ukraine's accession to the European Union.

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

All sides have to continue engaging in a meaningful dialogue to fulfil the legitimate democratic aspirations of the Ukrainian people. A lasting solution to the political crisis is needed. This must include constitutional reform and the creation of the conditions for democratic elections. Following the agreement reached by the sides on 21 February, the EU remains fully committed to support an inclusive political process, help de-escalate the situation and to assist Ukraine in the process of reform. The Association Agreement, including a DCFTA, does not constitute the final goal in EU-Ukraine cooperation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000752/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(27 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Intervento nella Repubblica centrafricana (RCA)

Dal dicembre 2012 la Repubblica centrafricana è in balia di un intenso conflitto civile che, nel marzo 2013, ha portato alla deposizione del presidente in carica in favore della presa del potere da parte dei ribelli del gruppo Seleka. Gli accordi di Libreville del gennaio 2013 non hanno portato ad alcun progresso nel conflitto e il governo di transizione di Seleka ha sospeso la Costituzione in attesa di indire nuove elezioni. Solo il 20 gennaio scorso il Consiglio nazionale di transizione ha eletto la nuova Presidente, Catherine Samba-Phanza, che ha immediatamente chiesto alla comunità internazionale di intervenire con più mezzi per riportare la pace.

L'UE attualmente rappresenta il principale donatore della Repubblica centrafricana, in base agli Accordi di Cotonou. La Commissione ha già garantito il sostegno economico e sociale al paese e ora ha approvato una nuova missione della PSDC (EUFOR CAR Bangui), per proteggere i civili e creare un accesso per gli aiuti umanitari. Il Consiglio ha approvato un concetto di management delle crisi che prevede una forza multinazionale europea di circa 500 uomini che dovrebbe restare nel paese per circa sei mesi, prima di lasciare le operazioni alle truppe dell'Unione Africana.

1. Può il Vice-presidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire per quale motivo l'UE non abbia optato per l'attivazione dei gruppi tattici europei per intervenire in RCA?

2. Quanto tempo occorrerà affinché la missione diventi pienamente operativa?

3. Ritiene che le forze che si vogliono mettere a disposizione siano sufficienti all'obiettivo della missione?

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

1. La possibilità di attivare i gruppi tattici dell'UE è stata vagliata sin dall'inizio della pianificazione. Un certo numero di Stati membri ha tuttavia ritenuto che questa non fosse l'opzione migliore al momento di cominciare a generare le capacità necessarie, soprattutto perché l'operazione in programma non corrispondeva al concetto di gruppo tattico, che ne prevede il dispiegamento come forza iniziale fino a un massimo di 120 giorni.

2. L'operazione EUFOR RCA dovrebbe raggiungere la piena capacità operativa all'inizio di giugno, sempre che le forze necessarie siano integralmente predisposte in tempo utile.

3. Una volta predisposte, le forze da dispiegare saranno sufficienti per conseguire l'obiettivo della missione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000752/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Intervention in the Central African Republic (CAR)

The Central African Republic has been in the grip of intense civil war since December 2012. As a result, in March 2013, the serving president was deposed in favour of a takeover of power by rebels of the Séléka group. The Libreville agreements of January 2013 have not led to any progress in the conflict. The Séléka transition government has suspended the constitution until fresh elections can be called. The National Transition Council elected the new president, Catherine Samba-Phanza, only on 20 January 2013. She immediately called upon the international community to intervene with more resources to restore peace.

Under the Cotonou Agreement, the EU is currently the Central African Republic's main donor. The Commission has already guaranteed economic and social support to the country, and has now approved a new CSDP mission (EUFOR CAR Bangui) to protect civilians and create access for humanitarian aid. The Council has approved a crisis management plan which provides for a European multinational force of around 500 men. This is to remain in the country for about six months, before leaving operations to troops of the African Union.

1. Can the Vice-President/High Representative explain the reason why the EU has not opted to mobilise European tactical groups to intervene in the CAR?

2. How long will it take for the mission to become fully operational?

3. Do you believe that the forces intended for deployment will be sufficient to achieve the mission's objective?

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

1. From the very beginning of the planning, the use of European Tactical Groups (EU Battlegroups) had been an option that was explored. However, a number of Member States deemed the use of Battlegroups not being the preferred option, whilst initiating the generation of the capabilities required. The main reasons therefore were that the foreseen operation was not in line with the Battlegroup Concept, which foresees the use of a Battlegroup as an entry force to be deployed up to 120 days.

2. It is foreseen that the operation EUFOR RCA will reach its Full Operational Capability early June, if required forces are fully generated in due course.

3. Once generated, the forces intended for deployment will be sufficient to achieve the missions objective.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000759/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(27 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Saneamiento de aguas en Urdaibai

A día de hoy, la margen izquierda de la reserva de la biosfera de Urdaibai, donde se encuentran municipios como Gernika, Busturia, Mundaka, Muxika, Sukarrieta o Bermeo, no tiene finalizadas en su totalidad las obras de saneamiento de aguas residuales urbanas y sigue vertiendo directamente las mismas a la ría de Mundaka, tal y como ha quedado constatado recientemente en la prensa local ([1]).

Respecto a la legislación de la Unión, la Directiva 91/271/CEE ([2]) afirma que todas las aglomeraciones urbanas comprendidas entre 2 000 y 10 000 equivalentes habitantes que viertan sus efluentes en una zona sensible deberán disponer de un sistema colector y de tratamiento.

Hay que precisar que el espacio de Urdaibai está calificado como reserva de la biosfera de la Unesco desde 1984, y que también tiene una importancia ornitológica, por lo que está calificado como zona de especial protección de las aves (ZEPA) desde 1994 ([3]) e integrado en la red Natura 2000 ([4]).

En su comunicación COM(2003)0845, la Comisión afirmó que las normas relativas a la calidad del agua y a la integridad hidrológica permiten impedir la deterioración de los sitios (1.2.2).

¿Cree la Comisión que estamos ante una clara infracción del ordenamiento jurídico europeo?

¿Ha existido por parte de las autoridades de la Unión alguna ayuda o subvención destinada a financiar parte de las obras previstas para el preceptivo saneamiento?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de abril de 2014)

El territorio de la reserva de la biosfera de Urdaibai está incluido parcialmente en una zona de protección especial (ZPE) ([5]) y en varias zonas especiales de conservación (ZEC) ([6]). Las medidas de gestión que deben aplicarse a escala nacional para la conservación de tales zonas incluyen medidas de depuración de aguas residuales. Por otra parte, según la Directiva sobre el tratamiento de las aguas residuales urbanas ([7]), las aguas residuales de aglomeraciones de más de 10 000 equivalentes habitante deben ser objeto de tratamiento terciario antes de ser vertidas en zonas sensibles, como el estuario del Oka.

De la información comunicada por las autoridades españolas en el último ejercicio de presentación de informes, la Comisión no puede sacar ninguna conclusión sobre si las aglomeraciones indicadas por Su Señoría cumplen las normas. La Comisión tiene la intención de solicitar información más detallada a España antes de decidir si conviene tomar alguna medida.

Los fondos de la UE y, en particular, el Fondo de Cohesión y el Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional han ayudado considerablemente a los Estados miembros y a sus regiones a invertir en infraestructuras para el tratamiento de las aguas residuales. Esta ayuda seguirá siendo posible en el periodo de programación de 2014-2020, en función de las solicitudes concretas que presenten las autoridades competentes y de que la región correspondiente cumpla los criterios fijados para optar a las subvenciones. España ya ha recibido cierta financiación de la UE para esta región.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/norte/euskadi/Urdaibai-unica-saneamiento-gastarse-millones_0_211729326.html
([2]) Directiva 91/271/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1991, sobre el tratamiento de las aguas residuales urbanas.
([3]) Directiva 79/409/CEE (Directiva Aves).
([4]) Natura 2000 es una red ecológica de áreas de conservación de la biodiversidad en la Unión Europea, según la Directiva 92/43/CEE (Directiva Hábitats).
([5]) Según la Directiva 2009/147/CE, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres.
([6]) Según la Directiva 92/43/CEE, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres.
([7]) Directiva 91/271/CEE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000759/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Water sanitation in Urdaibai

Urban waste-water sanitation works remain incomplete on the left bank of the Urdaibai biosphere reserve, which encompasses towns such as Guernica, Busturia, Mundaka, Muxika, Sukarrieta and Bermeo, and waste water is being discharged directly into the Mundaka estuary, as reported recently in the local press ([1]).

In EU legislation, Directive 91/271/EEC ([2]) states that all urban agglomerations with a population of between 2 000 and 10 000 that discharge their effluents into a sensitive area must have a collecting and treatment system.

It should be pointed out that the Urdaibai site has been classed as a Unesco biosphere reserve since 1984, and that it is also of ornithological importance, and for this reason has been classed as a special protection area for birds (SPA) since 1994 ([3]) and is part of the Natura 2000 network ([4]).

In its communication COM(2003)0845, the Commission stated that regulations on water quality and hydrological integrity make it possible to prevent sites from deteriorating (1.2.2).

Does the Commission believe that this is a clear breach of EU legislation?

Is there any kind of aid or subsidy available from the EU authorities for funding some of the planned works for the essential sanitation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

The territory covered by the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve is partly included in a Special Protection Area (SPA) ([5]) and in several Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) ([6]). The management measures required at national level for the conservation of such sites include actions to ensure water treatment. In addition, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) ([7]) requires that waste water from agglomerations of more than 10 000 population equivalents receives tertiary treatment before it is discharged in sensitive areas such as the estuary of the Oka.

The information received from the Spanish authorities within the last reporting exercise does not allow the Commission to draw any conclusions on the compliance of the agglomerations mentioned by the Honourable Member. The Commission intends to request more detailed information from Spain before deciding on the appropriate course of action.

EU funds, in particular the Cohesion Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, have significantly supported Member States and their regions to invest in infrastructures for waste water treatment. Depending on the eligibility of the region concerned and on the particular requests brought forward by the competent authorities, this support will still be possible in the programming period 2014-2020. Spain has already received some EU funding for this region.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/norte/euskadi/Urdaibai-unica-saneamiento-gastarse-millones_0_211729326.html
([2]) Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste-water treatment.
([3]) Directive 79/409/EEC (Birds Directive).
([4]) Natura 2000 is an ecological network of biodiversity preservation areas in the European Union, in accordance with Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive).
([5]) According to Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds.
([6]) According to Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.
([7]) Directive 91/271/EEC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000767/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Anti-government protests in Ukraine

In recent weeks, a series of protests have engulfed Ukraine, with protesters calling for President Yanukovych to dismiss his government and announce a fresh round of elections. The demonstrations have been led by the opposition, who see Ukraine's long-term future as being linked to the EU rather than to Russia.

In this context, can the Commission please outline what steps it has taken and is currently taking to support more amicable links with Ukraine and to safeguard the right to peaceful protest within the country?

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

The situation has evolved considerably in recent weeks. The EU welcomes the Ukrainian government's commitment to ensure the representative nature and inclusiveness of governmental structures, reflecting regional diversity, to ensure the full protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, to undertake constitutional reform, to investigate all human rights violations and acts of violence, to fight extremism, and to hold free, fair and transparent Presidential elections. The EU is contributing to international efforts, led by the IMF, to stabilise Ukraine's economic and financial situation, and is undertaking measures that could bring overall support of EUR 11 billion. The signature of political chapters of the Association Agreement and EU decision to implement autonomous trade measures allowing Ukraine to benefit early from the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area to be established are initial steps towards intensifying the relationship between the EU and Ukraine. The EU has recognised that the Agreement does not constitute the final goal in EU-Ukraine relations. In addition, the European Commission has recently established a dedicated Support Group for Ukraine aimed at helping the Ukrainian authorities to implement a comprehensive reform agenda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000769/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Impact of eurozone rescue plan

In the past week, EU finance ministers have been discussing plans for a common rescue mechanism for aiding problem banks, as part of proposals aimed at ensuring that there is no repeat of taxpayer-funded bailouts. Under the plans, an EU single resolution mechanism would be developed over a period spanning 10 years, resulting in a rescue pot of up to EUR 55 billion.

In this context, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

In light of the fact that the City of London in the UK is the largest financial centre in the EU, can the Commission please detail whether an impact assessment has been carried out to evaluate the possible impact of any rescue pot upon Member States that are not in the eurozone?

Can the Commission please provide assurances that taxpayers in Member States that are not part of the eurozone will not have to bear the cost of these proposals, as well as of further steps aimed at creating a complete EU banking union?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2014)

The Commission conducted an impact assessment for its proposal on the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD) on equipping authorities in all Member States with the tools to resolve failing banks while minimising the use of public funds. The Single Resolution Mechanism (SRM) does not imply additional costs compared to the BRRD as it only pools at EU level the tasks of national authorities as well as contributions due under the BRRD from banks in the participating Member States. In particular, the applicable rules for the relation between resolution authorities of participating and non-participating Member States remain those set out in the BRRD.

The administrative expenditures of the SRM will be covered by contributions exclusively from banks with operations in the participating Member States. The resolution costs will be supported by the Single Resolution Fund that is sourced exclusively from the financial sector of participating Member States. In addition, participating Member States are planning to set up a mechanism to reimburse Member States that do not participate in the SRM for any amount that those Member States have paid into the general budget of the Union in the unlikely event that a non-contractual liability of an EU institution arises from the exercise of powers under the SRM. These elements will ensure that taxpayers in Member States that are not part of the Banking Union will not have to bear the related costs.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000772/14
à la Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(27 janvier 2014)

Objet: Rapport de la Cour des comptes européenne sur le programme LIFE

Le 17 janvier 2014, la Cour des comptes européenne a rendu un rapport sur la mise en œuvre du programme LIFE et délivre à cette occasion plusieurs remarques et recommandations à la Commission européenne, qui gère directement ce programme.

L'audit réalisé révèle notamment que le nombre de projets financés par le programme n'a pas été suffisant «pour favoriser des avancées significatives dans la politique environnementale de l'UE» et que certains projet étaient plutôt choisis en fonction de leur État membre de provenance plutôt qu'en fonction de leur «intérêt intrinsèque».

La Cour des comptes européenne formule ensuite un certain nombre de recommandations dans le but d'améliorer l'efficacité du programme.

Comment la Commission compte-t-elle prendre en compte ces remarques et recommandations, et sous quel délai?

La Commission envisage-t-elle une réorganisation des moyens de gestion du programme, notamment dans la manière de sélectionner les projets?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(31 mars 2014)

La Commission a accueilli favorablement les remarques de la Cour, et note que de nombreuses conclusions du rapport ont été prises en compte dans la proposition faite par la Commission en décembre 2011 de nouveau règlement LIFE adopté à la fin de l'année 2013. La suppression des allocations nationales indicatives à compter de 2018 et la possibilité d'établir, par l'intermédiaire des programmes de travail pluriannuels, des «thèmes de projets» qui seront traités prioritairement dans la sélection des projets en vue d'un financement, font clairement progresser le programme LIFE dans la direction indiquée par la Cour.

Depuis le 1er janvier 2014, la mise en œuvre du programme LIFE est déléguée à l'Agence exécutive pour les petites et moyennes entreprises (EASME). Dans ce contexte, la Commission veillera à ce que les méthodes de gestion existantes soient conformes au règlement LIFE, en tenant compte des recommandations formulées par la Cour des comptes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000772/14
to the Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Report of the European Court of Auditors on the LIFE Programme

On 17 January 2014, the European Court of Auditors published a report on the implementation of the LIFE Programme and took the opportunity to make several observations and recommendations to the European Commission, which is managing this programme.

The audit carried out showed in particular that the number of projects financed by the programme was not sufficient 'to promote meaningful developments in EU environmental policy' and that some projects had been selected based on their Member State of origin, rather than on their 'merit'.

The European Court of Auditors proceeded to issue a number of recommendations, with the aim of improving the programme's effectiveness.

How does the Commission intend to take into account these comments and recommendations, and within what timeframe?

Is the Commission considering a reorganisation of the programme's management methods, particularly with regard to the project selection process?

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

The Commission has welcomed the observations of the Court, and notes that many of the report findings were included in the Commission's Proposal of December 2011 for a new LIFE Regulation adopted at the end of 2013. The elimination of indicative national allocations as of 2018 and the possibility of establishing, through the multi-annual work programmes, 'project topics' which will be given priority in the selection of projects for funding clearly move LIFE in the direction indicated by the Court.

The implementation of the LIFE programme has been delegated to the European Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises (EASME) since 1 January 2014. In this context, the Commission will ensure that the management methods in place comply with the LIFE regulation, taking into account the recommendations of the Court of Auditors.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000773/14
à la Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(27 janvier 2014)

Objet: Reconnaissance des stages au niveau européen

En décembre 2013, la Commission a publié des lignes directrices pour améliorer la qualité des stages, et ce dans le but de favoriser l'accès à l'emploi des jeunes de moins de 25 ans.

Parmi les recommandations de la Commission figure l'obligation pour l'employeur de fournir en amont des informations claires sur la nature du stage, la rémunération et les tâches à accomplir.

Si ces préconisations ont vocation à être appliquées partout dans l'Union, la mobilité des jeunes et leurs possibilités de trouver un emploi dans un autre pays européen ne pourront être véritablement accrues que si les stages qu'ils effectuent sont reconnus dans l'ensemble de l'Union. Des pistes en ce sens ont d'ores et déjà été lancées par le Parlement européen dans le cadre de la révision de la directive sur la reconnaissance des qualifications professionnelles.

Comment la Commission compte-t-elle concrétiser la reconnaissance des stages au niveau européen?

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

La reconnaissance des acquis d'apprentissage (définis en termes de connaissances, de qualifications et de compétences) au niveau national et européen est un élément clé pour des stages de qualité.

Le nouveau programme Erasmus+ vise à augmenter le nombre de stages effectués à l'étranger tant dans l'enseignement supérieur que dans l'enseignement et la formation professionnels. Le contrat d'apprentissage, signé par le stagiaire, l'organisme d'envoi et l'organisme d'accueil, fait partie intégrante de cette mobilité. Il définit les modalités de la formation, la nature des acquis d'apprentissage et la façon dont ils sont reconnus. Pour être retenues, les demandes pour ce type de financement dans le cadre d'Erasmus+ doivent expliquer clairement comment les acquis d'apprentissage sont définis et reconnus.

La récente proposition de la Commission concernant une recommandation du Conseil relative à un cadre de qualité pour les stages COM(2013) 857 s'appuie sur l'expérience positive de programmes appropriés de l'Union et souligne l'importance de la reconnaissance des acquis d'apprentissage des stages. Le point 13 relatif à la «reconnaissance appropriée des stages effectués» est un appel à «encourager les fournisseurs de stages à certifier, au moyen d'une attestation ou d'une lettre de référence, les connaissances, les qualifications et les compétences acquises au cours du stage».

Le système européen de crédits d'apprentissage pour l'enseignement et la formation professionnels (ECVET) favorise la reconnaissance des acquis d'apprentissage, tant au niveau national que transnational, et aborde les situations d'apprentissage formelle, non-formelle et informelle, y compris les stages (http://www.ecvet-team.eu/).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000773/14
to the Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Recognition of internships at European level

In December 2013, the Commission published guidelines to improve the quality of internships, with the aim of promoting access to employment for young people under the age of 25.

The Commission's recommendations included a requirement for employers to provide clear information beforehand on the nature of the internship, the remuneration and the duties to be performed.

Although these recommendations are designed to be applied everywhere in the European Union, the mobility of young people and their ability to find work in another European country cannot be truly improved, unless the internships that they have completed are recognised throughout the Union. Action in this direction has already been taken by the European Parliament as part of the revision of the directive on the recognition of professional qualifications.

How does the Commission intend to ensure the recognition of internships at European level?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

Recognition of learning outcomes (defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence) at both national and European level is a key element of high-quality traineeships.

The new Erasmus+ Programme aims to boost the number of traineeships carried out abroad in both higher education and vocational education and training. An integral part of this mobility is the 'Learning Agreement', signed by the participant, the sending and the host organisation. It sets out the details of the training, the nature of the learning outcomes and how they are recognised. To be successful, applications for this type of funding under Erasmus+ must clearly explain how learning outcomes are defined and recognised.

The recent Commission Proposal for a Council Recommendation for a Quality Framework for Traineeships COM(2013) 857 draws on successful experience of relevant Union programmes and underlines the importance of recognising the learning outcomes of traineeships. Paragraph 13 on the 'Proper Recognition of Traineeships' is a call to 'encourage traineeship providers to certify through a certificate or a letter of reference the knowledge, skills and competences acquired during traineeships.'

The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) supports the recognition of learning outcomes, both nationally and across borders, and covers formal, non-formal and informal learning situations, including internships (http://www.ecvet-team.eu/).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000774/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(27 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rapimenti di attivisti in Ucraina

Recenti notizie dall'Ucraina rendono ancora più preoccupante il degenerare degli scontri tra manifestanti e forze dell'ordine, tanto da far pensare a una vera e propria guerra civile e a metodi degni delle dittature militari sudamericane degli anni Settanta.

Un giornalista ucraino ha affermato di essere sopravvissuto a stento a un rapimento in piena regola da parte delle forze di polizia, in seguito al quale è stato interrogato, torturato e abbandonato in un bosco, dato per morto. Insieme a lui vi era un altro uomo, che non è sopravvissuto al trattamento subito e che, a detta dei familiari, è stato trovato abbandonato nella neve con un sacco di plastica intorno alla testa e evidenti segni sul volto dovuti all'uso di nastro adesivo.

I rapimenti di manifestanti stanno diventando una costante degli scontri, con 12 attivisti mancanti all'appello dalla scorsa settimana.

Alla luce di questi eventi, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire:

— se è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra esposti;

— se ritiene che possano essere fondati;

— se intende approfondire la questione e avviare un'indagine conoscitiva, mettendosi in contatto con le competenti autorità ucraine;

— come intende procedere qualora queste azioni dovessero risultare reali e a opera delle forze di polizia ucraine?

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

I diritti umani e le libertà fondamentali devono essere pienamente rispettati. L'UE ha condannato con la massima fermezza tutti gli atti di violenza verificatisi in Ucraina dal novembre 2013. Questo tipo di repressione è inaccettabile, indipendentemente dalle circostanze. I responsabili di gravi violazioni dei diritti umani devono essere tradotti in giustizia. Le violazioni dei diritti umani devono essere oggetto di indagini indipendenti, segnatamente attraverso il panel consultivo internazionale del Consiglio d'Europa. Il governo ucraino deve rispettare gli obblighi derivanti dagli strumenti internazionali sui diritti umani di cui è parte firmataria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000774/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Abduction of activists in the Ukraine

Recent news from the Ukraine make the worsening of clashes between protesters and security forces all the more worrying, reminiscent of an out-and-out civil war with methods not dissimilar to those used by the military dictatorships of South America in the 1970s.

A Ukrainian journalist said that he had barely survived a blatant abduction by the police, following which he was interrogated, tortured and left for dead in a wood. With him was another man who did not survive the treatment inflicted on him and who, according to his family, was found abandoned in the snow with a plastic bag round his head and obvious signs of the use of adhesive tape on his face.

Abductions of protesters are becoming a common occurrence during clashes, with 12 activists missing since last week.

In the light of these events, can the Vice-President/High Representative clarify:

— whether she was aware of the above events;

— whether she believes them to be true;

— whether she intends to investigate the matter further and launch an enquiry, contacting the competent authorities in the Ukraine;

— how she intends to proceed if these actions are found to be true and to have been perpetrated by the Ukrainian police?

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

Human rights and fundamental freedoms have to be fully respected. The EU has condemned in the strongest terms all use of violence which occurred in Ukraine since November 2013. No circumstances can justify such a repression. Those responsible for grave human rights violations should be brought to justice. Independent investigations into Human Rights violations, notably through the Council of Europe International Advisory Panel, need to take place. Ukrainian government has to abide by its obligations under international Human Rights instruments to which it is a State party.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000776/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(27 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Proteger la intimidad

Hace unos días se conoció que la empresa Google había adquirido la compañía Nest Labs que fabrica, como es bien conocido, diversos electrodomésticos que presumen de «ser inteligentes» por incorporar sistemas de identificación telemática o algoritmos para concluir hipótesis sobre los comportamientos, entre otros instrumentos.

El Parlamento se ha pronunciado en varias ocasiones a favor de la defensa de la privacidad y la protección de datos. Por ejemplo, mediante su Resolución de 15 de junio de 2010 sobre el denominado «Internet de los objetos». De ahí que pregunte a la Comisión:

1. ¿Qué medidas piensa establecer para evitar los riesgos de que datos íntimos de los ciudadanos europeos en posesión de la empresa Nest Labs a través de sus productos lleguen a Google y sean objeto de tratamiento para fines comerciales o publicitarios?

2. ¿Me podría precisar en qué fase de tramitación se encuentra la reforma de la normativa sobre protección de datos? Dada la experiencia con la que cuenta la Comisión, ¿considera factible la aprobación de la propuesta de Reglamento sobre protección de datos antes de que concluya esta legislatura parlamentaria?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de abril de 2014)

1. Las medidas nacionales de ejecución de la Directiva 95/46/CE ([1]) son aplicables a los datos personales recogidos por los equipos situados en la EU, tales como los dispositivos Nest utilizados por las personas que viven en Europa. De conformidad con la Directiva 95/46/CE, los datos personales de las personas físicas deben recogerse con fines determinados, explícitos y legítimos, y no ser tratados posteriormente de manera incompatible con dichos fines.

Además, los Estados miembros concederán a los interesados el derecho a oponerse, previa petición y sin gastos, al tratamiento de los datos de carácter personal que les conciernan respecto de los cuales el responsable prevea un tratamiento destinado a la prospección; o ser informado antes de que los datos se comuniquen por primera vez a terceros o se usen en nombre de éstos a efectos de prospección, y a que se le ofrezca expresamente el derecho de oponerse, sin gastos, a dicha comunicación o utilización. Además, la Directiva sobre privacidad electrónica contiene normas específicas que exigen la aceptación previa para el envío de comunicaciones comerciales por correo electrónico, incluidos SMS, MMS y mensajes enviados a través de aplicaciones similares. Esto es aplicable en el contexto de la adquisición de Nest por Google.

2. La reforma de la protección de datos es una prioridad para la Presidencia griega. La Presidencia convocó una reunión tripartita en Atenas (el 22 de enero de 2014) con la Comisión, los dos ponentes del Parlamento Europeo y la próxima Presidencia de la UE (Italia) con el fin de elaborar una hoja de ruta para llegar cuanto antes a un acuerdo sobre la reforma de la protección de datos. El objetivo es llegar a un acuerdo sobre un mandato de negociación con el Parlamento Europeo antes de que finalice la Presidencia griega ([2]).

([1]) Directiva 95/46/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 24 de octubre de 1995, relativa a la protección de las personas físicas en lo que respecta al tratamiento de datos personales y a la libre circulación de estos datos. DO L 281 de 23.11.1995, pp. 31-50.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-60_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000776/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Protection of privacy

A few days ago it was announced that Google had acquired the company Nest Labs which, as is well known, manufactures a variety of electronic home appliances that are deemed to 'be smart' because of the fact that they incorporate, among other tools, telematic or algorithmic identification systems in order to make hypotheses on behaviour.

The European Parliament has given a number of rulings in defence of privacy and data protection, for example in its Decision of 15 June 2010 on the so-called 'Internet of Things'. I therefore ask the commission:

1. What measures is it thinking of taking to prevent the risk of European citizens' personal data owned by Nest Labs falling into the hands of Google through the former's products and being used for commercial or advertising purposes?

2. What stage the reform on data protection laws is at? Given the Commission's experience, does it consider it to be feasible to approve the proposed regulation on data protection before this parliamentary legislation has been completed?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

1. National measures implementing Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) are applicable to personal data collected by equipment located in the EU, such as Nest devices used by individuals living in Europe. According to Directive 95/46/EC, personal data of individuals needs to be collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and shall not be further processed in a way incompatible with those purposes.

Also Member States shall grant the data subjects the right to object, on request and free of charge, to the processing of personal data relating to him which the controller anticipates being processed for the purposes of direct marketing, or to be informed before personal data are disclosed for the first time to third parties or used on their behalf for the purposes of direct marketing, and to be expressly offered the right to object free of charge to such disclosures or uses. Furthermore, the ePrivacy Directive contains specific rules requiring prior opt-in consent to send commercial communications using electronic mail, which encompasses MMS, SMS and messages sent using similar applications. This holds true in the context of the acquisition of Nest by Google.

2. The data protection reform is a priority for the Greek Presidency. The Presidency convened a tripartite meeting in Athens (on 22 January 2014) with the Commission, the two European Parliament rapporteurs and the next Presidency of the EU (Italy) to work out a road map for agreeing on the data protection reform swiftly. The objective is to agree on a mandate for negotiation with the European Parliament before the end of the Greek Presidency ([2]).

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.
Official Journal L 281, 23.11.1995 P. 0031 — 0050.

([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-60_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000780/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(27 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Impjiegi

Il-Kummissjoni ressqet proposti biex jittejjeb in-netwerk ta' riċerka għall-impjiegi tal-EURES sabiex tiġi ffaċilitata l-mobbiltà tax-xogħol u biex jinkiseb suq tax-xogħol tal-UE li jkun verament integrat. F'dan ir-rigward, il-Kummissjoni ddikjarat li madwar 7.5 miljun Ewropew jaħdem fi Stat Membru li mhuwiex tiegħu, ċifra li tammonta għal 3.1 % biss tal-haddiema. Barra minn hekk, madwar 700 000 persuna (bħala medja) jiċċaqilqu kull sena biex imorru jaħdmu barra pajjiżhom ġewwa l-UE. Din ir-rata ta' 0.29 % tikkuntrasta bil-kbir mar-rati tal-Awstralja (1.5 % bejn 8 stati) u l-Istati Uniti (2.4 % bejn 50 stat).

Liema huma l-kawżi primarji ta' dawn ir-rati baxxi ta' mobbiltà fl-UE? Il-Kummissjoni kif biħsiebha tikkumplimenta l-miżuri attwali, bħan-netwerk ta' riċerka għall-impjieg tal-EURES, biex tindirizza dan il-fenomenu?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(2 ta' April 2014)

Il-livell tal-mobbiltà tax-xogħol bejn l-Istati Membri jista' jiġi spjegat b'diversi fatturi, li whud minnhom huma kulturali u soċjali (bħall-ostakli lingwistiċi u kulturali, is-swieq tal-proprjetà, ir-rabtiet tal-familja). Oħrajn huma relatati mal-eżerċitar tad-drittijiet mogħtija bil-liġi tal-UE u l-inadegwatezza tal-appoġġ (bħas-sistemi differenti tas-sigurtà soċjali u tat-tassazzjoni, il-kwalifiki professjonali differenti u l-ostakli legali jew amministrattivi).

Fl-2011, l-akbar diffikultà prattika skont iċ-ċittadini tal-UE meta jmorru jaħdmu fi Stat Membru ieħor ([1]) kienet il-lingwa (39 %) segwita mill-konsiderazzjonijiet tal-familja (23 %). Ammont żgħir ta' nies semmew ostakli potenzjali oħra bħala l-ostaklu prinċipali: id-diffikultà li wieħed isib xogħol xieraq (4 %); il-burokrazija involuta (4 %); u d-differenzi kulturali (4 %).

Fl-Istħarriġ Ekonomiku tal-UE tal-2012, l-OECD enfasizzat diversi ostakli għall-mobbiltà tax-xogħol. Ħafna minnhom huma indirizzati f'inizjattivi fil-livell tal-UE. Il-koleġiżlaturi laħqu ftehim b'mod partikolari dwar Direttivi għall-akkwist u l-preservazzjoni tad-drittijiet għall-pensjoni supplimentari, dwar il-miżuri li jiffaċilitaw l-eżerċitar tad-drittijiet ikkonferiti fuq ħaddiema fil-kuntest tal-moviment liberu tagħhom ([2]) u dwar ir-rikonoxximent ta' kwalifiki professjonali ([3]). Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta għal Regolament dwar il-EURES, in-netwerk ta' riċerka għall-impjiegi ([4]), li jimmira biex isaħħaħ l-aċċess tal-ħaddiema għas-servizzi ta' appoġġ fil-mobbiltà tax-xogħol fi ħdan l-UE. Anke l-Parlament Ewropew u l-Kunsill laħqu ftehim fuq Deċiżjoni dwar netwerk ta' Servizzi Pubbliċi tal-Impjiegi ([5]) (PES) li jappoġġa t-tagħlim u l-kooperazzjoni reċiproċi dwar l-implimentazzjoni tal-politiki tal-impjiegi fl-Istati Membri inklużi wkoll l-attivitajiet mill-PES relatati mal-mobbiltà.

([1]) Ewrobarometru Speċjali 363, Is-Suq Intern: Sensibilizzazzjoni, Perċezzjonijiet u Impatti.
([2]) COM (2013) 236 final.
([3]) Id-Direttiva 2013/55/UE, ĠU UE, L354, 28.12.2013.
([4]) COM (2014) 6 final.
([5]) COM (2013) 430.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000780/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Employment

The Commission has put forward proposals to improve the EURES job search network in order to facilitate labour mobility and achieve a truly integrated EU labour market. In this connection, the Commission has stated that about 7.5 million Europeans work in a Member State other than their own, amounting to only 3.1% of the total labour force. Furthermore, around 700 000 people (on average) move every year to work abroad within the EU. This rate of 0.29% contrasts heavily with the rates in Australia (1.5% between 8 states) and the US (2.4% between 50 states).

What are the root causes of such a low rate of labour mobility within the EU? How does the Commission intend to complement currently existing measures such the EURES job search network to address this phenomenon?

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

The level of labour mobility between EU Member States can be explained by several factors, some of which are cultural and social (linguistic and cultural barriers, housing markets, family ties). Others are related to the exercise of rights conferred by EC law and the inadequacy of support (different social security and taxation systems, different professional qualifications, and legal or administrative barriers).

In 2011, the main practical difficulty quoted by EU citizens in relation to working in another Member State ([1]) was language (39%), followed by family considerations (23%). A small number of people mentioned other potential barriers as the main obstacle: difficulty of finding an appropriate job (4%); the bureaucracy involved (4%); and cultural differences (4%).

In its 2012 Economic Survey of the EU, the OECD pointed to various barriers to labour mobility.. Most of them are addressed in initiatives at EU level. Co-legislators notably reached an agreement on directives on the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights, measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of their free movement ([2]) and recognition of professional qualifications ([3]). Moreover, the Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation on EURES, the job search network ([4]), that aims to enhance access of workers to intra-EU labour mobility support services. The EP and Council also recently reached agreement on a decision on a network of Public Employement Services ([5]) (PES), which supports mutual learning and cooperation on the implementation of employment policies in Member States including also on activities by the PES related to mobility.

([1]) Special Eurobarometer 363, Internal Market: Awareness, Perceptions and Impacts.
([2]) COM(2013) 236 final.
([3]) Directive 2013/55/EU, OJ EU, L354, 28.12.2013.
([4]) COM(2014) 6 final.
([5]) COM(2013) 430.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000786/14
alla Commissione
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(27 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Rimpatrio delle salme degli europei sepolti in Egitto

Premesso che, ad una settimana dall'approvazione della Costituzione con il referendum popolare, la situazione in Egitto sta diventando sempre più preoccupante e che, non placandosi gli scontri di piazza e gli attentati, continua a crescere il numero di morti, quasi cento negli ultimi giorni, e feriti.

Considerato che, fatto allarmante, allo scontro politico si sta aggiungendo quello religioso, con attacchi da parte dei fondamentalisti islamici nei confronti delle comunità di religione cristiana, a cui bisogna aggiungere gli ormai numerosi episodi di profanazioni o danneggiamenti delle tombe nei cimiteri cristiani.

Visto che in Egitto sono sepolti migliaia di soldati europei caduti durante la Seconda guerra mondiale (italiani, tedeschi e inglesi in primo luogo), raccolti principalmente nel Sacrario di El Alamein, e che nella cattedrale di Alessandria d'Egitto sono conservati i resti del re d'Italia Vittorio Emanuele III.

Può la Commissione adoperarsi in tutti i modi possibili intraprendendo le strade percorribili per fare in modo che questi cimiteri vengano protetti dalle profanazioni e, laddove vi fosse la reale possibilità che episodi di sfregio possano avvenire a danno delle tombe di illustri cittadini europei, come sta rischiando di accadere per le spoglie dell'ex-sovrano d'Italia, le salme vengano immediatamente rimpatriate?

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

L'Unione europea è consapevole e preoccupata per il deterioramento della situazione dei diritti umani in Egitto, comprese le vessazioni subite dalle diverse minoranze religiose. L'Unione europea condanna ogni forma di intolleranza, discriminazione e violenza nei confronti delle persone per motivi di religione o di credo, in ogni parte del mondo e indipendentemente dalla religione. L'AR/VP ha ripetutamente esortato le autorità egiziane a garantire la libertà di religione e di credo nel paese.

La delegazione dell'UE al Cairo segue con la massima attenzione i casi di violenza settaria, compresi gli atti di vandalismo ai danni di chiese o cimiteri cristiani, e nei suoi contatti con le autorità egiziane insiste sull'importanza di evitare le discriminazioni per motivi religiosi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000786/14
to the Commission
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(27 January 2014)

Subject: Repatriation of the remains of Europeans buried in Egypt

Even though a week has passed since the new Constitution was approved in Egypt by popular referendum, the situation in the country is growing increasingly unstable, with more and more people being killed (almost 100 in the past few days alone) or injured in street clashes and attacks that are showing no sign of abating.

Alarmingly, the conflict is now spreading from politics to religion, with Islamic fundamentalists carrying out attacks against the Christian community, not to mention the desecration and vandalism that has already taken place in a number of Christian cemeteries.

Thousands of European soldiers (predominantly Italian, German and British) who died during the Second World War are buried in Egypt, primarily at the War Memorial at El Alamein, while the remains of the Italian King Vittorio Emanuele III are interred in St Catherine's Cathedral in Alexandria.

Taking the above into account, does the Commission intend to take all possible measures and investigate all feasible ways of protecting these cemeteries from desecration and to immediately repatriate the remains of eminent Europeans, such as King Vittorio Emanuele III, whose tombs are at a very real risk of being vandalised?

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

The European Union is aware and concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation in Egypt, including the constraints that different religious minorities face in Egypt. The EU condemns all forms of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, wherever it takes place and regardless of the religion. The HR/VP repeatedly called on the Egyptian authorities to ensure freedom of religion or belief in the country.

The EU Delegation in Cairo is closely following cases of sectarian violence, including vandalism of Churches or Christian cemeteries, and emphasises in its contacts with Egyptian authorities the importance of avoiding discrimination on religious grounds.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000798/14
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE) et Franck Proust (PPE)
(28 janvier 2014)

Objet: Fin des aides publiques aux aéroports régionaux

Un projet de lignes directrices révisées communiqué en juillet dernier par la Commission a pour objectif de diminuer les aides d'État en faveur des aéroports régionaux. Ces dispositions contraindraient nombre d'aéroports régionaux européens à la fermeture. Face à cette menace, nous avons décidé d'interpeller la Commission en cosignant une lettre ouverte à l'attention du président Barroso, envoyée et publiée le 14 novembre 2013.

Les aéroports régionaux sont des vecteurs de création d'emplois et aussi des facteurs d'inclusion sociale dans des régions parfois enclavées. Ils représentent des infrastructures publiques nécessaires au développement économique et au rayonnement de nos régions dans l'Union.

Par ailleurs, ce projet est contraire aux priorités de la Commission, qui souhaite interconnecter l'Europe. Les aéroports régionaux sont à ce titre un maillon de l'intermodalité nécessaire pour désengorger les principaux aéroports et, surtout, aboutir à un réseau de transport européen intégré.

La Commission doit nous donner des explications sur le fondement de sa démarche. La Commission peut-elle nous préciser la manière dont elle va procéder pour que les emplois puissent être conservés en cas de fermeture des aéroports concernés? Peut-elle nous expliquer dans quelle mesure les propositions avancées dans ce projet vont dans le sens de l'intermodalité défendue par la Commission dans son programme de travail?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(28 mars 2014)

La Commission est également d'avis que le développement des aéroports régionaux est important pour la croissance économique et la cohésion territoriale, notamment car ils constituent des maillons de la chaîne de l'intermodalité. Les nouvelles lignes directrices reconnaissent ce rôle primordial en offrant un cadre pour le financement public des infrastructures aéroportuaires si, bien sûr, l'intérêt commun le justifie.

En outre, les nouvelles lignes directrices concernant les aides d'État en faveur des aéroports et des compagnies aériennes ([1]) offrent des conditions de compatibilité pour les aides au fonctionnement en faveur des petits aéroports dont le trafic annuel est inférieur à 700 000 passagers. Pour ces aéroports, la Commission réévaluera la situation après cinq ans.

Les aéroports dont le trafic annuel se situe entre 700 000 et trois millions de passagers peuvent bénéficier d'une aide au fonctionnement pour compenser les pertes pendant une période transitoire de 10 ans.

Ces nouvelles règles ont pour but de veiller à ce que les aéroports situés dans des régions ayant de réels besoins en transports accèdent aux financements publics dont ils ont besoin. Dans son évaluation de la compatibilité, la Commission prend en compte de manière adéquate les effets externes positifs pour une région qui découlent de la gestion d'un aéroport, par exemple lorsqu'il s'agit de déterminer si une aide d'État est efficace pour atteindre un objectif d'intérêt commun. Dans le même temps, il convient d'éviter la trop grande multiplication des aéroports régionaux, qui mènerait à la création d'infrastructures aéroportuaires mal utilisées, voire inutilisées.

([1]) L'adoption formelle et la publication des nouvelles lignes directrices au Journal officiel dans toutes les langues officielles de l'UE est prévue pour mars 2014. À titre d'information, le texte des nouvelles lignes directrices est disponible en anglais à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/modernisation/index_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000798/14
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE) and Franck Proust (PPE)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: Ending public aid to regional airports

Draft revised Guidelines issued by the Commission last July aim to reduce state aid to regional airports. These provisions would see a number of European regional airports being forced to close. In response to this threat, we decided to raise the issue with the Commission by co-signing an open letter to President Barroso, which was sent and published on 14 November 2013.

Regional airports are important assets for job creation as well as catalysts for social inclusion in regions that can sometimes be cut off. They are a form of public infrastructure which is fundamental to economic development and to the strengthening of our regions' influence in the EU.

Moreover, this project goes against the Commission's priorities of creating an interconnected Europe. Regional airports are an important link in mixed-mode transport, which is necessary for freeing up hub airports and, above all, creating an integrated European transport network.

The Commission needs to explain the grounds for its measure. Could the Commission tell us what it is going to do to ensure that jobs will be retained if the airports in question are closed? Could it explain to us how far the proposals made in these draft Guidelines tie in with the mixed-mode transport championed by the Commission in its work programme?

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

The Commission shares the view that the development of regional airports is important for economic growth and territorial cohesion, in particular providing important links in mixed-mode transport networks. The new guidelines recognise this important role, by providing a framework for public funding of airport infrastructure, when this is indeed needed and justified for the common interest.

Moreover, the new state aid guidelines for airports and airlines ([1]) provide compatibility conditions for operating aid to small airports with annual traffic of less than 700 000 passengers. For these airports, the Commission will reassess the situation after five years.

Airports with annual traffic between 700 000 and three million passengers may benefit from operating aid to cover losses during a transitional period of 10 years.

These new rules aim to ensure that airports located in regions with genuine transport needs get access to the public funding they need. The positive externalities for a region resulting from the operation of an airport are adequately taken into account in the Commission's compatibility assessment, for example in order to assess whether state aid is effective in achieving an objective of common interest. At the same time, a proliferation of regional airports, which leads to the creation of unused or not efficiently used airport infrastructures, should be avoided.

([1]) The formal adoption and publication of the new guidelines in the Official Journal in all EU official languages is foreseen for March 2014. For information purposes, the text of the new guidelines is available in English at: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/modernisation/index_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000800/14
to the Commission
Mike Nattrass (NI)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: Thalidomide

Thalidomide was developed in the 1950s by the West German pharmaceutical company Chemie Grünenthal GmbH. It is a powerful drug that was sold over the counter and prescribed to many pregnant women principally during the period 1958-1962 before being withdrawn. There were over 20 000 live births of severely impaired babies worldwide, though it is estimated that at least 100 000 babies died in utero. Then, knowing all this, they released the drug in Spain in 1965!

1. Can the Commission explain why EU citizens, originating from different Member States but all equally victims of the thalidomide disaster, are not being compensated by Grünenthal?

2. Is it legally acceptable for Grünenthal to enjoy protection from a Member State in order not to be held responsible for the suffering of citizens residing in other Member States, when equality is one of the key values on which the EU is founded?

3. The Commission states that '[h]ealth policy, as well as the organisation and delivery of healthcare, is a Member State competence under Article 168 of the Treaty. As such, injury compensation schemes are not a matter of EU competence'. Can the Commission explain why Grünenthal is not being held responsible for the damage and suffering it has caused due to its negligence? This is not about health, this is about negligence.

4. Why should national Member State governments be forced to provide compensation schemes from their taxpayers' money, when the cause is another Member State blocking claims?

5. If the German Government is able to unilaterally protect a company from claims, can we presume that the UK Government can protect UK companies from claims originating from the other 27 Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2014)

The Commission is aware of the fact that certain victims of Thalidomide are not eligible to receive payments from the trust fund for Thalidomide victims which the German Government established in 1971 and to which Grünenthal contributed. Based on Commission's information, the German trust fund only compensates victims domiciled in countries where Thalidomide was distributed directly by Grünenthal. Victims domiciled in Member States (MS) where the drug was produced and distributed by licensees ([1]), do not receive payments under the German trust fund. It is the Commission's understanding that the UK victims receive compensation payments from the trust fund set up for this purpose by the UK Government and Distillers (or today its successor Diageo).

As far as the Commission is aware, the initial German law from 1971 establishing the German trust contained a provision according to which all existing claims against Grünenthal concerning damages covered by the scope of the law (i.e. damages related to the use of Thalidomide-containing products directly distributed by Grünenthal) lapsed. Following an amendment in 2005, this provision was deleted. It is the Commission's understanding that foreign Thalidomide victims not covered by this law are not prevented from bringing individual lawsuits against Grünenthal.

Should any victim of a particular product wish to seek damages from a manufacturer in another MS, European legislation helps him to assert his rights. Regulation 44/2001 on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters allows a victim to bring a tort case in his own country if that is the place where the harmful event occurred. The subsequent judgment would be enforceable in Germany.

([1]) in particular the UK where it was distributed by Distillers as licensee.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000804/14
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(28 janvier 2014)

Objet: Expatriation d'handicapés et maltraitance d'enfants handicapés en institution

Le 19 janvier, la chaîne de télévision française M6 a diffusé un reportage intitulé «Enfants handicapés: révélations sur les centres qui les maltraitent» sur les mauvais traitements physiques et psychiques infligés à des enfants handicapés au sein de certains établissements belges et français. Ce reportage mettait également en lumière le problème de l'expatriation d'handicapés français en Belgique en raison de la pénurie d'établissements en France et du différentiel de coût de prise en charge. Il y aurait 5 000 handicapés mentaux français, essentiellement adultes, accueillis dans le secteur belge non conventionné (dans des établissements créés par des associations privées à but lucratif) et près de 1 600 autres handicapés (enfants, adolescents et jeunes adultes) placés dans le secteur conventionné. Face aux dysfonctionnements graves constatés, un accord-cadre vient d'être signé entre la France et la Belgique pour la mise en place d'inspections communes franco-belges dans les établissements concernés.

1. Dans sa stratégie 2010-2020 en faveur des personnes handicapées, l'Union européenne soutient le principe de la désinstitutionalisation afin de leur garantir une participation entière et égale à tous les aspects de la société. Quelles actions la Commission a-t-elle déjà engagées à cette fin, notamment pour les enfants handicapés? Une évaluation à mi-parcours de la stratégie 2010-2020 est-elle envisagée?

2. La Commission entend-elle exiger des garanties minimales relatives au bien-être et au traitement des personnes handicapées en institution?

3. L'initiative franco-belge précitée pourrait-elle servir de modèle pour la mise en place d'un contrôle systématique des établissements notamment ceux recevant des financements européens, comme cela est le cas en Hongrie, par exemple?

4. La directive sur les soins de santé transfrontaliers, entrée en vigueur en 2013 et qui vise notamment à éviter les abus et à décourager le tourisme médical, permet-elle d'apporter une réponse aux problèmes liés au phénomène d'expatriation d'handicapés?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(14 avril 2014)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se référer aux réponses qu'elle a apportées aux questions écrites E-002656/2013, E-003264/2013, E-003457/2013, E-000118/2013, E-000112/2013 et E-008559/2012.

Un examen de la mise en œuvre des différentes actions de la stratégie européenne 2010-2020 en faveur des personnes handicapées ([1]) est en cours en vue de faire rapport en 2014 sur les progrès accomplis et de préparer une liste mise à jour des actions à entreprendre à partir de 2016, comme le prévoit la stratégie. Une étude vise actuellement à aider la Commission à recueillir des données et des informations aux fins de la préparation de ce rapport ([2]). L'étude examinera également l'incidence et les effets plus étendus de cette stratégie européenne sur les politiques en faveur des personnes handicapées des États membres et sur la mise en œuvre pratique de la convention des Nations unies relative aux droits des personnes handicapées (UNCRPD).

Les informations relatives au modèle franco-belge de contrôles automatiques réalisés auprès d'établissements sont susceptibles d'intéresser d'autres États membres, mais aussi le groupe informel dénommé «groupe d'experts européen sur la transition des soins en institution aux soins de proximité».

La directive 2011/24/UE relative à l'application des droits des patients en matière de soins de santé transfrontaliers ([3]) n'est en effet pas destinée en soi à promouvoir le «tourisme de santé»; elle précise les droits des patients à demander un remboursement dans leur État membre d'origine pour des traitements qu'ils ont choisi de recevoir dans un autre État membre.

([1]) COM(2010) 636 final.
([2]) Appel d'offres JUST/2012/DISC/PR/0072/A4— « Étude sur les progrès réalisés par l'UE dans la mise en œuvre de la convention des Nations unies relative aux droits des personnes handicapées et de la stratégie européenne 2010-2020 en faveur des personnes handicapées».
([3]) JO L 88 du 04.04.2011, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000804/14
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: Expatriation of people with disabilities and abuse of children with disabilities in institutions

On 19 January 2014, the French television channel M6 broadcast a report entitled 'Enfants handicapés: révélations sur les centres qui les maltraitent' ['Children with disabilities — an exposé on the centres that abuse them'] on the physical and psychological ill-treatment suffered by children with disabilities in a number of French and Belgian establishments. This report also highlighted the problem of French people with disabilities being expatriated to Belgium because of a shortage of establishments in France and the disparity in care costs. Some 5 000 French people with mental disabilities, mainly adults, are receiving care in the Belgian private sector (in establishments created by private for-profit organisations) and close to 1 600 other people with disabilities (children, teenagers and young adults) have been placed in the public sector. In view of the serious failings that have come to light, a framework agreement between France and Belgium has just been signed to set up inspections to be conducted jointly by the two countries in the establishments in question.

1. In its Disability Strategy 2010-2020, the European Union supports the principle of taking people out of institutions in order to enable them to participate fully and equally in all aspects of society. What action has the Commission already initiated to this end, in particular in relation to children with disabilities? Are there any plans to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the strategy 2010-2020?

2. Is the Commission planning on stipulating minimum assurances relating to the well-being and treatment of people with disabilities in institutions?

3. Could the initiative spearheaded by France and Belgium serve as a model for carrying out automatic checks on establishments, in particular those that receive European funding — for example in Hungary?

4. Is the directive on cross-border healthcare, which came into force in 2013 with the specific aim of preventing abuse and discouraging medical tourism, able to provide an answer to problems related to the expatriation of people with disabilities?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 April 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-002656/2013, E-003264/2013, E-003457/2013, E-000118/2013, E-000112/2013 and E-008559/2012.

A review of the implementation of the various actions of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]) is ongoing with a view to report in 2014 on progress made and to prepare an updated list of actions from 2016, as foreseen in the strategy. A study is currently being carried out to support the Commission in gathering data and information to prepare this report ([2]). The study will also look at the impact and broader effects of the European Disability Strategy on the Member States disability policies and their practical implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

The information on the French/Belgian model for carrying out automatic checks on establishments is likely to be interesting for other Member States and also for the informal 'European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care'.

Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare ([3]) does indeed not intend to promote 'health tourism' per se; it clarifies the rights of patients to seek reimbursement in their home Member State for treatment that they choose to receive in another Member State.

([1]) COM(2010) 636 final.
([2]) JUST/2012/DISC/PR/0072/A4 — 'Study on progress achieved in the implementation by the EU of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020'.
([3]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000811/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(28 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: L-Impjieg

Il-konklużjonijiet tar-rieżami tal-Impjieg u l-Iżviluppi Soċjali fl-Ewropa tal-2013 juru żieda sinifikanti fil-faqar fost il-popolazzjoni fl-età tax-xogħol b'konsegwenza tal-kriżi ekonomika. F'dan ir-rigward, il-Kummissarju għall-Impjiegi, l-Affarijiet Soċjali u l-Inklużjoni, László Andor, saħaq fuq il-fatt li għandha tingħata attenzjoni lill-ħolqien tal-impjiegi u għandha tkun żgurata l-kwalità ta' dawn l-impjiegi.

Il-Kummissjoni kif biħsiebha timmonitorja l-Istati f'termini ta' ħolqien tal-impjiegi? Il-Kummissjoni biħsiebha tintroduċi inizjattivi biex tħeġġeġ u tixpruna t-tkabbir tal-impjieg?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(9 ta' April 2014)

It-tnaqqis tal-qgħad huwa wieħed mill-għanijiet ewlenin tal-aġenda tal-Kummissjoni fil-qasam tal-governanza ekonomika. Biex jitħeġġeġ il-ħolqien tal-impjieg, il-Kummissjoni tirrakkomanda lill-Istati Membri jnaqqsu r-rata fiskali fuq ix-xogħol, partikularment għall-ħaddiema b'paga baxxa u żgħażagħ; li jimmodernizzaw is-sistemi ta' determinazzjoni tas-salarji sabiex jiffavorixxu l-produttività, il-kompetittività tal-kostijiet u d-domanda aggregata; li jtaffu l-frammentazzjoni; li jikkumbattu x-xogħol mhux iddikjarat; u li jisfruttaw il-potenzjal għall-impjieg ta' setturi li qed jikbru b'ritmu mgħaġġel, bħall-ekonomija ekoloġika, it-teknoloġiji informatiċi, u l-kura tas-saħħa ([1]). Matul is-Semestru Ewropew, il-Kummissjoni se tanalizza l-isforzi ta' riforma tal-Istati Membri, u fejn xieraq, se tipproponi Rakkomandazzjonijiet Speċifiċi għall-Pajjiżi (CSRs) ([2]).

Il-Kummissjoni appoġġat riformi fl-Istati Membri permezz ta' inizjattivi varji fuq il-livell tal-UE. B'segwitu għall-Pakkett tal-Impjieg ([3]), il-Kummissjoni żviluppat għodod ta' informazzjoni dwar il-ħiliet, bħall-*Panorama tal-Ħiliet Ewropej*, li tipprovdi dejta dwar xejriet ta' ħiliet fil-professjonijiet u fis-setturi fuq il-livell nazzjonali u dak tal-UE. Twaqqfu sħubijiet bejn diversi partijiet interessati, fis-settur tal-kura tas-saħħa fil-qafas tal-Azzjoni Konġunta dwar l-ippjanar u t-tbassir tal-forza tax-xogħol, kif ukoll fis-settur tat-teknoloġiji informatiċi fil-qafas tal-Gran Koalizzjoni għall-Impjiegi Diġitali, sabiex jidentifikaw il-bżonnijiet u jimmobilizzaw il-kompetenzi u r-riżorsi fis-setturi li joffru ħafna impjiegi. Il-Kummissjoni kattret l-isforzi wkoll fit-tqabbil tal-ħiliet mal-impjiegi u fil-mobbiltà tax-xogħol madwar l-UE, billi bidlet il-portal EURES għat-tiftix tal-impjieg f'għodda Ewropea vera ta' kollokazzjoni u ingaġġ. Fl-aħħar nett, il-QFP ([4]) għall-perjodu attwali se jappoġġa sforzi għall-ħolqien tat-tkabbir u tal-impjieg fl-UE billi jalloka mill-inqas 23.1% tal-baġit tal-Politika ta' Koeżjoni lill-FSE ([5]), is-sors finanzjarju Ewropew ewlieni li jappoġġa l-ħolqien tal-impjieg, flimkien mal-ESIFs ([6]) l-oħra, filwaqt li l-iskema IIŻ ([7]), li għadda kif inħolqot, timmira li tindirizza speċifikament il-problema tal-qgħad fost iż-żgħażagħ,

([1]) Il-Komunikazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni "Stħarriġ Annwali dwar it-Tkabbir tal-2014" (COM(2013) 800 finali tat-13 ta' Novembru 2013).
([2]) Ir-Rakkomandazzjonijiet Speċifiċi għall-Pajjiżi.
([3]) Il-Komunikazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni "Lejn irkupru li jwassal għall-ħolqien abbundanti ta' impjiegi" (COM(2012) 173 finali tat-18 ta' April 2012).
([4]) Il-Qafas Finanzjarju Pluriennali.
([5]) Il-Fond Soċjali Ewropew.
([6]) Il-Fondi Ewropej Strutturali u tal-Investiment (ESIF).
([7]) L-Inizjattiva favur l-Impjieg taż-Żgħażagħ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000811/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: Employment

The findings of the 2013 Employment and Social Developments in Europe review show a significant increase in poverty among the working-age population as a result of the economic crisis. In this regard, the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor, has stressed the fact that attention needs to be paid to job creation and to ensuring the quality of those jobs.

How does the Commission intend to monitor states in terms of job creation? Does the Commission intend to introduce initiatives to encourage and trigger employment growth?

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

Reducing unemployment is one of the core objectives of the Commission's economic governance agenda. To stimulate job creation, it advises the Member States to reduce the tax wedge on labour, particularly for low-paid and young workers, modernise wage-setting systems to favour productivity, cost competitiveness and aggregate demand, offset segmentation, fight against undeclared work, and exploit the employment potential of fast-growing sectors, such as the green economy, ICT and healthcare ([1]). During the European Semester, the Commission will assess the Member States' reform efforts and, where appropriate, propose CSRs ([2]).

The Commission has supported reforms in the Member States through various EU-level initiatives. Following up the Employment Package ([3]), it has developed skill intelligence tools, such as the *European Skills Panorama*, which provides data on skill trends in occupations and sectors at national and EU level. Multi-stakeholder partnerships were set up in the healthcare sector under the Joint Action on workforce planning and forecasting and in the ICT sector under the *Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs*, to identify skills needs and mobilise competencies and resources in job-rich sectors. The Commission has also stepped up matching services and labour mobility across the EU by transforming the EURES job-seekers' portal into a true European placement and recruitment tool. Lastly, the MFF ([4]) for the current period will support efforts to create growth and jobs in the EU by earmarking at least 23.1% of the Cohesion Policy budget for the ESF ([5]), the main European financial source supporting the creation of jobs together with the other ESIF ([6]), while the newly created YEI ([7]) aims to specifically address the problem of youth unemployment.

([1]) Communication 'Annual Growth Survey 2014' (COM(2013) 800 final of 13 November 2013).
([2]) Country-Specific Recommendations.
([3]) Communication 'Towards a job-rich recovery' (COM(2012) 173 final of 18 April 2012).
([4]) Multiannual Financial Framework.
([5]) European Social Fund.
([6]) European Structural and Investment Funds.
([7]) Youth Employment Initiative.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000814/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(28 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: L-adozzjoni tat-tfal

Malta u s-Slovakkja reċentement iffirmaw memorandum ta' qbil dwar l-adozzjoni ta' tfal mis-Slovakkja. Huwa mistenni wkoll li Malta tiffirma memoranda ta' qbil simili ma' Stati Membri oħra. Id-Direttorat Ġenerali tal-Kummissjoni għall-Ġustizzja, il-Libertà u s-Sigurtà kkummissjonat studju dwar dan is-suġġett (JLS/2007/C4/017-30-CE-0157325/00-64), li r-riżultati tiegħu juru li ħafna nies jistennew li l-UE jkollha rwol fl-iffaċilitar tal-leġiżlazzjoni fl-Istati Membri għall-adozzjoni ta' tfal minn Stati Membri oħra.

Il-Kummissjoni x'qed tagħmel sabiex twettaq dan ir-rwol u tiffaċilita iktar il-ftehimiet dwar l-adozzjoni tat-tfal bejn l-Istati Membri?

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

L-adozzjoni mhix regolata fil-livell tal-UE u tibqa' fil-kompetenza tal-Istati Membri. Fil-livell internazzjonali, il-Kummissjoni tappoġġa l-implimentazzjoni korretta tal-Konvenzjoni tal-Aja dwar il-Protezzjoni tat-Tfal u l-Kooperazzjoni fir-Rispett tal-Adozzjoni bejn Pajjiż u ieħor, li l-Istati Membri kollha tal-Unjoni Ewropea jagħmlu parti minnha, billi jipparteċipaw fuq bażi regolari fil-Kummissjonijiet Speċjali fil-kuntest tal-Konferenza tal-Aja dwar id-Dritt Internazzjonali Privat. Dawn il-laqgħat huma mmirati għall-iskambju tal-aqwa prattiki biex jittejjeb il-funzjonament tal-Konvenzjoni u tissaħħaħ il-kooperazzjoni internazzjonali f'din il-kwistjoni, inklużi l-Istati Membri tal-UE.

Il-Kummissjoni qiegħda tissorvelja b'mod ġenerali l-iżviluppi relatati ma' dan is-suġġett, fost affarijiet oħra permezz tat-twettiq ta' studji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000814/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: Child adoption

Malta and Slovakia recently signed a memorandum of understanding on the adoption of children from Slovakia. Malta is also expected to sign similar memoranda of understanding with other Member States. The Commission's Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security commissioned a study on this subject (JLS/2007/C4/017-30-CE-0157325/00-64), the findings of which show that most people expect the EU to play a role in facilitating legislation in the Member States for the adoption of children from other Member States.

What is the Commission doing to fulfil this role and to facilitate further agreements on the adoption of children between the Member States?

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

Adoption is not regulated at EU level and remains within the competence of the Member States. At international level, the Commission supports the correct implementation of the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption, to which all the Member States of the European Union are party, by participating on a regular basis in the Special Commissions organised in the context of the Hague Conference on Private International Law. These meetings are aimed at exchanging best practises to improve the functioning of the Convention and strengthen international cooperation in this matter, including the EU Member States.

The Commission is monitoring in general the developments relating to this subject, *inter alia* through the conducting of studies.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000820/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(28. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Türkei und finanzielle Unterstützung

Die Annäherung der Europäischen Union und der Türkei wurden vor allem in den vergangenen Jahren in besonderem Maße politisch unterstützt und begrüßt. Dessen ungeachtet breitet sich bei den europäischen Bürgerinnen und Bürgern immer mehr Skepsis aus, und es stellt sich die Frage, ob die europäischen Werte mit der türkischen Innen- und Außenpolitik in Einklang gebracht werden können. Besonders die Proteste der türkischen Bevölkerung, die auf brutalste Weise von Premier Erdogan unterbunden wurden, fallen sehr negativ ins Gewicht. Die Türkei missachtet demnach alle Werte, für die die Europäische Union einsteht, nicht zuletzt die Propagierung der Demokratie und die Wahrung der Menschen- und Bürgerrechte.

1. Wieso trägt ein Land, das bekanntermaßen von Korruption auf höchster Ebene ([1]) geprägt ist, nach wie vor die Bezeichnung „Beitrittskandidat"?

2. Wieso erhält ein solches Land die Möglichkeit der weiteren wirtschaftlichen Bereicherung, da die Bezeichnung „Beitrittskandidat" mit signifikant erhöhter finanzieller Unterstützung verbunden ist?

3. Woher genau stammen die etwaigen finanziellen Mittel, die der Türkei allein durch die Bezeichnung „Beitrittskandidat" zuteilwerden?

4. Wie ist der Umfang der Mittel, die in die Türkei fließen?

5. Mit welchen Anforderungen an die Türkei ist die finanzielle Unterstützung verbunden?

6. Wie lange wird die Türkei den Status „Beitrittskandidat" beibehalten können, auch wenn sich, wie bisher, seitens der Türkei kein signifikantes Einlenken bei kritischen Punkten beobachten lässt?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(15. April 2014)

Die finanzielle Unterstützung für die Türkei im Rahmen von IPA belief sich im Zeitraum 2007-2013 auf 4,79 Mrd. EUR.

Was die Verwaltungsmodalitäten anbelangt, so wurde die IPA-Heranführungshilfe für die Türkei im Anschluss an eine umfassende Bewertung der Verwaltungs- und Kontrollsysteme der eigens eingerichteten Strukturen von den türkischen Behörden im Wege der indirekten Mittelverwaltung umgesetzt. Der Rechtsrahmen für die indirekte Mittelverwaltung ist in der Haushaltsordnung und den Anwendungsbestimmungen zur Haushaltsordnung festgelegt und in der IPA-Durchführungsverordnung und der Rahmenvereinbarung mit der Türkei detaillierter geregelt.

Im Einklang mit den geltenden Vorschriften haben die türkischen Behörden spezifische Strukturen eingerichtet, wie z. B. den Nationalen IPA-Koordinator, den Nationalen Anweisungsbefugten (NAO), die operativen Strukturen, den Nationalen Fonds und die Prüfbehörde. Ein ähnliches System ist für IPA II vorgesehen.

Zusätzlich zu den obengenannten Strukturen kontrollieren die Kommissionsdienststellen systematisch die getätigten Zahlungen. Die für die Türkei zuständige EU-Delegation in Ankara führt Ex-ante-Überprüfungen und -Kontrollen von Ausschreibungen, der Auftragsvergabe und der Vertragsausführung durch. Darüber hinaus sind die Kommission und OLAF berechtigt, alle notwendigen technischen und finanziellen Überprüfungen durchzuführen, die Umsetzung von Programmen zu überwachen, Unterlagen zu kontrollieren und Kontrollen vor Ort durchzuführen. Werden Unregelmäßigkeiten festgestellt, hat dies die Wiedereinziehung der Mittel durch die Kommission zur Folge.

([1]) http://derstandard.at/1389857824115/Ankara-laesst-fast-hundert-Richter-und-Staatsanwaelte-zwangsversetzen

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001060/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Entità dei fondi europei destinati alla Turchia

Si chiede alla Commissione di sapere quale sia l'ammontare dei fondi che l'UE intende destinare alla Turchia nel periodo 2014-2020, a che titolo e quali sono i beneficiari finali di tali fondi?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001061/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Gestione dei fondi europei destinati alla Turchia

Può la Commissione far sapere se i fondi destinati alla Turchia sono a gestione diretta da parte della Commissione e/o di altre Istituzioni/Agenzie dell'UE o meno?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001062/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Entità dei fondi europei destinati alla Turchia

Può la Commissione far sapere quali modalità di rendicontazione e certificazione della spesa sono state implementate nel caso in cui i fondi destinati alla Turchia non sono gestiti dall'UE?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001063/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Rendicontazione delle spese per i fondi alla Turchia non gestiti dall'UE

Può la Commissione far sapere quali modalità di rendicontazione e certificazione della spesa sono state implementate per i fondi destinati alla Turchia che non sono gestiti dall'UE?

Risposta congiunta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(15 aprile 2014)

L'assistenza finanziaria fornita dall'IPA alla Turchia nel periodo 2007-2013 è stata pari a 4,79 miliardi di EUR.

Per quanto riguarda la modalità di gestione, in base a una valutazione globale dei sistemi di gestione e controllo delle strutture specifiche approntate si è optato per una gestione indiretta dell'assistenza preadesione dell'IPA a favore della Turchia, affidata alle autorità turche. Il quadro giuridico applicabile alla gestione indiretta è contenuto nel regolamento finanziario e nelle relative modalità di applicazione, e ulteriormente specificato nel regolamento di attuazione dell'IPA e nell'accordo quadro con la Turchia.

Conformemente alle norme applicabili, le autorità turche hanno predisposto strutture ad hoc, come il coordinatore nazionale IPA, l'ordinatore nazionale, le strutture operative, il Fondo nazionale e l'autorità di audit. Una struttura analoga è prevista nell'ambito dell'IPA II.

In aggiunta alle strutture suddette, i servizi della Commissione controllano sistematicamente l'esborso dei fondi. La delegazione dell'UE ad Ankara procede a verifiche e controlli ex ante delle procedure di gara, dell'aggiudicazione degli appalti e dell'esecuzione dei contratti. La Commissione e l'OLAF hanno inoltre il diritto di procedere a tutte le necessarie verifiche tecniche e finanziarie, di seguire l'attuazione di un programma e di eseguire controlli documentali e in loco. L'individuazione di qualsiasi irregolarità determina il recupero dei fondi da parte della Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000820/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: Turkey and financial support

Particularly in recent years, the rapprochement between the European Union and Turkey has been strongly politically supported and welcomed. Despite this, the people of Europe are increasingly sceptical, and it is questionable whether European values can be reconciled with Turkey's domestic and foreign policy. Notably, the protests by the Turkish people, which have been very brutally repressed by Prime Minister Erdoğan, have had a very adverse impact. Turkey disregards all the values espoused by the European Union, including the propagation of democracy and respect for human rights, including civil rights.

1. Why does a country which is well known to be suffering from corruption at the highest level ([1]) still have the status of a candidate for accession?

2. Why is such a country being given the opportunity for further economic enrichment, as that status is associated with significantly increased financial support?

3. What is the source of any funding which is granted to Turkey purely on account of its status as a candidate for accession?

4. How much funding is Turkey receiving?

5. What requirements are attached to the financial support for Turkey?

6. For how long will Turkey be able to retain the status of a candidate for accession even if, as hitherto, it makes no significant concessions on critical points?

Question for written answer E-001060/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Extent of European funds allocated to Turkey

Can the Commission state what funds the EU plans to allocate to Turkey between 2014 and 2020 and on what grounds, and who will ultimately benefit from them?

Question for written answer E-001061/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Management of European funds allocated to Turkey

Can the Commission state whether it and/or other institutions/agencies of the EU will directly manage the funds allocated to Turkey?

Question for written answer E-001062/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Extent of European funds allocated to Turkey

If the funds allocated to Turkey are not to be managed by the EU, can the Commission state what procedures have been put in place to ensure transparent spending and certification of expenses?

([1]) http://derstandard.at/1389857824115/Ankara-laesst-fast-hundert-Richter-und-Staatsanwaelte-zwangsversetzen

Question for written answer E-001063/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Accounting for the disbursement of funds for Turkey that are not managed by the EU

Can the Commission please explain what accounting and certification procedures have been put in place for the disbursement of funds for Turkey that are not managed by the EU?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2014)

IPA financial assistance to Turkey for the period 2007-2013 has been EUR 4.79 billion.

With regard to management modalities, on the basis of the results of a comprehensive assessment of the management and control systems of the dedicated established structures, IPA pre-accession assistance to Turkey has been implemented by Turkish authorities through indirect management. The legal framework applicable to indirect management is set out in the Financial Regulation and its Rules of Application, and further detailed in the IPA Implementing Regulation and the framework Agreement with Turkey.

In line with the applicable rules, the Turkish authorities established dedicated structures, such as the National IPA Coordinator, the National Authorising Officer (NAO), the Operating Structures, the National Fund, the Audit Authority. A similar set-up is foreseen under IPA II.

In addition to the above designated structures, Commission services are controlling the disbursements of funds in a systemic manner. The EU Delegation to Turkey in Ankara carries out *ex-ante* verifications and controls of tendering, contracting and contract implementations. In addition, the Commission and OLAF have the right to carry out any necessary technical and financial verification, to follow the implementation of a programme, or conduct documentary and on-the-spot checks. The identification of any irregularity leads to the recovery of the funds by the Commission.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000831/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE) y Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(28 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Protección del lobo ibérico

En España, a mediados de la década de los años setenta, el lobo ibérico, una de las joyas de la corona de la fauna europea, estaba considerado como un animal dañino y se encontraba al borde de la extinción. En 1995, España transpuso la Directiva (92/43/CEE), del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres, y clasificó al lobo ibérico como una especie motivo de preocupación y como una prioridad europea al sur del río Duero. Sin embargo, en el norte (donde vive la mayor parte de la población), se siguen cazando lobos. Como consecuencia de esta división territorial, administrativa y jurídica que carente de base científica, los daños ocasionados al norte del río Duero los deben soportar los propietarios de tierras, mientras que en el sur asume los daños la administración. Asimismo, existen otros problemas, tales como demoras en el pago de ayudas, la presentación de reclamaciones falsas por daños ocasionados por lobos, la ausencia de censos de población independientes y científicos y divergencias en los criterios de gestión aplicadas por las distintas comunidades autónomas.

A la luz de lo expuesto:

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que es conveniente armonizar la protección del lobo ibérico en toda España para que el país se pueda beneficiar de los fondos del proyecto LIFE (instrumento financiero con el que la UE presta su apoyo a proyectos de conservación del medio ambiente y de la naturaleza), como ocurre en Portugal?

2. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de que no existe un censo global de esta especie? La falta de una metodología de censo uniforme, científica y justa para todas las regiones está dando lugar a duplicaciones en las estadísticas definitivas.

3. A fin de resolver este conflicto y fomentar la conservación del lobo ibérico, especie de gran importancia ecológica y de especial interés para la conservación para la UE, ¿sería posible que los ganaderos de la «tierra de los lobos» recibieran ayudas de la política agrícola común reservadas para zonas con limitaciones naturales? ¿Se podrían incentivar y apoyar iniciativas de desarrollo sostenible en regiones deprimidas que albergan lobos a través, por ejemplo, del turismo ecológico?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de marzo de 2014)

No hay ningún impedimento para que el proyecto LIFE aporte financiación destinada a la población de lobos en el conjunto del territorio español.

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de las posibles deficiencias de que adolecen los métodos utilizados para el recuento de la población de lobos ibéricos, como la inexistencia de un censo nacional actualizado. Así se reconocen en los informes que están disponibles en la página web de la Comisión ([1]) sobre la situación de los grandes carnívoros en el periodo de 2010-2012. No obstante, la información disponible, incluidos los estudios parciales realizados en zonas específicas, y la estabilidad de la superficie ocupada por el lobo, indican que la población es estable. De acuerdo con el informe más reciente publicado por las autoridades españolas ([2]) conforme a lo dispuesto en el artículo 17 de la Directiva sobre los hábitats, el estado de conservación de esta especie en España es favorable.

En lo tocante a la ayuda a las zonas con limitaciones naturales u otras limitaciones específicas al amparo del Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader), debe tenerse presente que esa ayuda se abona para compensar los costes adicionales y las pérdidas de ingresos como consecuencia de las limitaciones que supone la producción agrícola en la zona en cuestión, según lo establecido en el artículo 31 del Reglamento (UE) n° 1305/2013. No es posible, por tanto, subvencionar la conservación del lobo ibérico en virtud de esta medida de desarrollo rural.

El Feader subvenciona estudios e inversiones vinculados al mantenimiento, recuperación y mejora del patrimonio natural y medidas de concienciación medioambiental. En caso de reconocerse que la población de lobos y su hábitat forman parte del patrimonio natural, estos ámbitos podrían recibir ayudas.

También está disponible la ayuda destinada a la creación de empresas para actividades no agrícolas en zonas rurales y la ayuda a inversiones en la creación y el desarrollo de tales actividades, incluido el ecoturismo.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/pdf/task_1_part2_species_country_reports.pdf
([2]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=es/eu/art17/envucgusw/ES_species_reports-13910-125043.xml&conv=354&source=remote#1352

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000831/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE) και Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(28 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Προστασία του ιβηρικού λύκου

Στα μέσα της δεκαετίας του '70 στην Ισπανία, ο ιβηρικός λύκος, ο οποίος αποτελεί εμβληματικό είδος της ευρωπαϊκής πανίδας, θεωρούνταν επιβλαβές ζώο και βρισκόταν στα όρια της εξαφάνισης. Το 1995, η Ισπανία θέσπισε την οδηγία για τους οικοτόπους (92/43/ΕΟΚ) και ταξινόμησε τον ιβηρικό λύκο ως είδος που προκαλεί ανησυχίες και ως ευρωπαϊκή προτεραιότητα σε περιοχές νότια του ποταμού Duero. Εντούτοις, στο βορρά (όπου ζει το μεγαλύτερο μέρος του πληθυσμού), ο λύκος εξακολουθεί να αποτελεί αντικείμενο θήρας. Λόγω αυτού του εδαφικού, διοικητικού και νομικού διαχωρισμού, ο οποίος δεν έχει επιστημονική βάση, βόρεια του ποταμού Duero οι ζημίες επιβαρύνουν τους ιδιοκτήτες της περίφρακτης έκτασης ενώ στον νότο οι ζημίες επιβαρύνουν τη διοίκηση. Επιπλέον, υπάρχουν και άλλα προβλήματα, όπως καθυστερήσεις στην καταβολή ενισχύσεων, ψευδείς δηλώσεις για ζημίες από λύκους, απουσία συνολικής, ανεξάρτητης και επιστημονικής απογραφής του πληθυσμού και διαφορές στα κριτήρια διαχείρισης που χρησιμοποιούν οι διάφορες αυτόνομες κοινότητες.

Στο πλαίσιο των ανωτέρω, θα θέλαμε να ρωτήσουμε την Επιτροπή:

1. Κρίνει σκόπιμη την εναρμόνιση της προστασίας του ιβηρικού λύκου σε ολόκληρη την Ισπανία, ούτως ώστε να μπορεί η χώρα να επωφεληθεί από τους πόρους του προγράμματος LIFE (χρηματοδοτικό μέσο για τη στήριξη της προστασίας του περιβάλλοντος και της φύσης), όπως συμβαίνει στην Πορτογαλία;

2. Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή ότι δεν έχει διενεργηθεί συνολική απογραφή αυτού του είδους; Η απουσία ενιαίας, επιστημονικής και αντικειμενικής μεθοδολογίας απογραφής για όλες τις περιοχές συνεπάγεται διπλοεγγραφές στις τελικές στατιστικές.

3. Για να επιλυθεί το ζήτημα αυτό και να προωθηθεί η διατήρηση του ιβηρικού λύκου — ενός είδους μεγάλης οικολογικής σημασίας και ιδιαίτερου ενδιαφέροντος από πλευράς διατήρησης για την ΕΕ — θα μπορούσαν οι κτηνοτρόφοι εντός της «περιοχής των λύκων» να λαμβάνουν ενισχύσεις στο πλαίσιο της Κοινής Γεωργικής Πολιτικής για περιοχές με φυσικούς περιορισμούς; Θα μπορούσαν να προωθηθούν και να υποστηριχθούν πρωτοβουλίες για βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη σε μειονεκτούσες περιοχές όπου απαντάται ο ιβηρικός λύκος μέσω, για παράδειγμα, του οικοτουρισμού;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnikεξ εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Μαρτίου 2014)

Δεν υπάρχει εμπόδιο στη χρηματοδότηση του προγράμματος LIFE για τον πληθυσμό των ιβηρικών λύκων της Ισπανίας.

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι υπάρχουν ενδεχόμενες αδυναμίες στις μεθοδολογίες που χρησιμοποιούνται για την εκτίμηση του πληθυσμού των ιβηρικών λύκων, καθώς και έλλειψη επικαιροποιημένης εθνικής απογραφής. Αυτές οι ενδεχόμενες αδυναμίες έχουν αναγνωριστεί στις εκθέσεις που διατίθενται στην ιστοσελίδα της Επιτροπής ([1]) σχετικά με τα μεγάλα σαρκοβόρα για την περίοδο 2010-2012. Ωστόσο, οι διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες που αφορούν τις επιμέρους έρευνες που πραγματοποιήθηκαν σε συγκεκριμένους τομείς και τη σταθερότητα της κατανομής των λύκων υποδηλώνουν ότι ο πληθυσμός είναι σταθερός. Η τελευταία έκθεση που υποβλήθηκε από τις ισπανικές αρχές ([2]) σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 17 της οδηγίας περί οικοτόπων καταλήγει στο συμπέρασμα ότι το είδος έχει ευνοϊκή κατάσταση διατήρησης στην Ισπανία.

Όσον αφορά τη στήριξη των περιοχών που αντιμετωπίζουν φυσικούς ή άλλους ειδικούς περιορισμούς στο πλαίσιο του ευρωπαϊκού γεωργικού ταμείου αγροτικής ανάπτυξης (ΕΓΤΑΑ), πρέπει να ληφθεί υπόψη ότι η εν λόγω στήριξη καταβάλλεται για τις πρόσθετες δαπάνες και την απώλεια εισοδήματος που σχετίζονται με τα μειονεκτήματα της γεωργικής παραγωγής στη συγκεκριμένη περιοχή, όπως ορίζεται στο άρθρο 31 του κανονισμού 1305/2013. Επομένως, δεν είναι δυνατό να προωθηθεί η διατήρηση του ιβηρικού λύκου στο πλαίσιο του παρόντος μέτρου αγροτικής ανάπτυξης.

Το ΕΓΤΑΑ υποστηρίζει μελέτες και επενδύσεις που συνδέονται με τη συντήρηση, την αποκατάσταση και την αναβάθμιση της φυσικής κληρονομιάς, καθώς και δράσεις περιβαλλοντικής ευαισθητοποίησης. Εάν ο πληθυσμός του ιβηρικού λύκου και του οικοτόπου του αναγνωριστεί ως φυσική κληρονομιά, οι εν λόγω περιοχές θα μπορούν να επωφεληθούν από την ενίσχυση.

Η ενίσχυση είναι επίσης διαθέσιμη για τη σύσταση επιχείρησης που δεν αφορά γεωργικές δραστηριότητες σε αγροτικές περιοχές και συνοδεύεται από στήριξη επενδύσεων για τη δημιουργία και την ανάπτυξη των εν λόγω δραστηριοτήτων καθώς και του οικοτουρισμού.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/pdf/task_1_part2_species_country_reports.pdf
([2]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=es/eu/art17/envucgusw/ES_species_reports-13910-125043.xml&conv=354&source=remote#1352

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000831/14
à la Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE) et Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(28 janvier 2014)

Objet: Protection du loup ibérique

En Espagne, au milieu des années 1970, le loup ibérique, l'un des trésors de la faune européenne, était considéré comme une espèce nuisible et était à la limite de l'extinction. En 1995, le pays a adopté la directive habitats (92/43/CEE) et classé le loup ibérique comme une espèce en situation préoccupante et comme une priorité européenne dans les régions situées au sud du Duero. Mais au nord du fleuve, où vit la majorité des individus, le loup continue à être chassé. Cette division territoriale, administrative et juridique dépourvue de base scientifique a pour conséquence que les dégâts causés au nord du Duero sont supportés par les propriétaires des terres, tandis qu'au sud, ils sont pris en charge par l'administration. D'autres problèmes se posent: retards dans le versement des aides, fausses déclarations de dégâts causés par des loups, absence de tout recensement exhaustif, indépendant et scientifique des populations de loups et disparités dans les critères de gestion appliqués par les différentes communautés autonomes.

Compte tenu de ce qui précède, nous souhaitons interroger la Commission sur les points suivants:

1. La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas qu'il serait judicieux d'harmoniser les mesures de protection du loup ibérique sur l'ensemble du territoire espagnol, de sorte que le pays puisse bénéficier du financement de projets au titre du programme LIFE (l'instrument financier de soutien aux projets de conservation de l'environnement et de la nature), à l'instar du Portugal?

2. La Commission sait-elle qu'il n'a été entrepris aucun recensement exhaustif des populations de loups ibériques? En l'absence d'une méthode de recensement uniforme, scientifique et impartiale appliquée dans l'ensemble des régions, les statistiques finales contiennent des doublons.

3. Afin de résoudre les différends et de favoriser la conservation du loup ibérique, une espèce très importante d'un point de vue écologique et dont la conservation revêt un intérêt particulier pour l'Union, serait-il possible que les éleveurs établis dans le «pays des loups» bénéficient des aides de la politique agricole commune réservées aux zones soumises à des contraintes naturelles? Serait-il possible d'encourager et de soutenir des initiatives de développement durable dans les zones fragiles abritant des loups, par exemple dans le cadre de l'éco-tourisme?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(20 mars 2014)

Rien ne s'oppose à un financement au titre du programme LIFE en faveur de la population de loups ibériques sur l'ensemble du territoire espagnol.

La Commission est consciente des éventuelles faiblesses des méthodes utilisées pour l'estimation de la population de loups ibériques, notamment l'absence d'un recensement national mis à jour. Ces faiblesses potentielles ont été reconnues dans les rapports sur le statut des grands carnivores pour la période 2010-2012, disponibles sur la page web ([1]) de la Commission. Néanmoins, les informations disponibles, notamment les enquêtes partielles menées dans des zones spécifiques, ainsi que la stabilité de la répartition des loups laissent penser que la population est stable. Le dernier rapport présenté par les autorités espagnoles ([2]) , conformément à l'article 17 de la directive «Habitats», conclut que l'espèce a un état de conservation favorable en Espagne.

En ce qui concerne le soutien dont bénéficient les zones soumises à des contraintes naturelles et à d'autres contraintes spécifiques dans le cadre du Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural (FEADER), il faut prendre en considération le fait que cette aide est versée pour compenser les coûts supplémentaires et la perte de revenu résultant des contraintes pour la production agricole dans la zone concernée, conformément à l'article 31 du règlement (UE) n° 1305/2013. Par conséquent, il n'est pas possible de soutenir la conservation du loup ibérique dans le cadre de cette mesure du Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/pdf/task_1_part2_species_country_reports.pdf
([2]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=es/eu/art17/envucgusw/ES_species_reports-13910-125043.xml&conv=354&source=remote#1352

Le FEADER soutient les études et les investissements liés à l'entretien, à la restauration et à la mise en valeur du patrimoine naturel ainsi que les actions de sensibilisation environnementale. Si la population de loups et son habitat sont reconnus comme patrimoine naturel, ces zones pourraient bénéficier de cette aide.

L'aide au démarrage d'entreprises pour des activités non agricoles dans les zones rurales, accompagnée de l'aide aux investissements dans la création et le développement de telles activités, y compris l'écotourisme, est également disponible.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000831/14
alla Commissione
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE) e Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(28 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Protezione del lupo iberico

In Spagna, nella metà degli anni '70, il lupo iberico, uno dei gioielli della corona della fauna europea, era considerato come una specie nociva ed era minacciato di estinzione. Nel 1995, il paese ha adottato la direttiva Habitat (92/43/CEE) e classificato il lupo iberico come una specie in situazione preoccupante e come priorità europea nelle regioni a sud del fiume Duero. Tuttavia, a nord del fiume (dove vive la maggior parte della popolazione), il lupo continua a essere cacciato. Come conseguenza di tale divisione territoriale, amministrativa e giuridica, priva di basi scientifiche, i danni provocati a nord del fiume Duero sono a carico dei proprietari delle terre, mentre a sud vengono compensati dall'amministrazione. Sussistono inoltre altri problemi, come i ritardi nei pagamenti degli aiuti, la presentazione di false richieste di indennizzo per danni causati dal lupo, l'assenza di censimenti globali, indipendenti e scientifici della popolazione, nonché la divergenza dei criteri di gestione applicati dalle diverse comunità autonome.

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

1. ritiene opportuno armonizzare le misure di protezione del lupo iberico sull'intero territorio spagnolo, in modo che il paese possa beneficiare dei finanziamenti destinati ai progetti nell'ambito di LIFE (strumento finanziario a sostegno della conservazione dell'ambiente e della natura), come accade in Portogallo?

2. è consapevole del fatto che non è stato effettuato alcun censimento globale per la specie in questione? L'assenza di una metodologia di censimento uniforme, scientifica ed equa applicata in tutte le regioni sta dando luogo a duplicazioni nelle statistiche finali.

3. Per risolvere tale conflitto e promuovere la conservazione del lupo iberico (una specie di grande importanza ecologica e la cui conservazione è di particolare interesse per l'UE), sarebbe possibile prevedere che gli allevatori situati nella «terra del lupo» beneficino degli aiuti riservati alle aree con limitazioni naturali nell'ambito della politica agricola comune? Sarebbe inoltre possibile promuovere e appoggiare iniziative di sviluppo sostenibile nelle zone depresse che ospitano i lupi nel quadro, ad esempio, dell'ecoturismo?

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

Non vi sono ostacoli ai finanziamenti di LIFE per la popolazione di lupi spagnoli sull'intero territorio spagnolo.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di possibili carenze nelle metodologie utilizzate per stimare la popolazione del lupo iberico, tra cui la mancanza di un censimento nazionale aggiornato. Tali carenze potenziali sono state riconosciute nelle relazioni disponibili sulla pagina web della Commissione ([1]) sullo status dei grandi carnivori per il periodo 2010-2012. Tuttavia, le informazioni disponibili, in particolare le indagini parziali effettuate in settori specifici, nonché l'ambiente naturale dei lupi, portano a pensare che la popolazione sia stabile. La relazione più recente presentata dalle autorità spagnole ([2]) a norma dell'articolo 17 della direttiva «Habitat» ha concluso che la specie ha uno status di conservazione soddisfacente in Spagna.

Per quanto riguarda il sostegno alle zone soggette a vincoli naturali o ad altri vincoli specifici nell'ambito del Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR), va tenuto conto del fatto che tale sostegno è concesso per coprire i costi aggiuntivi e il mancato guadagno dovuti ai vincoli sulla produzione agricola nella zona in questione, come indicato all'articolo 31 del regolamento 1305/2013. Non è quindi possibile sostenere la conservazione del lupo iberico nel quadro di tale misura di sviluppo rurale.

Il FEASR finanzia studi e investimenti relativi al mantenimento, al restauro e alla riqualificazione del patrimonio naturale, nonché iniziative di sensibilizzazione ambientale. Se la popolazione di lupi e il loro habitat sono riconosciuti come patrimonio naturale, questi settori potrebbero beneficiare dell'aiuto.

Sono altresì disponibili aiuti all'avviamento di attività imprenditoriali non agricole nelle zone rurali, accompagnati da misure di sostegno per gli investimenti nella creazione e nello sviluppo di tali attività, tra cui l'ecoturismo.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/pdf/task_1_part2_species_country_reports.pdf
([2]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=es/eu/art17/envucgusw/ES_species_reports-13910-125043.xml&conv=354&source=remote#1352

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-000831/14
till kommissionen
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE) och Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(28 januari 2014)

Angående: Skydd av den iberiska vargen

Den iberiska vargen, en av juvelerna i den europeiska faunan, betraktades som ett skadedjur i mitten på 1970-talet i Spanien och höll på att utrotas. Spanien antog habitatdirektivet (92/43/EEG) 1995 och klassificerade vargen som en art vars fortbestånd väcker oro och som ett europeiskt nyckelprojekt i områdena söder om floden Duero. I de norra delarna, där de flesta människorna bor, jagas vargen fortfarande. Till följd av denna territoriella, administrativa och juridiska indelning, som inte har någon vetenskaplig grund, ersätts de skador som uppstår norr om Duero av markägarna medan skadorna i syd ersätts av förvaltningen. Dessutom finns det andra problem, bland annat förseningar i stödbetalningarna, falska ersättningskrav för vargskador, avsaknaden av en heltäckande, oberoende och vetenskaplig varginventering och skillnader i de förvaltningskriterier som de olika självstyrande regionerna använder.

Mot bakgrund av detta skulle vi vilja ställa följande frågor till kommissionen:

1. Anser kommissionen att det är ändamålsenligt att harmonisera skyddet av den iberiska vargen i hela Spanien så att landet kan dra nytta av projektmedel från Life (ett finansiellt instrument till stöd för bevarande av miljön), såsom är fallet i Portugal?

2. Är kommissionen medveten om att ingen heltäckande varginventering gjorts? Avsaknaden av en enhetlig, vetenskaplig och rättvis inventeringsmetod för alla regioner gör att vissa uppgifter förekommer två gånger i den slutliga statistiken.

3. Den iberiska vargen är en art med stor ekologisk betydelse, och det finns ett särskilt intresse att bevara den inom EU. För att lösa den här konflikten och för att uppmuntra till bevarandet av den iberiska vargen undrar vi om det vore möjligt för markägarna i ”vargbältet” att få stöd från de medel som i den gemensamma jordbrukspolitiken avsatts för områden med naturliga begränsningar? Kan hållbara utvecklingsinitiativ i eftersatta områden där vargar håller till uppmuntras och stödjas, genom, exempelvis ekoturism?

Svar från Janez Potočnik på kommissionens vägnar
(20 mars 2014)

Ingenting hindrar en Life-finansiering till förmån för den spanska vargstammen i hela Spanien.

Kommissionen är medveten om att det finns potentiella svagheter i de metoder som använts för att uppskatta den iberiska vargstammen, bland annat saknas en uppdaterad nationell totalinventering. Dessa potentiella svagheter har erkänts i de rapporter om de stora rovdjurens status för perioden 2010–2012 ([1]) som finns tillgängliga på kommissionens webbplats. Både de uppgifter som finns tillgängliga, inklusive de icke-heltäckande undersökningar som genomförts inom specifika områden, och stabiliteten i vargens utbredningsområde, tyder dock på att stammen är stabil. Den senaste rapporten som de spanska myndigheterna har lämnat ([2]) i enlighet med artikel 17 i habitatdirektivet drar slutsatsen att arten har en gynnsam bevarandestatus i Spanien.

När det gäller stöd för områden med naturliga och andra särskilda begränsningar inom ramen för Europeiska jordbruksfonden för landsbygdsutveckling (EJFLU), måste hänsyn tas till att sådant stöd betalas ut för extrakostnader och inkomstbortfall som har samband med begränsningar för jordbruket i området, i enlighet med artikel 31 förordning (EG) nr 1305/2013. Det är därför inte möjligt att stödja bevarandet av den iberiska vargen inom ramen för landsbygdsutvecklingsstödet.

EJFLU stödjer studier och investeringar som rör underhåll, återställande och uppgradering av naturarvet samt miljörelaterade åtgärder för ökad medvetenhet. Om vargstammen och dess livsmiljö erkänns som naturarv kan dessa områden erhålla stöd.

Etableringsstöd för annan verksamhet än jordbruksverksamhet på landsbygden tillsammans med investeringsstöd för skapande och utveckling av sådan verksamhet, bland annat ekoturism, är också tillgängligt.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/pdf/task_1_part2_species_country_reports.pdf
([2]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=es/eu/art17/envucgusw/ES_species_reports-13910-125043.xml&conv=354&source=remote#1352

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000831/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE) and Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: Iberian wolf protection

In Spain in the mid-1970s, the Iberian wolf, one of the crowning glories of European fauna, was regarded as vermin and was on the verge of extinction. In 1995 Spain adopted the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and categorised the Iberian wolf as a species of concern and as a European priority in areas south of the Duero River. However, in the north (where most of the population lives), the wolf is still hunted. As a result of this territorial, administrative and legal division, which has no scientific basis, damages north of the Duero River are borne by the owners of the enclosed land, whereas in the south damages are paid by the administration. Furthermore, there are other problems, such as delays in aid payments, false claims for wolf damages being submitted, the absence of any global, independent and scientific population censuses, and disparities in the management criteria used by the different autonomous communities.

In light of the above, we would like to ask the Commission:

1. Does it think it appropriate to harmonise Iberian wolf protection across the whole of Spain so that the country can benefit from the LIFE (financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation) project funds, as is the case in Portugal?

2. Is the Commission aware that there no global census has been taken of this species? The absence of a uniform, scientific and fair census methodology for all the regions is causing duplicates in the final statistics.

3. To resolve this conflict and encourage the conservation of the Iberian wolf — a species of great ecological importance and special conservation interest for the EU — would it be possible for the ranchers within the 'land of wolves' to receive aid reserved in the common agricultural policy for areas with natural limitations? Could sustainable development initiatives in depressed areas home to wolves be encouraged and supported, through, for example, eco-tourism?

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

There is no obstacle to LIFE funding for the Spanish wolf population throughout the whole of Spain.

The Commission is aware of possible weaknesses in the methodologies used for estimating the Iberian wolf population, including the lack of an updated national census. These potential weaknesses have been recognised in the reports available on the Commission's webpage ([1]) on large carnivore status for the period 2010-2012. Nevertheless, the available information, including the partial surveys carried out in specific areas, as well as the stability of the wolf range, suggest that the population is stable. The last report submitted by the Spanish authorities ([2]) in accordance with Article 17 of the Habitats Directive concludes that the species has a favourable conservation status in Spain.

As regards support for areas facing natural and other specific constraints under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), it must be taken into consideration that such support is paid for additional costs and income foregone related to the constraints for agricultural production in the area concerned, as laid down in Article 31 of the regulation 1305/2013. Therefore, it is not possible to support the conservation of the Iberian wolf under this measure of Rural Development.

The EAFRD supports studies and investments linked with the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of the natural heritage as well as environmental awareness actions. If the wolf population and its habitat are recognised as natural heritage, these areas could benefit from the aid.

Business start-up aid for non-agricultural activities in rural areas accompanied by support for investments in creation and development of such activities, including eco-tourism is also available.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/pdf/task_1_part2_species_country_reports.pdf
([2]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=es/eu/art17/envucgusw/ES_species_reports-13910-125043.xml&conv=354&source=remote#1352

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-000832/14
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(28. januar 2014)

Zadeva: Evropska podpora in ureditev množičnega financiranja (crowdfunding)

Množično financiranje postaja vse pomembnejši mehanizem za zbiranje (zagonskega) kapitala. Po ocenah poznavalcev naj bi v letu 2014 na ta način (mladi) podjetniki zbrali kar za dobrih sedem milijard evrov kapitala, globalno naj bi bilo z množičnim financiranjem ustvarjenih več kot 270 tisoč novih delovnih mest.

V ZDA naj bi dodaten zagon tej alternativni obliki financiranja dala spremembe zakonodaje. Tudi Evropska komisija je že prepoznala pomen alternativnega množičnega financiranja, kar je razvidno iz postopka posvetovanja javnosti, ki se je zaključilo konec leta 2013.

Množično financiranje ima dobre možnosti, da postane trajnostni vir financiranja novih evropskih projektov in spodbujanja malih in srednjih podjetij. To med drugim priznava in upošteva tudi Evropska komisija v svoji zeleni knjigi o dolgoročnem financiranju evropskega gospodarstva, ki je bila objavljena 25. marca 2013. Ker pa gre za dokaj nov koncept financiranja, je njegova regulacija po državah članicah zelo različna.

Na različnih platformah za *crowdfunding* so bili izjemno uspešni številni slovenski projekti. Kljub navdušenju nad konceptom se zavedam, da ravno zaradi njegove nepredvidljive prihodnosti obstajajo tudi mogoči negativni vidiki množičnega financiranja, ki zadevajo predvsem varnost potrošnikov in investitorjev.

Komisijo zato sprašujem:

1. Ali lahko v prihodnosti pričakujemo finančne spodbude EU za platforme za *crowdfunding* in profesionalizacijo in registracijo tega alternativnega financiranja?

2. Katere negativne vidike množičnega financiranja prepoznava Komisija in katere zakonodajne ukrepe načrtuje za njihovo zajezitev?

3. Kateri ukrepi na ravni EU obstajajo za zaščito investitorjev in potrošnikov v primeru financiranja spornih iniciativ?

4. Kdaj bodo znani rezultati javnega posvetovanja o množičnem financiranju, ki ga je sprožila Evropska komisija, in kateri so nadaljnji načrtovani ukrepi na področju množičnega financiranja na ravni EU?

Odgovor g. Barnierja v imenu Komisije
(4. april 2014)

Množično financiranje poleg številnih potencialnih koristi vključuje tudi nekatera tveganja. Nosilci projektov lahko tvegajo izgubo ugleda ali nezadostno varstvo pravic intelektualne lastnine. Tveganja za vlagatelje vključujejo goljufije, neuspešnost projekta, odsotnost povračila vračljivih sredstev, zavajajoče oglaševanje oz. v primeru množičnega financiranja s finančnim donosom, odsotnost prejema obljubljenega donosa naložbe ali razvodenitev naložbe po izdaji dodatnih vrednostnih papirjev. Na ravni EU obstaja zakonodaja, ki obravnava nekatera od teh tveganj. Na primer Direktiva o elektronskem poslovanju ([1]) določa pravila o odgovornosti spletnih posrednikov. Direktiva o nepoštenih poslovnih praksah ([2]) je namenjena zaščiti potrošnikov, npr. pred zavajajočimi poslovnimi praksami. Bolj specifična finančna zakonodaja, kot so Direktiva o trženju finančnih storitev potrošnikom na daljavo ([3]), Direktiva o trgih finančnih instrumentov (MiFID) ([4]), Direktiva o prospektu ([5]) ali Direktiva o plačilnih storitvah ([6]), bi se lahko uporabljala za množično posojanje ali vlaganje, odvisno od okoliščin, npr. uporabljenega poslovnega modela in zbranih sredstev.

([1]) Direktiva 2000/31/ES (UL L 178/1, 17.7.2000).
([2]) Direktiva 2005/29/ES (UL L 149/22, 11.6.2005).
([3]) Direktiva 2002/65/ES (UL L 271/16, 9.10.2002).
([4]) Direktiva 2004/39/ES (UL L 145/1, 30.4.2004).
([5]) Direktiva 2003/71/ES (UL L 345/64, 31.12.2003).
([6]) Direktiva 2007/64/ES (UL L 319/1, 5.12.2007).

Komisija je v letu 2013 izvedla javno posvetovanje o množičnem financiranju. Vprašanja, obravnavana v tem okviru, so vključevala ozaveščanje, javno financiranje, samoregulacijo in morebitne potrebe po nadaljnjih ukrepih EU, vključno z zakonodajnimi pobudami za spodbujanje množičnega financiranja ob hkratnem zagotavljanju ustrezne ravni varstva potrošnikov. Rezultati posvetovanja so na voljo na spletu. Komisija je 27. marca 2014 sprejela sporočilo o množičnem financiranju, ki predstavlja del naknadnih ukrepov, sprejetih na podlagi zelene knjige o dolgoročnem financiranju. V sporočilu je podrobneje začrtan pristop politike Komisije k množičnemu financiranju.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000832/14
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: European support for and regulation of crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is becoming an increasingly important mechanism for obtaining (start-up) capital. Experts estimate that in 2014 (young) entrepreneurs will obtain over EUR 7 billion of capital using this method, and in total more than 270 000 new jobs will be created as a result.

In the United States changes in legislation have given added impetus to this alternative form of funding. It is clear from the public consultation process which was concluded at the end of 2013 that the Commission has already recognised the importance of crowdfunding.

Crowdfunding has the potential to become a sustainable source of financing for new European projects and for promoting small and medium-sized enterprises. This is one of the points made by the Commission in its green paper on the long-term financing of the European economy, published on 25 March 2013. However, given that crowdfunding is a relatively new concept, the way in which it is regulated differs substantially from country to country.

Numerous Slovenian projects have been highly successful on various crowdfunding platforms. Although I am enthusiastic about the concept, I realise that its uncertain future means there are also potential negative aspects to crowdfunding, mainly concerning consumer and investor security.

In view of the above, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. Can we anticipate EU financial incentives for crowdfunding platforms in future and the professionalisation and registration of this alternative source of funding?

2. What does the Commission see as the negative aspects of crowdfunding and what legislative measures is it planning in order to tackle them?

3. What measures exist at EU level to protect investors and consumers in the case of funding for contentious initiatives?

4. When will the Commission publish the results of its public consultation on crowdfunding and what further measures are planned with regard to crowdfunding at EU level?

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

Besides numerous potential benefits, crowdfunding also involves some risks. Project owners might run reputational risks or risks relating to insufficient protection of intellectual property rights. The risks to contributors include fraud, project failure, not receiving back reclaimable funds, misleading advertising, or in the case of crowdfunding with financial returns, not receiving the promised return on their investments or having their investment diluted when additional securities are issued. At EU level there is legislation in place to address some of these risks. For example the Electronic Commerce Directive ([1]) lays down liability rules as regards online intermediaries. The directive on Unfair Commercial Practices ([2]) aims to protect consumers, e.g. against misleading commercial practices. More specific financial legislation, such as the directive on Distance Marketing of Financial Services ([3]), the MiFID ([4]), the Prospectus Directive ([5]), or the Payment Services Directive ([6]) might apply to crowd lending or investing, depending on the circumstances, e.g. the business model used and the amounts raised.

([1]) Directive 2000/31/EC (OJ L 178/1, 17.7.2000).
([2]) Directive 2005/29/EC (OJ L 149/22, 11.6.2005).
([3]) Directive 2002/65/EC (OJ L 271/16, 9.10.2002).
([4]) Directive 2004/39/EC (OJ L 145/1, 30.4.2004).
([5]) Directive 2003/71/EC (OJ L 345/64, 31.12.2003).
([6]) Directive 2007/64/EC (OJ L 319/1, 5.12.2007).

The Commission held a public consultation on crowdfunding in 2013. Issues examined in that context included awareness raising, public funding, self-regulation, and the possible need for further EU action, including legislative initiatives in order to promote crowdfunding and at the same time ensure an appropriate level of consumer protection. The results of the consultation are available online. The Commission adopted a communication on Crowdfunding on 27 March 2014, as part of the follow-up to the Long Term Financing Green Paper. This communication outlines in detail the policy approach of the Commission to crowdfunding.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000835/14
à la Commission
Astrid Lulling (PPE)
(28 janvier 2014)

Objet: Syndrome d'effondrement des colonies d'abeilles: nécessité d'une nouvelle approche orientée sur l'élevage d'essaims

Les chercheurs de l'université de Reading au Royaume-Uni ont publié le 8 janvier 2014 les résultats de leurs recherches.

Il en découle qu'il manque deux tiers des colonies d'abeilles dont l'Europe a besoin pour assurer la pollinisation indispensable au maintien de son agriculture.

Cela représente un déficit de 13,4 millions de ruches, soit 7 milliards d'abeilles.

Ce phénomène appelé syndrome d'effondrement des colonies d'abeilles (ou CCD pour l'expression anglaise *Colony Collapse Disorder*), est constaté depuis la fin des années 1990 et s'amplifie d'année en année. Or, les scientifiques ont constaté que la pollinisation intensive par les abeilles augmente très significativement la qualité et la productivité des récoltes.

1. La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas que parallèlement aux actions déjà menées, il serait temps d'envisager une nouvelle approche orientée sur l'élevage d'essaims destinée à pallier le problème des 13,4 millions de colonies manquantes en Europe?

2. La Commission estime-t-elle qu'il est indiqué de soutenir financièrement les actions concrètes actuellement menées pour favoriser la reproduction d'essaims?

3. La Commission est-elle disposée à proposer de subventionner l'installation de ruches dans les exploitations agricoles, dont l'effet bénéfique sur la productivité aurait également pour conséquence de diminuer les subventions versées pour compenser les pertes de productivité actuellement constatées?

4. La Commission est-elle prête à soutenir financièrement l'installation de jeunes apiculteurs qui se spécialiseraient dans l'élevage d'essaims?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(9 avril 2014)

La Commission a connaissance de l'étude à laquelle l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence. Le rapport ne sous-entend pas que les abeilles mellifères soient les seuls pollinisateurs jouant un rôle important. Il soulève en revanche la question inquiétante des pertes considérables de pollinisateurs sauvages et préconise d'éviter de compter de façon excessive sur les abeilles mellifères pour la pollinisation. Alors que ce rapport souligne de nombreuses lacunes fondamentales dans notre compréhension actuelle du système de pollinisation, une étude réalisée au niveau mondial a récemment montré que les pollinisateurs sauvages peuvent améliorer la nouaison des cultures, quelle que soit l'abondance des abeilles mellifères. La Commission a financé des recherches sur les facteurs déterminants et l'évolution des pollinisateurs, dans un précédent programme cadre ([1]).

Sur la base de l'évaluation des mesures de la PAC en faveur du secteur de l'apiculture ([2]), la Commission considère que la mesure d'aide au repeuplement du cheptel apicole telle que définie à l'article 55 du règlement (UE) nº 1308/2013 ([3]) n'a besoin d'être complétée par aucune mesure supplémentaire portant sur le même point. Plusieurs actions peuvent être soutenues au titre de cette mesure, telles que la reproduction et la vente de reines, la production et la vente d'essaims, ou encore le maintien de races locales d'abeilles mellifères. En 2013, cette mesure représentait 16 % des dépenses totales engagées au titre des programmes nationaux du secteur de l'apiculture. En ce qui concerne les programmes nationaux d'apiculture 2014-2016, vingt-deux États membres vont mettre en place des mesures d'aide au repeuplement du cheptel apicole.

([1]) Projet STEP FP7 244090 http://www.step-project.net/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/market-and-income-reports/2013/apiculture/fulltext_en.pdf
([3]) JO L 347 du 20.12.2013.

Les États membres peuvent soutenir l'installation de ruches dans les exploitations agricoles grâce à la mesure de rationalisation de la transhumance dans le cadre des programmes nationaux d'apiculture. De plus, plusieurs mesures prévues par le règlement (UE) nº 1305/2013 relatif au développement rural ([4]), y compris les dispositions de l'article 17 concernant les investissements, peuvent être applicables. Les États membres peuvent également mettre en place un soutien financier aux jeunes agriculteurs qui se spécialiseraient dans l'élevage d'essaims, en vertu de l'article 19 dudit règlement concernant le développement des exploitations agricoles et des entreprises.

([4]) JO L 347 du 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000835/14
to the Commission
Astrid Lulling (PPE)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: Colony Collapse Disorder: the need for a new approach based on breeding swarms

On 8 January 2014, researchers from the University of Reading published a set of results.

It was revealed that Europe is short of two thirds of the honeybee colonies it needs to properly pollinate its crops — a process which is vital to crop yield.

This equates to a deficit of 13.4 million beehives, or 7 billion honeybees.

This phenomenon, which is known under the name Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), has been known about since the late 1990s and is becoming more prevalent year on year. What is more, scientists have observed that intensive pollination greatly enhances crop quality and productivity.

1. Does the Commission not think that it is time to supplement the action that is already being taken with a new approach based on breeding swarms in order to combat the problem of the 13.4 million missing colonies in Europe?

2. Does the Commission believe that it is advisable to provide financial support for the specific action currently being taken to encourage swarm reproduction?

3. Is the Commission prepared to subsidise the installation of beehives on farms, which would not only increase productivity but also reduce subsidies to compensate for the current level of losses in productivity?

4. Is the Commission prepared to provide financial support to set up young beekeepers specialising in breeding swarms?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

The Commission is aware of the study referred to by the Honourable Member. The report does not suggest that honeybees are the only important pollinators. It also raises concerns about major losses of wild pollinators and warns against the over-reliance upon managed honeybees for pollination. While it highlights numerous critical gaps in current understanding of pollination service, a global study has recently shown that wild pollinators may enhance fruit set of crops regardless of honey bee abundance. The Commission has funded research related to drivers and trends of pollinators in past Framework Programme ([1]).

Based on the evaluation on the CAP measures for the apiculture sector ([2]), the Commission considers that the measure to support the restocking of hives as laid down in Article 55 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 ([3]) does not need to be supplemented by an additional measure on the same issue. Several actions can be supported under this measure such as breeding and selling of queen bees, producing and selling swarms or maintaining local breeds of honeybees. In 2013, this measure represented 16% of the total expenditure of the national apiculture programmes. For the 2014-2016 national apiculture programmes, 22 Member States will have measures to restock hives in place.

Member States can support the installation of beehives on farms through the rationalisation of transhumance measure in the national apiculture programmes. In addition, several measures of Regulation (EC) No 1305/2013 on rural development ([4]), including Article 17 on investments, can be of relevance. Member States can also introduce financial support for young farmers specialising in breeding swarms under Article 19 of this regulation on farm and business development.

([1]) Project FP7 244090 STEP http://www.step-project.net/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/market-and-income-reports/2013/apiculture/fulltext_en.pdf
([3]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.
([4]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000843/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(28 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Is-sitwazzjoni fl-Ukraina

Is-sitwazzjoni politika attwali fl-Ukraina hija tassew fraġili, fejn fazzjonijiet pro-Ewropej qegħdin ikunu soġġetti għal aktar vjolenza u oppressjoni mill-pulizija.

L-Istati Uniti diġà qiegħed sanzjonijiet fuq il-Gvern Ukrain bħala reazzjoni għas-sitwazzjoni politika attwali, filwaqt li l-UE wriet biss it-tħassib tagħha.

Taħt liema ċirkostanzi l-Kummissjoni tqis li għandhom jiġu imposti sanzjonijiet fuq l-Ukraina?

Il-Kummissjoni għadha lesta li tiddiskusti ftehimiet ma' Yanukovych għat-titjib tar-relazzjonijiet mal-UE?

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

Is-sitwazzjoni nbidlet b'mod drammatiku minn mindu ġiet indirizzata l-kwistjoni. Żewġ mewġiet ta' sanzjonijiet ġew adottati mill-Kunsill Ewropew dwar l-uffiċjali Russi fis-17 ta' Marzu u fl-20 ta' Marzu ([1]) u d-diskussjonijiet dwar kwistjonijiet ta' viża u l-Ftehim il-Ġdid ġew sospiżi fis-6 ta' Marzu. Kwalunkwe passi destabbilizzanti mir-Russja jwasslu għal konsegwenzi addizzjonali u kbar għar-relazzjonijiet f'firxa wiesgħa ta' oqsma ekonomiċi bejn l-UE u l-Istati Membri tagħha, fuq naħa, u l-Federazzjoni Russa, fuq in-naħa l-oħra. Kif innotat fil-Kunsill tal-Affarijiet Barranin fl-14 ta' April, għaddej xogħol ta' tħejjija mill-Kummissjoni u l-Istati Membri biex ikunu jistgħu jittieħdu passi oħra ([2]).

L-UE qed tissokta sforzi diplomatiċi mmirati li jrażżnu s-sitwazzjoni; ir-Rappreżentant Għoli ltaqgħet mal-Ministri tal-Affarijiet Barranin tal-Istati Uniti, ir-Russja u l-Ukraina f'Ġinevra fis-17 ta' April. L-UE ppreżentat il-pożizzjoni tagħha u l-partijiet kollha u ntlaħaq qbil fuq l-ewwel passi konkreti biex titnaqqas it-tensjoni u tiġi restawrata s-sigurtà għaċ-ċittadini kollha ([3]).

([1]) http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141707.pdf
([2]) http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/en/article_14901_en.htm
([3]) http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140417_01_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000843/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(28 January 2014)

Subject: Situation in Ukraine

The current political situation in Ukraine is very fragile, with pro-European factions being subjected to increased violence and police oppression.

The US has already placed sanctions on the Ukrainian Government as a response to the current political situation, whilst the EU has only expressed its concern.

Under what circumstances would the Commission deem it appropriate to impose sanctions on Ukraine?

Would the Commission still be willing to discuss with Yanukovych deals for improving relations with the EU?

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

The situation has changed dramatically since the question was addressed. Two waves of sanctions have been adopted by the European Council on Russian officials on 17 March and 20 March ([1]) and talks on visa matters and the New Agreement suspended on 6 March. Any further destabilising steps by Russia would lead to additional and far reaching consequences for relations in a broad range of economic areas between the EU and its Member States, on the one hand, and the Russian Federation, on the other hand. As noted in the Foreign Affairs Council on 14 April, preparatory work by the Commission and Member States is underway so further steps can be taken ([2]).

The EU is continuing diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalating the situation; the High Representative met the Foreign Ministers of the US, Russia and Ukraine in Geneva on 17 April. The EU presented its position and all parties and agreed on initial concrete steps to de-escalate tensions and restore security for all citizens ([3]).

([1]) http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141707.pdf
([2]) http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/en/article_14901_en.htm
([3]) http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140417_01_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000878/14
an die Kommission
Daniel Caspary (PPE)
(29. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Verlängerung der Übergangsfrist für SEPA

Die Einführung des neuen europaweiten Zahlungssystems SEPA wurde um sechs Monate — vom 1. Februar 2014 auf den 1. August 2014 — verschoben. Kann die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Aus welchen Gründen wurde die Einführung verschoben?

2. In welchen Ländern gab bzw. gibt es die größten Probleme bei der Einführung und Umsetzung des geplanten Zahlungssystems?

3. Zu welchem Zeitpunkt wurde erstmals die Verschiebung der Einführung in Betracht gezogen?

4. Zu welchem Zeitpunkt und von wem wurde die Entscheidung getroffen, die Verschiebung der Einführung um sechs Monate seitens der Kommission vorzuschlagen? Wann und von wem wurde sie endgültig getroffen?

5. Wann wurde diese Entscheidung erstmals mitgeteilt?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(1. April 2014)

Die Bewertung der Kommission von Anfang Januar 2014 stützte sich auf die aktuelle Umsetzungsquote der EZB von Mitte Dezember 2013 und kam zu dem Ergebnis, dass die Umsetzungsquote vom 1. Februar weit unter 100 % fallen würde. Deutschland und Irland sind bei Überweisungen und Lastschriften betroffen; Österreich, Italien, Portugal und Spanien nur bei Lastschriften. Um das Risiko einer Störung bei den Zahlungsvorgängen am 1. Februar 2014 zu vermeiden und unter der Beachtung, dass die Banken nur noch SEPA-konforme Zahlungen hätten akzeptieren dürfen, verabschiedete die Kommission am 9. Januar 2014 einen Vorschlag über eine sechsmonatige Übergangszeit bis zum 1. August 2014 für den Abschluss der SEPA-Umstellung. Der Vorschlag wurde öffentlich verkündet. Die Besitzstandsklausel soll schwerwiegenden Störungen bei den Zahlungsvorgängen vermeiden. Die Banken sind nicht verpflichtet, Altzahlungen zu bearbeiten, dürfen sie aber, falls nötig, parallel zu den SEPA-Zahlungen weiterhin abwickeln. Der Vorschlag wurde vom Parlament am 4. Februar 2014 und vom Rat „Wirtschaft und Finanzen“ am 18. Februar 2014 angenommen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000878/14
to the Commission
Daniel Caspary (PPE)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: Extension of the SEPA transitional period

Introduction of the new SEPA pan-European payments system has been delayed by six months from 1 February 2014 to 1 August 2014. Can the Commission answer the following questions in this regard:

1. On what grounds has the introduction of SEPA been delayed?

2. Which countries have had/are having the greatest problems with the introduction and implementation of the planned payments system?

3. At what point was the delay of its introduction first considered?

4. At what point, and by whom, was the decision taken by the Commission to propose a six-month delay in introduction? When and by whom was the final decision taken?

5. When was this decision first announced?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

Based on the latest migration rates available from the ECB mid-December 2013, the Commission's assessment in early January 2014 was that migration rates on 1 February would be far below 100%. Member States concerned include Germany and Ireland, for both credit transfers and direct debits, and Austria, Italy, Portugal and Spain for direct debits. To avoid any risk that the processing of payments would be interrupted on 1 February 2014, considering that banks would no longer have been allowed to accept non-SEPA compliant payments, the Commission adopted and publicly announced on 9 January 2014 a proposal granting a six-month transition period which will run until 1 August 2014 for the completion of the SEPA migration. This is a grandfathering clause to avoid serious disruption of payments. Banks are not obliged to process legacy payments but are allowed to continue to process them alongside the SEPA payments if needed. The proposal was adopted by Parliament on 4 February 2014 and by the Ecofin Council on 18 February 2014.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001712/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Πολιτική βούληση της Τουρκίας για την εξεύρεση λύσης στο Κυπριακό

Στις 11 Ιανουαρίου 2014 ο Υπουργός Εξωτερικών της Τουρκίας, Αχμέτ Νταβούτογλου, και ο Υπουργός Υποθέσεων ΕΕ, Μεβλούτ Τσαβούσογλου, συναντήθηκαν στις Βρυξέλλες με τον Επίτροπο Διεύρυνσης, Stefan Füle, και την Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπο της Ένωσης για θέματα Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής και Πολιτικής Ασφαλείας, Catherine Ashton. Μετά τη συνάντηση εκδόθηκε κοινή δήλωση, σύμφωνα με την οποία «η ΕΕ και η Τουρκία συμφωνούν για το πόσο σημαντικό είναι να εξευρεθεί λύση στο Κυπριακό».

Η κυβέρνηση της Κύπρου τονίζει εδώ και 40 χρόνια, από την τουρκική εισβολή, τη σημασία που έχει η εξεύρεση λύσης. Δυστυχώς η Τουρκία ήταν πάντα ιδιαίτερα αδιάλλακτη και απρόθυμη να διαπραγματευθεί. Κατόπιν τούτων ζητείται από την Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στα ακόλουθα ερωτήματα:

1. Διαβλέπει η Επιτροπή πραγματική αλλαγή στη στάση της Τουρκίας; και συγκεκριμένα, πέρα από θεωρητικά σχόλια και ευχολόγια, έχει όντως την πρόθεση η Άγκυρα να εργαστεί προς την κατεύθυνση της εξεύρεσης λύσης;

2. Αν ναι, γιατί δεν συμμορφώνεται η Τουρκία με τις βασικές της υποχρεώσεις προς την ΕΕ, δηλαδή να εφαρμόσει το Πρωτόκολλο της Άγκυρας, να επιτρέψει την είσοδο πλοίων και αεροσκαφών που φέρουν την κυπριακή σημαία σε τουρκικά λιμάνια και αεροδρόμια και να αποσύρει αμέσως τα τουρκικά στρατεύματα από την Κύπρο;

3. Ποια συγκεκριμένα μέτρα μπορεί να λάβει η Επιτροπή για να πείσει την Τουρκία να τηρήσει τις υποχρεώσεις της, πέρα από τις συνήθεις συστάσεις και εκκλήσεις για δράση;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Απριλίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να επιστήσει την προσοχή του Αξιότιμου Μέλους του Κοινοβουλίου στις πρόσφατες εξελίξεις όσον αφορά την επίλυση του κυπριακού προβλήματος, ειδικότερα δε στην κοινή δήλωση που συμφωνήθηκε από τους ηγέτες των δύο κοινοτήτων της Κύπρου. Η εξέλιξη αυτή θέτει γερά θεμέλια για την εκ νέου έναρξη συνομιλιών για μια συνολική διευθέτηση και για την ταχεία επίτευξη αποτελεσμάτων. Ο Πρόεδρος Van Rompuy και ο πρόεδρος Μπαρόζο στη δήλωσή τους της 11ης Φεβρουαρίου επανέλαβαν ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση είναι πρόθυμη να αναλάβει τις ευθύνες της όσον αφορά τη στήριξη των διαπραγματεύσεων μεταξύ των ηγετών της ελληνοκυπριακής και της τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας που διεξάγεται υπό την αιγίδα του ΟΗΕ και να παράσχει κάθε δυνατή στήριξη που τα μέρη και ο ΟΗΕ θα θεωρήσουν χρησιμότερη.

Σε σχέση με την ερώτηση σχετικά με σχόλια του Πρωθυπουργού Ερντογάν, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει στις απαντήσεις της στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-12828/2013, E-13942/2013, P-12808/2013, P-12809/2013, P-12847/2013, P-12858/2013, E-12861/2013, P-12878/2013, P-12894/2013, E-12897/2013, P-12986/2013, P-13054/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001367/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Turchia e la questione cipriota

La Commissione può aggiornare e fornire tutti i possibili dettagli circa lo status quo dell'annosa questione turco-cipriota che vede costantemente la Turchia porsi in modo negativo e ostile nei confronti di Cipro?

Qual è attualmente l'esatto ruolo dell'UE?

Risposta congiunta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(4 aprile 2014)

La Commissione richiama l'attenzione dell'onorevole deputato sui recenti sviluppi relativi a una soluzione della questione cipriota, vale a dire la dichiarazione congiunta dei leader delle due comunità cipriote, che pone solide basi per la ripresa dei colloqui su una soluzione globale e per l'ottenimento di rapidi risultati. Nella dichiarazione dell'11 febbraio scorso, il Presidente Van Rompuy e il Presidente Barroso hanno ribadito che l'Unione europea è più che disposta a dare il proprio contributo per agevolare i negoziati tra i leader delle comunità greco-cipriota e turco-cipriota, condotti sotto l'egida delle Nazioni Unite, e ad offrire tutto il sostegno ritenuto utile dalle parti e dall'ONU.

Per quanto riguarda i commenti del primo ministro Erdogan, la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alle sue risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-12828/2013, E-13942/2013, P-12808/2013, P-12809/2013, P-12847/2013, P-12858/2013, E-12861/2013, P-12878/2013, P-12894/2013, E-12897/2013, P-12986/2013, P-13054/2013 ([1]).

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000884/14
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(29 januari 2014)

Betreft: Erdoğan: „Er bestaat geen land genaamd Cyprus"

In november 2013 heeft de Turkse premier Erdoğan opnieuw gezegd dat Turkije Cyprus niet erkent: „Er bestaat geen land genaamd Cyprus" ([1]).

Op 28 januari 2014 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-013942/2013 met betrekking tot Erdoğans uitspraak. Daarin verwijst hij naar een gezamenlijk antwoord op eerder gestelde schriftelijke vragen: „De Commissie dringt er bij de partijen op aan snel volwaardige onderhandelingen te hervatten over een allesomvattende regeling onder auspiciën van de Verenigde Naties. De Commissie is, zoals ze bij herhaling heeft vermeld, er sterk van overtuigd dat er een reële kans bestaat om voor eens en voor altijd een oplossing te vinden voor de kwestie Cyprus ten behoeve van alle burgers van Cyprus en van de Europese Unie. De Commissie zal haar steun blijven betuigen en is bereid om, met alle betrokken partijen, deze verder te versterken zodra er sprake is van concrete vooruitgang."

1. Hoe ziet de Commissie de door haar gehoopte en verwachte „allesomvattende regeling", door „beide partijen" te bereiken, in de kwestie Cyprus concreet voor zich?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie Erdoğans uitspraak in het kader van deze „allesomvattende regeling" — een uitspraak waaruit blijkt dat Turkije, als één van beide partijen, zich geenszins welwillend en zelfs arrogant opstelt?

3. Welke consequenties heeft Erdoğans uitspraak, waaruit blijkt dat Turkije Cyprus — en daarmee een gedeelte van de EU! — niet erkent en ook niet zál erkennen, voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije met zijn houding voor de zoveelste keer zelf aantoont niet in de EU thuis te (willen) horen? Zo neen, hoe duidt de Commissie de Turkse onwelwillendheid en arrogantie dan wel?

5. Is de Commissie ertoe bereid — eindelijk! — de onvermijdelijke conclusie te trekken dat de toetredingsonderhandelingen met én alle EU-geldstromen naar Turkije onmiddellijk voor eens en voor altijd dienen te worden beëindigd?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(4 april 2014)

De Commissie vestigt de aandacht van het geachte Parlementslid op de recente ontwikkelingen betreffende een oplossing voor Cyprus, meer bepaald de gezamenlijke verklaring overeengekomen door de leiders van de twee Cypriotische gemeenschappen. Hiermee wordt een stevige basis gelegd om de besprekingen over een alomvattende regeling te hervatten en om snel tot resultaten te komen. In hun verklaring van 11 februari hebben voorzitter Van Rompuy en voorzitter Barroso nogmaals bevestigd dat de Europese Unie graag haar rol wil spelen bij het ondersteunen van de onderhandelingen tussen de Grieks- en de Turks-Cypriotische leiders, onder auspiciën van de VN, en om alle hulp te bieden die de beide partijen en de VN nuttig achten.

Wat betreft de vraag met betrekking tot de opmerkingen van premier Erdogan verwijst de Commissie naar haar antwoorden op de schriftelijke vragen E-12828/2013, E-13942/2013, P-12808/2013, P-12809/2013, P-12847/2013, P-12858/2013, E-12861/2013, P-12878/2013, P-12894/2013, E-12897/2013, P-12986/2013, P-13054/2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.cyprusnewsreport.com/?q=node/7170.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000884/14
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: Erdoğan: 'There is no country called Cyprus'

In November 2013, the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan reiterated that Turkey does not recognise Cyprus, stating that: 'There is no country called Cyprus'. ([1])

On 28 January 2014, Mr Füle responded on behalf of the Commission to Written Question E-013942/2013 regarding the comments made by Erdoğan. In his response, he referred to a joint answer to previous written questions: 'The Commission strongly encourages the parties to quickly resume fully-fledged negotiations on a comprehensive settlement under the auspices of the United Nations. The Commission, as indicated on different occasions, strongly believes that there is a genuine opportunity to solve the Cyprus issue once and for all for the benefit of all the citizens of Cyprus and of the European Union. The Commission will continue to show its support, and, with all the parties involved, stands ready to further strengthen it as soon as concrete progress is seen.'

1. How, specifically, does the Commission imagine that it will be possible for 'both parties' to reach the 'comprehensive settlement' of the Cyprus issue which the EU hopes and expects to achieve?

2. How does the Commission assess Erdoğan's comments in the context of this 'comprehensive settlement' — comments which reveal that the attitude of Turkey, one of the two parties involved, is by no means sympathetic and can even be described as arrogant?

3. What are the consequences of Erdoğan's comments, which reveal that Turkey does not recognise and also will not recognise Cyprus (and therefore a part of the EU!), for the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey?

4. Does the Commission share the view that Turkey's attitude once again shows that it does not belong in the EU and does not want to belong in the EU? If not, how does the Commission interpret the arrogance and lack of sympathy demonstrated by Turkey?

5. Is the Commission prepared to finally draw the unavoidable conclusion that the accession negotiations with Turkey and all EU funding provided to Turkey must be terminated immediately, once and for all?

Question for written answer E-001367/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Turkey and the Cyprus question

Could the Commission provide an update and all possible details concerning the current situation as regards the long-standing Turkey-Cyprus question, which has seen Turkey displaying a constantly negative and hostile attitude towards Cyprus?

What is the EU's precise role at the moment?

Question for written answer E-001712/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Political will of Turkey as regards finding a solution to the Cypriot issue

On 11 January 2014, the Turkish Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, and the Minister for EU Affairs, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, met in Brussels with the Commissioner for Enlargement, Stefan Füle, and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton. After the meeting, a joint statement was issued to the effect that '[the] EU and Turkey agree on how important it is to find a solution to the Cypriot issue'.

([1]) http://www.cyprusnewsreport.com/?q=node/7170

The Government of Cyprus has been stressing the importance of finding such a solution for the last 40 years, since the Turkish invasion. Unfortunately, Turkey has always been very intransigent and unwilling to negotiate. The Commission is therefore asked to answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission foresee a real change in Turkey's attitude, meaning that, besides theoretical comments and wishful thinking, Ankara will indeed work towards finding a solution?

2. If this is the case, why does Turkey not fulfil its basic obligations towards the EU, namely, to implement the Ankara Protocol, to allow ships and aircraft flying the Cypriot flag to enter Turkish ports and airports, and to withdraw Turkish troops from Cyprus immediately?

3. What specific measures can the Commission take to convince Turkey to abide by its obligations, besides the usual recommendations or calls for action?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2014)

The Commission would like to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the recent developments regarding a Cyprus settlement, in terms of the joint declaration agreed by the leaders of the two Cypriot communities. This lays a strong foundation for talks to resume on a comprehensive settlement and for rapid results to be achieved. President Van Rompuy and President Barroso reconfirmed in their statement of 11 February that the European Union is keen to play its part in supporting the negotiations between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot community leaders, conducted under UN auspices, and to offer all the support the parties and the UN find most useful.

In relation to the question regarding comments made by Prime Minister Erdogan, the Commission would like to refer to its replies to Written Questions E-12828/2013, E-13942/2013, P-12808/2013, P-12809/2013, P-12847/2013, P-12858/2013, E-12861/2013, P-12878/2013, P-12894/2013, E-12897/2013, P-12986/2013, P-13054/2013 ([2]).

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

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-000896/14
upućeno Komisiji
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(29. siječnja 2014.)

Predmet: Djelovanje protiv krađe identiteta

Krađa identiteta općenito se definira kao protupravno prisvajanje identiteta (imena, datuma rođenja, trenutačne ili prijašnje adrese) druge osobe bez njezina znanja ili pristanka. Ti se detalji potom koriste za nabavu robe ili usluga na ime te osobe. Termin krivotvorenje identiteta ponekad se koristi kao sinonim za krađu identiteta iako koncept krivotvorenja identiteta također obuhvaća upotrebu lažnog, ne nužno stvarnog, identiteta.

Krađa identiteta i kaznena djela povezana s identitetom pogađaju znatan broj osoba, a taj problem postaje sve veći. Prema procjenama Komisije čak 8,2 milijuna osoba pogođeno je krađom identiteta (2 % stanovništva EU-a), a svaka od tih osoba u prosjeku je izgubila 2 500 EUR, što na razini EU-a iznosi 20 milijardi EUR.

Također postoje neizravni financijski troškovi krađe identiteta koji nastaju zbog štete nanesene pojedincu u pogledu ocjene njegove kreditne sposobnosti, troškovi uklanjanja posljedica krađe identiteta (na primjer zamjena dokumenata) te negativni nefinancijski učinci kao što su stres i šteta nanesena ugledu osobe.

Povećan broj kaznenih djela povezanih s krađom identiteta također se objašnjava relativno malim rizikom od otkrivanja te u većini slučajeva još manjim rizikom od kaznenog gonjenja.

Budući da je taj problem često prekogranične prirode, potrebno je djelovanje EU-a. Što Komisija poduzima za suzbijanje krađe identiteta?

Odgovor gđe Malmström u ime Komisije
(30. travnja 2014.)

Komisija je već dugo svjesna da krađa identiteta nanosi štetu građanima EU-a. Zatražila je dvije studije, jednu za analizu zakonodavnog okvira za rješavanje problema krađe identiteta u državama članicama ([1]) i drugu za pripremu procjene učinka za zakonodavne i nezakonodavne mjere povezane s krađom identiteta. ([2])

Na osnovi toga krađa identiteta uključena je u Direktivu ([3]) o napadima na informacijske sustave: gdje su kaznena djela protiv integriteta informacijskih sustava počinjena zlouporabom identiteta druge osobe, time nanoseći štetu vlasniku identiteta, i gdje se ta zlouporaba može smatrati otegotnom okolnosti. Ta Direktiva donesena je u kolovozu 2013., a države članice dužne su je provesti do rujna 2015. Komisija će olakšati provedbu putem kontaktnog odbora u kojem stručnjaci iz država članica mogu razmjenjivati informacije o nacionalnim provedbenim mjerama te raspravljati o mogućim izazovima. Europski centar za kibernetički kriminal u okviru Europola usmjeren je na borbu protiv krađe identiteta i prijevara, čak i putem svojeg Focal Point Terminala, koji se bavi prijevarama u području bezgotovinskog plaćanja, što je posebno štetan oblik krađe identiteta.

Komisija je domaćin i neformalnim stručnim skupinama za pitanja krađe identiteta te je financirala nekoliko projekata iz proračunske linije programa Sprečavanja i borbe protiv kriminala.

([1]) RAND Europe/TimeLex, Komparativna studija o zakonodavnim i nezakonodavnim mjerama za borbu protiv krađe identiteta i s time povezanog kriminala: Završno izvješće, dostupno na http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/cybercrime/docs/rand_study_tr-982-ec_en.pdf

([2]) CSES (Centar za strategiju i usluge procjene), Studija procjene učinka u vezi s prijedlogom novog zakonodavnog okvira za krađu identiteta: Završno izvješće, dostupno na: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/cybercrime/docs/final_report_identity_theft_11_december_2012_en.pdf

([3]) Direktiva 2013/40/EU Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća od 12. kolovoza 2013. o napadima na informacijske sustave i o zamjeni Okvirne odluke Vijeća 2005/222/PUP; SL L 218, 14.8.2013., str. 8 — 14.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000896/14
to the Commission
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: Action against identity theft

Identity theft is generally defined as the misappropriation of the identity (such as the name, date of birth, current address or previous addresses) of another person without their knowledge or consent. These details are then used to obtain goods and services in that person's name. Identity fraud is sometimes used as a synonym for identity theft, although the concept of identity fraud also encompasses the use of a false, not necessarily real, identity.

Identity theft and identity-related crime affects a considerable proportion of the population, and the problem is growing. Commission estimates suggest that as many as 8.2 million individuals are affected by identity theft (2% of the EU population) with an average loss of around EUR 2 500 each, i.e. EUR 20 billion at EU level.

There are also indirect financial costs of identity theft arising from the damage to an individual's credit rating and the cost of rectifying the consequences of identity theft (for example replacing documents) as well as the non-financial impacts of an adverse nature such as stress and reputational damage.

Increased criminal activity related to identity theft is also explained by the relatively low risk of detection and, in most cases, an even lower risk of prosecution.

Since this is often a cross-border problem, EU action is needed. What is the Commission doing to combat identity theft?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2014)

The Commission has long recognised the negative impact of identity theft on EU citizens. It has commissioned two studies, one to analyse the legal framework covering identity theft in the Member States ([1]) and the second to prepare an impact assessment for legislative or non-legislative measures on identity theft. ([2])

On the basis of this evidence, identity theft has been included in the directive ([3]) on attacks against information systems: where offences against the integrity of information systems are committed by misusing the identity of another person, causing prejudice to the rightful identity owner, this misuse may be regarded as an aggravating circumstance. This directive was adopted in August 2013 and is to be implemented by Member States by September 2015. The Commission will facilitate implementation by means of a contact committee where experts from Member States can exchange information on national implementation measures and discuss challenges that may arise. The European Cybercrime Centre within Europol also focuses on the fight against identity theft and fraud, including through its Focal Point Terminal, which deals with non-cash payment fraud, one particularly harmful form of identity theft.

The Commission has also been hosting informal expert groups on the issue of identity theft and has funded a number of projects under the Prevention of and Fight against Crime (ISEC) budget line.

([1]) RAND Europe/TimeLex, Comparative Study on Legislative and Non Legislative Measures to Combat Identity Theft and Identity Related Crime: Final Report, available at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organised-crime-and-human-trafficking/cybercrime/docs/rand_study_tr-982-ec_en.pdf

([2]) CSES, Study for an Impact Assessment on a Proposal for a New Legal Framework on Identity Theft: Final Report, available at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organised-crime-and-human-trafficking/cybercrime/docs/final_report_identity_theft_11_december_2012_en.pdf

([3]) Directive 2013/40/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 August 2013 on attacks against information systems and replacing Council Framework Decision 2005/222/JHA; OJ L 218, 14.8.2013, p. 8-14.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000898/14
à la Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(29 janvier 2014)

Objet: La soi-disant affaire Eurostat, 10 ans après

En 2003, la presse britannique et un magazine allemand ont fait mousser un soi-disant scandale au sein d'Eurostat. La Commission Prodi de l'époque a tout de suite sorti tous les parapluies possibles et a notamment démis de leurs fonctions le Directeur général d'Eurostat et deux de ses adjoints. De plus, la Commission a mis fin aux activités d'une société privée qui effectuait des travaux pour Eurostat, au vu et au su de tous les instituts statistiques européens, mettant ainsi au chômage quelques dizaines de personnes. Des plaintes furent déposées par l'OLAF aux parquets de Paris et de Luxembourg.

Or, plus de dix ans après, il n'y a pas le début du commencement d'un procès contre les fonctionnaires destitués.

À ma connaissance, un fonctionnaire a été blanchi via une procédure disciplinaire. Les deux autres, dont le directeur général, ont reçu, en vertu d'un jugement de 2008 du Tribunal de première instance, des dommages et intérêts, parce que, selon le Tribunal, l'OLAF avait violé le principe de présomption d'innocence et l'obligation de confidentialité de son enquête.

Depuis, plus rien, alors qu'il a été prouvé entre temps qu'il n'y a pas eu d'enrichissement personnel des fonctionnaires en question.

Où en est la situation au début 2014?

La Commission n'entend-elle pas mettre enfin un terme à cette triste affaire en réhabilitant le Directeur général déchu, ainsi que son adjoint?

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(20 mars 2014)

Des procédures disciplinaires ont effectivement été ouvertes à l'encontre des deux hauts fonctionnaires mentionnés par l'Honorable Parlementaire, mais compte tenu de la longueur de la procédure judiciaire en France, ces procédures disciplinaires ont par la suite été retirées et les fonctionnaires concernés en ont été informés.

Les fonctionnaires concernés ont également été informés que la situation serait réexaminée une fois que la juridiction pénale compétente aura rendu une décision finale sur cette affaire.

La décision de retirer ces procédures a été prise conformément au devoir de sollicitude de la Commission envers ses agents ainsi qu'au principe de la présomption d'innocence.

En septembre 2013, le magistrat instructeur a rendu une ordonnance, dans laquelle il a conclu que la procédure à l'encontre des fonctionnaires visés (ainsi qu'à l'encontre d'un certain nombre de personnes) devrait être interrompue. Toutefois, la Commission, qui s'est constituée partie civile dans cette procédure, a fait appel de cette ordonnance et attend désormais les résultats.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000898/14
to the Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: The so-called Eurostat affair, 10 years on

In 2003, the British press and a German magazine stirred up a so-called scandal within Eurostat. At the time, the Commission under Mr Prodi immediately took every possible step to deflect the blame and, in particular, dismissed the Director-General of Eurostat and two of his deputies from their positions. The Commission also terminated the activities of a private company which had been carrying out work for Eurostat with the full knowledge of all the European statistical institutions, thereby putting several dozen people out of work. Complaints were filed by OLAF in the Paris and Luxembourg courts.

Now, over 10 years later, there is not the tiniest suggestion that the sacked officials will be brought to trial.

It is my understanding that one of the officials was cleared of wrongdoing in disciplinary proceedings. The two others, including the Director-General, were awarded damages in the Court of First Instance, which ruled in 2008 that OLAF had breached the principle of the presumption of innocence and the duty of confidentiality to which its inquiry was subject.

Since then, nothing has happened, even though it has been proved in the meantime that no illicit personal gain was made by the officials in question.

Where do we stand at the beginning of 2014?

Will the Commission not finally put an end to this sorry affair and rehabilitate the deposed Director-General and his deputy?

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

Disciplinary procedures were indeed opened against the two senior officials referred to by the Honourable Member, but given the lengthy duration of the judicial proceedings in France, these disciplinary procedures have subsequently been withdrawn and the officials concerned have been informed of this.

The officials concerned were further informed that the situation will be reviewed once the relevant penal court has taken a final decision on the case.

The decision to withdraw these procedures was taken in keeping with the Commission's duty of care towards its staff and the presumption of innocence.

The examining magistrate made an order in September 2013 in which he concluded that the proceedings against the officials referred to (and against a number of other persons) should be halted. However, the Commission, which is a civil party in these proceedings, has appealed against this order and is now awaiting the results.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000900/14
lill-Kummissjoni (Viċi President / Rappreżentant Għoli)
David Casa (PPE)
(29 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: VP/HR — Il-kunflitt Ukrain

Kien hemm żieda fil-livell ta' vjolenza fl-Ukraina l-ġimgħa li għaddiet. Insegwitu tad-diversi appelli sabiex jirrikorru għal djalogu paċifiku mill-Unjoni Ewropea u l-Istati Uniti, u l-pajjiż tal-aħħar impona wkoll sanzjonijiet fuq l-uffiċjali Ukraini, il-liġijiet kontra d-dimostranti thassru u l-Prim Ministru ddikjara r-riżenja tiegħu. Ma kienx hemm aktar żvilupp, madankollu, u ċ-ċittadini Ukraini ilhom, dejjem aktar u aktar, jitolbu l-għajnuna tal-Unjoni Ewropea.

Filwaqt li aħna ġejna kkritikati mir-Russja minħabba l-involviment tagħna fil-kunflitt, ġejna kkritikati wkoll minn ħafna oħrajn minħabba n-nuqqas min-naħa tagħna ta' pjan ta' azzjoni konkret fil-każ li s-sitwazzjoni ma tistabbilizzax ruħha fi żmien qasir. X'miżuri possibbli qed tikkunsidra tieħu l-UE fir-rigward tar-relazzjoni tagħha mal-Ukraina jekk il-Gvern Ukrain ma jindirizzax malajr dan il-kunflitt?

Tweġiba mogħtija mill-Kumissarju Füle f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Is-sitwazzjoni nbidlet b'mod konsiderevoli minn meta saret il-mistoqsija u tevolvi kuljum. L-UE qiegħda ssegwi l-avvenimenti mill-qrib; il-konklużjonijiet ewlenin tagħha jinsabu fil-weblinks li ġejjin [1] [2] [3] [4]. L-UE qed tissokta bi sforzi diplomatiċi mmirati li jnaqqsu t-tensjoni fis-sitwazzjoni; fis-17 ta' April ir-Rappreżentant Għoli ltaqgħet mal-Ministri Barranin tal-Istati Uniti, ir-Russja u l-Ukraina f'Ġinevra u qablet li jittieħdu passi konkreti biex inaqqsu t-tensjonijiet u jirrestawraw is-sigurtà għaċ-ċittadini kollha.

L-UE hija determinata li tiżgura li l-Ukraina jkollha l-appoġġ kollu meħtieġ, biex twettaq ir-riformi politiċi u ekonomiċi meħtieġa sabiex tikkonsolida Ukraina li hija indipendenti, demokratika, magħquda u prospera. Membri tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea u tal-Gvern Ukrain, immexxija rispettivament mill-President Barroso u l-Prim Ministru Yatseniuk, iltaqgħu fit-13 ta' Mejju fi Brussell. Il-partijiet qablu li jżommu interazzjoni u koordinazzjoni mill-qrib bil-għan li japprofondixxu l-assoċjazzjoni politika u l-integrazzjoni ekonomika tal-Ukraina mal-UE. [5] Il-partijiet qablu wkoll li jissoktaw bl-implimentazzjoni tal-Aġenda Ewropea għar-Riforma inklużiva konġunta, li tgħaqqad il-ħtiġijiet fit-terminu qasir u dak medju tal-Ukraina. Fis-16 ta' Mejju l-Kummissarju Füle għamel żjara fi Kyiv u ltaqa' mal-Prim Ministru Yatsenyuk u l-President Turchinov biex jibda x-xogħol fuq l-implimentazzjoni prattika tar-riformi. [6]

L-UE qed tipprovdi lill-Ukraina bi EUR 11-il biljun f'self u għotjiet biex jgħinuha fil-proċess ta' riforma tagħha, inklużi żewġ selfiet ta' emerġenza bħala Assistenza Makrofinanzjarja li flimkien jammontaw għal EUR 1,61 biljun [7] [8]. L-UE ddeċidiet ukoll li toħloq grupp ta' appoġġ biex tipprovdi struttura, ħarsa ġenerali u gwida għall-ħidma tal-Kummissjoni fl-appoġġ tagħha lill-Ukraina. Dan se jgħin biex jimmobilizza l-għarfien espert tal-Istati Membri u jtejjeb il-koordinazzjoni ma' donaturi oħra u mal-Istituzzjonijiet Finanzjarji Internazzjonali [9].

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[1] http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140417_01_en.pdf
[2] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141749.pdf
[3] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141372.pdf
[4] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/141601.pdf
[5] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-346_mt.htm
[6] http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/fule/headlines/news/2014/05/20140516_en.htm
[7] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-279_mt.htm
[8] http://europa.eu/newsroom/files/pdf/ukraine_mt.pdf
[9] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-413_mt.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000900/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Casa (PPE)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Ukrainian conflict

The level of violence in Ukraine increased last week. After several calls to engage in peaceful dialogue were issued by the European Union and the United States, the latter also imposing sanctions on Ukrainian officials, the laws against protesters were abolished and the Prime Minister announced his resignation. There have been no further developments, however, and Ukrainian citizens have been calling increasingly for help from the European Union.

While we have been criticised by Russia for our involvement in the conflict, we have also been criticised by many others for our lack of a concrete action plan in the event that the situation does not stabilise soon. What possible measures is the EU considering taking as regards its relationship with Ukraine if the Ukrainian Government fails to address this conflict soon?

Answer given by Commissioner Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The situation has changed considerably since the question was posed and evolves daily. The EU is following events closely; its main conclusions are available at the following web-links [1][2][3][4]. The EU is continuing diplomatic efforts to de-escalate the situation; the High Representative met the US, Russia and Ukraine Foreign Ministers in Geneva on 17 April and agreed on concrete steps to de-escalate tensions and restore security for all citizens.

The EU is determined to make sure Ukraine has all the support it needs, to undertake the political and economic reforms necessary to consolidate a democratic, independent, united and prosperous Ukraine. Members of the European Commission and Ukrainian Government, headed respectively by President Barroso and Prime Minister Yatseniuk, met on 13 May in Brussels. The sides agreed to maintain close interaction and coordination with a view to further deepening Ukraine's political association and economic integration with the EU. [5] The sides also agreed to continue implementation of the joint inclusive European Agenda for Reform, which combines Ukraine's short and medium-term needs. On 16 May Commissioner Füle visited Kyiv and met Prime Minister Yatsenyuk and President Turchinov to start the work on practical implementation of the reforms [6].

The EU is providing Ukraine with EUR 11 billion in loans and grants to assist its reform process, including two emergency Macro Financial Assistance loans of a combined EUR 1.61 billion [7] [8]. The EU has also decided to create a support group to provide structure, overview and guidance for the Commission's work to support Ukraine. It will help mobilise Member States' expertise and enhance coordination with other donors and the International Financing Institutions [9].

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(1) http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140417_01_en.pdf
(2) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141749.pdf
(3) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141372.pdf
(4) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/141601.pdf
(5) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-346_en.htm
(6) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/fule/headlines/news/2014/05/20140516_en.htm
(7) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-279_en.htm
(8) http://europa.eu/newsroom/files/pdf/ukraine_en.pdf
(9) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-413_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000902/14
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(29 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Regolament dwar il-Fond tas-Suq Monitarju

Wieħed mir-rekwiżiti tar-regolament propost dan l-aħħar huwa li l-maniġer tal-MMF għandu jiżgura li titwettaq valutazzjoni interna ta' riskju tal-kreditu ħalli tiġi evitata d-dipendenza żejda fuq il-klassifikazzjonijiet esterni.

Dan ifisser li l-mod ta' kif l-MMFs qed jiġu kklassifikati bħalissa se jinbidel kompletament.

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tagħti aktar informazzjoni fir-rigward tar-raġunijiet għal dan ir-rekwiżit? X'jistgħu jkunu l-implikazzjonijiet ta' dan il-metodu ta' klassifikazzjoni tal-MMF il-ġdid għall-investituri Ewropej?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(26 ta' Marzu 2014)

Permezz tal-miżuri proposti fl-abbozz ta' Regolament dwar il-Fondi tas-Suq Monetarju (MMF), iddaħħlet sistema ġdida ta' klassifikazzjoni tal-kreditu. L-intenzjoni hija li din is-sistema tieħu post ir-referenza mekkanistika li torbot l-eliġibilità ta' strument finanzjarju b' kundizzjoni ta' klassifikazzjoni esterna tal-kreditu. Din ir-referenza mekkanistika għandha tinbidel bħala konsegwenza tad-dħul fis-seħħ tar-Regolament il-ġdid u tad-Direttiva l-ġdida dwar l-aġenziji tal-klassifikazzjoni tal-kreditu (il-pakkett CRAIII) bil-għan li l-leġiżlazzjoni Ewropea ssir anqas dipendenti fuq il-klassifikazzjonijiet esterni tal-kreditu.

Sabiex tiġi sostituta r-rabta mekkanistika, il-Kummissjoni pproponiet li tistabbilixxi sistema identika iżda li tkun ibbażata fuq it-tfassil ta' klassifikazzjoni tal-kreditu interna, li tibqa' ssegwi l-klassifikazzjonijiet esterni, iżda f'miżura anqas. Skont din il-proċedura l-ġdida, kull maniġer ikun irid jevalwa huwa stess ir-riskji tal-krediti tal-istrumenti finanzjarji li fihom huwa jkun qiegħed jikkunsidra li jinvesti.

Il-proposta fiha wkoll miżura oħra li ma tikkonċernax il-klassifikazzjoni interna tal-istrumenti finanzjarji li fihom jinvestu l-fondi iżda l-klassifikazzjoni tal-fondi stess. Din il-miżura għandha l-għan li jiġi evitat li l-maniġers tal-fondi jħallsu lil xi aġenzija tal-klassifikazzjoni biex jirċievu l-klassifikazzjoni, ħaġa li twassal għal għad ta' dubji fejn jidħlu kunflitti ta' interess li jeżistu bejn il-maniġer u l-aġenzija. Sabiex jiġi ggarantit li l-investituri jibqa' jkollhom aċċess għal informazzjoni trasparenti dwar il-fondi li fihom jinvestu, huma jistgħu għaldaqstant jibqgħu jitolbu li l-fondi jirċievu klassifikazzjoni. Din hija miżura proporzjonata biex jiġu llimitati l-kunflitti ta' interess li jċekknu l-fiduċja tal-investituri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000902/14
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: Money Market Funds Regulation

One of the requirements of the newly proposed regulation is that the MMF manager must ensure that an internal credit risk assessment is carried out to avoid overreliance on external ratings.

This means that the way in which MMFs are currently rated will change completely.

Could the Commission please elaborate on the reasons behind this requirement? What might the implications of this new MMF rating method be for European investors?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(26 mars 2014)

Parmi les mesures proposées dans le projet de règlement sur les fonds monétaires, un nouveau système de notation de crédit a été introduit. Ce système vise à remplacer la référence mécanique qui lie l'éligibilité d'un instrument financier à une condition de notation de crédit externe. Cette référence mécanique doit être changée suite à l'entrée en vigueur du nouveau règlement et de la nouvelle directive sur les agences de notation de crédit (paquet CRAIII) qui visent à rendre la législation européenne moins dépendante des notations de crédit externes.

Afin de remplacer le lien mécanique, la Commission a proposé de mettre en place un système identique mais qui se base sur l'élaboration d'une notation de crédit interne tout en continuant de suivre les notations externes, mais dans une moindre mesure. Selon cette nouvelle procédure, chaque gestionnaire devra évaluer lui-même les risques de crédit des instruments financiers dans lesquels il compte investir.

La proposition contient également une autre mesure qui ne concerne pas la notation interne des instruments financiers dans lequel le fonds investit mais la notation du fonds lui-même. Cette mesure vise à éviter que les gestionnaires de fonds ne rémunèrent une agence de notation pour recevoir une note de crédit, ce qui soulève de nombreuses interrogations quant aux conflits d'intérêt qui existent entre le gestionnaire et l'agence. Afin de garantir que les investisseurs puissent continuer d'avoir accès à une information transparente sur les fonds dans lesquels ils investissent, ils pourront cependant continuer de demander à ce que le fonds reçoive une note de crédit. Il s'agit d'une mesure proportionnée pour limiter les conflits d'intérêt qui portent atteinte à la confiance des investisseurs.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000913/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(29 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Legame tra consumo di alcol e violenza domestica

Recenti studi di un'università americana, relativi ai fattori scatenanti della violenza domestica, suggeriscono che tra le cause principali di violenze fisiche, psicologiche e sessuali l'abuso di alcol sia un fattore determinante. Lo studio, condotto su soggetti di sesso maschile e poi su soggetti di sesso femminile, ha coinvolto due gruppi di giovani adulti, evidenziando che tutti, senza distinzioni di genere sessuale di appartenenza, tendono a essere più aggressivi e violenti quando assumono sostanze come l'alcol.

In particolare, è stato rilevato che i maschi sotto l'influenza dell'alcol sono più propensi a perpetrare aggressione fisica, psicologica o sessuale contro le loro partner, rispetto ai maschi sotto l'influenza della marijuana. Le donne, invece, era più probabile che fossero sia fisicamente che psicologicamente aggressive sotto l'influenza dell'alcol, ma, a differenza degli uomini, avevano anche maggiori probabilità di essere psicologicamente aggressive sotto l'influenza della marijuana.

Alla luce di questo studio, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se è in possesso di dati che avallino i risultati dell'esperimento condotto negli USA;

2. se in Europa sono stati condotti esperimenti simili e con quali risultati;

3. se i governi degli Stati membri o la Commissione stessa hanno avviato dei programmi di prevenzione delle violenze domestiche che includano anche un modulo sulla prevenzione dell'abuso di alcol e droghe?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2014)

Combattere le violenze contro le donne è una delle priorità della Commissione, come dimostrano il Piano d'azione per l'attuazione del programma di Stoccolma, la Carta delle donne e la Strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015. L'adozione, quando possibile, di misure legislative, la lotta contro la discriminazione e per l'*empowerment* femminile, l'ampliamento delle conoscenze, gli scambi di buone pratiche sulle strategie efficaci, le campagne sensibilizzare e l'erogazione di fondi rimangono le principali iniziative dell'Unione per aiutare gli Stati membri a mettere fine alla violenza contro le donne.

Il 5 marzo 2014 l'Agenzia dell'Unione europea per i diritti fondamentali ha pubblicato i risultati di un'indagine su scala europea sulle violenze vissute dalle donne. L'indagine, che ha raccolto la testimonianza di 42 000 donne in tutti e 28 gli Stati membri, rende conto delle violenze fisiche, sessuali e psicologiche vissute dalle donne e aiuterà i responsabili a diversi livelli a prendere decisioni migliori e più documentate.

La Commissione, insieme agli Stati membri, si sta già occupando della questione della specificità di genere del consumo di stupefacenti e dei suoi effetti nell'ambito familiare. L'attuale piano d'azione dell'UE in materia di lotta contro la droga 2013-2016 ([1]) prevede azioni concrete che gli Stati membri sono chiamati a attuare per ridurre la domanda di stupefacenti ([2]). La Commissione sostiene inoltre progetti nel quadro del programma «Prevenzione e informazione in materia di droga» ([3]), tra cui un progetto attualmente in corso dal titolo *«Gender-specific and participatory community-based approaches for prevention, drug-demand reduction, and services harmonisation in 6 EU countries: what makes a difference?»*.

La strategia dell'UE in materia di alcol mira a ridurre i danni causati da un consumo di alcolici dannoso e rischioso soprattutto per la salute e la società.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=IT&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2012809%202013%20INIT
([2]) (obiettivo 1, azione 1, lettere a) e c)).
([3]) Decisione n. 1150/2007/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 settembre 2007, che istituisce per il periodo 2007-2013 il programma specifico Prevenzione e informazione in materia di droga nell'ambito del programma generale Diritti fondamentali e giustizia, GU L 257 del 3.10.2007, pag. 23-29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000913/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: Link between alcohol consumption and domestic violence

Recent research by an American university into the factors which trigger domestic violence suggests that among the main causes of physical, psychological and sexual violence the abuse of alcohol is a determining factor. The research, carried out on male subjects and then on female subjects, involved two groups of young adults, and revealed that all of them, regardless of gender, tend to be more aggressive and violent when they consume substances such as alcohol.

In particular, it has been found that males under the influence of alcohol have a greater propensity to commit acts of physical, psychological or sexual aggression against their partners, as compared with males under the influence of marijuana. Women, on the other hand, were more likely to be physically and psychologically aggressive under the influence of alcohol, but, unlike men, they were more likely to be psychologically aggressive under the influence of marijuana.

In view of this research, can the Commission clarify:

1. whether it has any data supporting the results of the experiment conducted in the USA;

2. whether any similar experiments have been conducted in Europe, and with what results;

3. whether the governments of Member States or the Commission itself have put in place programmes of prevention of domestic violence including a module on the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2014)

Combating violence against women is a priority of the Commission, as shown in the action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme, the Women's Charter and the strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015). Adoption of legislative measures when possible, fighting against discrimination and empowering women, improving knowledge, exchanging good practices on effective policies, raising awareness and providing funding will remain our main initiatives to support the Member States in eliminating violence against women.

On 5 March 2014, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has released the results of an EU-wide survey on women's experiences of violence. The findings from interviews with 42 000 women across all 28 EU Member States about their experiences of physical, sexual and psychological violence will help decision-makers at all levels to make better, evidence-based decisions.

The Commission, jointly with EU Member States, has been addressing the issues of gender-specific drug use as well as drug use and its impact in the context of family life. The current EU Drugs Action Plan 2013-2016 ([1]) provides for concrete actions to be implemented by Member States under the Drug demand reduction strand ([2]). Also, the Commission, through the Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([3]) (DPIP) has supported projects, such as the current project on 'Gender-specific and participatory community-based approaches for prevention, drug-demand reduction, and services harmonisation in 6 EU countries: what makes a difference?'.

In addition, the EU alcohol strategy aims at reducing the harm caused by harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption, including the health and societal harm.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/drugs-ap-2013-2016_en.pdf
([2]) (objective 1, actions 1a and c).
([3]) Decision No 1150/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 September 2007 establishing for the period 2007-2013 the Specific Programme Drug prevention and information as part of the General Programme Fundamental Rights and Justice, OJ L 257, 3.10.2007, p. 23-29.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000914/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(29 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Danni alla salute legati all'uso del colluttorio

Uno studio scientifico di un'università britannica ha rivelato che l'uso di un collutorio antibatterico può avere effetti nocivi sulla salute umana. In particolare il pericolo dipende dal fatto che il liquido antibatterico attacca sia i batteri nocivi per l'organismo che quelli «utili», inficiandone l'azione, col rischio di complicazioni a livello di pressione sanguigna, cardiopatie, ictus e altri eventi correlati all'ipertensione.

Lo studio si è basato su un campione di 19 persone sane che dovevano utilizzare un noto collutorio antibatterico due volte al giorno. I soggetti sono stati oggetto, sia al basale che durante lo studio, di misurazioni della pressione sanguigna. Le misure hanno mostrato che la pressione sanguigna dei partecipanti variava tra le 2 e le 3,5 unità. Questo, secondo gli scienziati, significa che per ogni aumento di due punti della pressione sanguigna, il rischio di morire di malattie cardiache aumenta del 7 %, e il rischio di morire di ictus del 10 %.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. esistono altri studi condotti da altri centri di ricerca che suggeriscano i medesimi risultati dell'esperimento in oggetto;

2. ritiene che sia necessario avviare campagne di informazione riguardo all'attenta valutazione nell'uso dei collutori antibatterici, in special modo diretta a chi è già a rischio di problemi legati alla pressione sanguigna?

Risposta congiunta di Neven Mimica a nome della Commissione
(14 aprile 2014)

Lo studio menzionato dall'Onorevole deputato concerne un colluttorio contenente clorexidina. I colluttori contenenti clorexidina possono essere classificati quali cosmetici o medicinali. La decisione in merito alla classificazione di un prodotto deve essere presa dalle autorità nazionali competenti tenendo conto di tutte le sue caratteristiche.

I cosmetici devono essere sicuri. La clorexidina è consentita quale conservante ad una concentrazione massima dello 0,3 %. Le stesse restrizioni si applicano alle altre funzioni di tale sostanza.

I prodotti medicinali possono essere immessi sul mercato dell'UE soltanto se è stata loro concessa previamente un'autorizzazione da parte dell'autorità competente di uno Stato membro o della Commissione. L'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione è concessa dopo che si sono valutate la qualità, la sicurezza e l'efficacia del prodotto e si è giunti alla conclusione che il suo uso presenta un bilancio positivo in termini di rischi/benefici. Prodotti medicinali contenenti clorexidina sono stati autorizzati dagli Stati membri. Dopo l'autorizzazione iniziale la sicurezza di un prodotto è monitorata lungo il suo intero ciclo di vita nel quadro della farmacovigilanza.

La Commissione non è a conoscenza di studi analoghi condotti in università o in centri di ricerca in Europa. Il Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico non sostiene la ricerca sull'uso dei colluttori antibatterici e sui loro effetti potenziali sulla salute umana.

La Commissione esaminerà l'opportunità di chiedere al Comitato scientifico della sicurezza dei consumatori di riesaminare la clorexidina e, se del caso, prenderà le misure appropriate. Per il momento, la Commissione non dispone di evidenze sufficienti per avviare una campagna di informazione.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000957/14
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(30 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Efecte adverse ale apelor de gură

Apa de gură poate creşte riscul de infarct şi accident cerebral, pentru că soluţia antiseptică ucide bacteriile bune care contribuie la menţinerea unui nivel scăzut al tensiunii arteriale, potrivit unui studiu realizat de cercetătorii britanici, publicat în „Free Radical Biology And Medicine".

Voluntarii care au participat la acest studiu au înregistrat o creştere a tensiunii arteriale timp de câteva ore după ce au folosit apă de gură. Voluntarii, persoane sănătoase, au folosit apă de gură de două ori pe zi, iar tensiunea lor arterială a crescut cu 2-3,5 unităţi de fiecare dată (milimetri coloană de mercur). Mai mult, efectul creşterii tensiunii arteriale s-a manifestat chiar din prima zi.

Având în vedere cele de mai sus:

1. Are Comisia în vedere realizarea unor studii similare?

2. Intenţionează Comisia să revizuiască reglementările privind aceste produse, prin care să clarifice şi posibilul caracter periculos al apelor de gură ce conţin antisepticul clorhexidină?

Răspuns comun dat de dl Mimica în numele Comisiei
(14 aprilie 2014)

Studiul menţionat de distinşii membri se referă la apa de gură care conţine clorhexidină. Tipurile de apă de gură cu clorhexidină pot fi clasificate drept produse cosmetice sau medicamente. O decizie privind clasificarea unui produs trebuie să fie făcută de către autorităţile naţionale competente, luând în considerare toate caracteristicile acestuia.

Produsele cosmetice trebuie să fie sigure. Este permisă utilizarea clorhexidinei ca şi conservant într-o concentraţie maximă de 0,3 %. Aceeaşi restricţie se aplică altor funcţii ale substanţei.

Medicamentele pot fi introduse pe piaţa UE numai după acordarea unei autorizaţii de comercializare fie de către autoritatea competentă a unui stat membru, fie de către Comisie. Autorizaţia de comercializare se acordă numai după evaluarea calităţii, siguranţei şi eficacităţii produsului şi numai după ce s-a constatat existenţa, în cazul utilizării sale, a unui echilibru pozitiv între beneficii şi riscuri. Medicamentele care conţin clorhexidină au fost autorizate de statele membre. După acordarea autorizaţiei iniţiale, siguranţa unui produs este evaluată pe parcursul întregului său ciclu de viaţă în cadrul farmacovigilenţei.

Comisia nu are cunoştinţă de studii similare desfăşurate în universităţi sau în centre de cercetare din Europa. Cel de-al şaptelea program-cadru pentru cercetare şi dezvoltare tehnologică nu susţine cercetarea privind utilizarea apei de gură antibacteriene sau posibilele sale efecte asupra sănătăţii umane.

Comisia va lua în considerare necesitatea de a solicita reevaluarea clorhexidinei de către Comitetul ştiinţific pentru siguranţa consumatorilor şi, în cazul în care este necesar, intenţionează să ia măsurile corespunzătoare. În acest stadiu, Comisia nu are dovezi suficiente pentru a desfăşura o campanie de informare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000914/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: Health risks associated with using a mouthwash

A scientific study conducted by a British university has revealed that using an antibacterial mouthwash can have harmful effects on people's health. In particular, the danger lies in the fact that the antibacterial liquid attacks not just bacteria that are harmful to the body but also 'good' ones, neutralising their action, with a risk of complications in terms of blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and other events linked to hypertension.

The study was based on a sample of 19 healthy volunteers who had to use a well-known antibacterial mouthwash twice a day. They had their blood pressure taken both at the outset and during the study. The results showed that the participants' blood pressure varied by between 2 and 3.5 units. The implication of this, according to the scientists, is that for each two-point rise in blood pressure the risk of dying from heart disease rises by 7% and the risk of dying from stroke by 10%.

1. Can the Commission say whether there are other studies conducted by other research centres that suggest the same results as the experiment in question?

2. Does the Commission believe information campaigns are needed to make people think carefully about whether to use antibacterial mouthwashes, especially people who are already at risk of developing blood-pressure-related problems?

Question for written answer E-000957/14
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Adverse effects of mouthwash

Mouthwash can increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes because the antiseptic solution kills good bacteria that help maintain low blood pressure, according to a study carried out by British researchers and published in the journal 'Free Radical Biology and Medicine'.

The blood pressure of volunteers who took part in the study rose within hours of using mouthwash. The healthy volunteers used mouthwash twice a day, and each time their blood pressure rose by between 2 and 3.5 units (millimetres of mercury). Moreover, this effect was seen on the very first day.

1. Will the Commission carry out similar studies?

2. Will the Commission revise the rules on such products and clarify the possible dangersposed by mouthwash containing the antiseptic chlorhexidine?

Joint answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(14 April 2014)

The study referred to by the Honorable Members is about mouthwash which contains chlorhexidine. Mouthwashes containing chlorhexidine may be classified as cosmetics or medicinal products. A decision regarding the classification of a product must be made by national competent authorities taking into account all its characteristics.

Cosmetics must be safe. Chlorhexidine is allowed as a preservative at a maximum concentration of 0.3%. The same restriction applies to other functions of the substance.

Medicinal products can be placed on the EU market only after a marketing authorisation has been granted either by the competent authority of a Member State or by the Commission. A marketing authorisation is granted after quality, safety and efficacy have been evaluated and a positive benefit-risk balance related to its use has been concluded. Medicinal products containing chlorhexidine have been authorised by Member States. After the initial authorisation, the safety of a product is followed during its whole life-cycle within a framework of pharmacovigilance.

The Commission is not aware of similar studies carried out in universities or research centres in Europe. The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development does not support research on the use of antibacterial mouthwash and potential effects on people's health.

The Commission will consider the need to request the reassessment of chlorhexidine to the Scientific Committee on Consumers Safety and if necessary, it may take appropriate measures. At this stage, the Commission has no sufficient evidence for an information campaign.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000916/14
alla Commissione
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(29 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Programma ERASMUS+

Considerando:

— che il rispetto della diversità linguistica è uno dei valori fondamentali dell'UE e che la Carta dei diritti fondamentali riconosce la diversità linguistica come un diritto dei cittadini (articolo 22) e vieta qualsiasi forma di discriminazione fondata sulla lingua (articolo 21);

— che il programma Erasmus+ è finanziato in solido da tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea, a beneficio di tutti i cittadini europei;

— che l'opportunità per tutti i giovani europei di studiare, formarsi, lavorare e praticare sport all'estero è stata riconosciuta come uno dei fattori chiave dalla Strategia Europa 2020 al fine di superare la crisi, dare impulso alla crescita e all'occupazione e promuovere l'uguaglianza e l'inclusione sociale;

visto:

— che alla data odierna i documenti relativi al programma Erasmus+ (le informazioni sul sito web e la guida ai finanziamenti) sono stati pubblicati nella sola versione inglese;

— che le traduzioni nelle altre ventitré lingue ufficiali dell'Unione europea non saranno disponibili prima di aprile 2014;

— che la prima scadenza per la presentazione delle proposte per il ricevimento del supporto finanziario cade il 17 marzo 2014;

— che tale ritardo conferisce un iniquo vantaggio ai cittadini europei di madrelingua inglese;

si chiede alla Commissione europea:

— se e quali iniziative intenda intraprendere per porre fine all'ingiustificata discriminazione della maggioranza dei cittadini europei di madrelingua diversa dall'inglese;

— se e come si stia adoperando per accelerare il processo di traduzione dei documenti relativi al programma Erasmus+ in modo che siano disponibili in tutte le lingue ufficiali dell'UE anteriormente alla scadenza del primo bando, e se e in quale modo si stia impegnando per garantire che le informazioni inerenti a tutti i programmi di finanziamento europei vengano pubblicate contemporaneamente in tutte le ventiquattro lingue ufficiali dell'Unione europea.

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(21 marzo 2014)

L'11 dicembre 2013 il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio hanno adottato il regolamento (UE) n. 1288/2013 che istituisce «Erasmus+», il programma dell'Unione per l'istruzione, la formazione, la gioventù e lo sport. ([1]) La Commissione può confermare di aver pubblicato il giorno seguente l'invito a presentare proposte relativo al programma Erasmus+ in 23 lingue ufficiali dell'UE ([2]).

La guida al programma Erasmus+, che fornisce informazioni dettagliate riguardanti tutte le iniziative nell'ambito del programma, è al momento disponibile unicamente in inglese. Si tratta di un lungo documento che i servizi della Commissione stanno attualmente procedendo a tradurre, per quanto siano nel contempo anche impegnati a tradurre guide analoghe relative ad altri nuovi programmi dell'UE. La guida sarà resa disponibile in tutte le lingue quanto prima.

Il sito Internet del programma Erasmus+ è attualmente accessibile in tutte le lingue ufficiali dell'UE. La Commissione sta inoltre provvedendo ad ottimizzare il sito Internet «Education and Training» dedicato all'istruzione e alla formazione, sul server Europa, la cui traduzione sarà fornita quanto prima.

([1]) GU L 347 del 20.12.2013, pag. 50.
([2]) GU C 362 del 12.12.2013, pag. 62.

La Commissione ha preparato tutte le agenzie nazionali, che attuano per suo conto il programma Erasmus+ a livello nazionale, a fornire ai potenziali candidati le informazioni del caso sul bando nelle rispettive lingue. Ai fini della relativa presentazione, le domande possono essere redatte in una qualsiasi delle lingue ufficiali. La Commissione non ritiene quindi che sia stato penalizzato alcun gruppo di potenziali candidati.

Dato che l'invito a presentare proposte del programma Erasmus+ è disponibile nelle lingue ufficiali dell'UE e dato il sostegno delle agenzie nazionali, la Commissione non vede alcuna giustificazione per posticipare il primo invito fino a quando non sia disponibile la traduzione della guida. Qualunque ritardo produrrebbe senza dubbio notevoli ripercussioni negative sui cittadini dell'UE e sulle organizzazioni che desiderano partecipare al programma.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000916/14
to the Commission
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: The Erasmus+ Programme

Respect for linguistic diversity is one of the fundamental values of the European Union. The Charter of Fundamental Rights recognises linguistic diversity as a right of citizens (Article 22) and prohibits any kind of discrimination based on language (Article 21).

The Erasmus+ Programme is financed jointly by all EU Member States for the benefit of all European citizens.

According to the Europe 2020 strategy, one of the key factors for overcoming the crisis, boosting growth and employment and promoting equality and social inclusion is for all young people in Europe to have the opportunity to study, train, work and take part in sport abroad.

However, the Erasmus+ Programme documents (the information on the website and the funding guide) have so far only been published in English, and the translations into the other 23 official languages of the European Union will not be available until April 2014. Yet the first deadline for submitting proposals for financial support is 17 March 2014. The delay in publishing the translations gives European citizens with English as their mother tongue an unfair advantage.

Is the Commission going to put an end to the unjustified discrimination against the majority of European citizens whose mother tongue is not English and, if so, what initiatives does it intend to adopt?

Is the Commission endeavouring to speed up the process of translating the Erasmus+ Programme documents to make them available in all the official EU languages prior to the deadline for the first call for proposals, and in what way is it doing so? What efforts is it making, if any, to ensure that information pertaining to all European funding programmes is published simultaneously in all 24 official EU languages?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2014)

The European Parliament and the Council adopted on 11 December 2013 Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 establishing 'Erasmus+' : the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport ([1]). The Commission can confirm that it launched the next day the call for proposals for Erasmus+ in 23 official EU languages ([2]).

The Erasmus+ Programme Guide, which provides detailed information about all actions under the Programme, is as yet only available in English. It is a long document that is currently being translated by the Commission's services, which are also simultaneously translating similar guides in respect of the other new EU programmes. The Guide will be made available in all languages as soon as possible.

The Erasmus+ Programme website is currently available in all the EU official languages. Furthermore, the Commission is currently in the process of improving the Education and Training website on the Europa server and its translation will be ensured as soon as possible.

The Commission has instructed all National Agencies, which implement Erasmus+ on behalf of the Commission at national level, to provide potential applicants with all necessary supporting information on the call in their own language. Applications can be submitted in any official language. Thus the Commission does not consider that any group of potential applicants has been put at a disadvantage.

Given that the Erasmus+ call for proposals is available in the official EU languages and given the support available from National Agencies, the Commission saw no justification for delaying the first call while awaiting translation of the Programme Guide. Indeed, any such delay would have had a substantial negative impact on EU citizens and organisations wishing to participate in the programme.

([1]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 50.
([2]) OJ C 362, 12.12.2013, p. 62.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000923/14
an die Kommission
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)
(29. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Versicherung von Anhängern

1. Gibt es eine europäische Regelung für die Schadensregulierung von Versicherungen von Anhängern im Schwertransport? Oder obliegt dies komplett den Mitgliedstaaten?

2. Wenn eine diesbezügliche europäische Gesetzgebung existiert, ist es dann europarechtskonform, dass eine Versicherung von Zugmaschinen im Schwertransport in einem Mitgliedstaat bei verschuldeten Verkehrsunfällen, die den Anhänger betreffen, 50 % der Auslagen vom Versicherer des Anhängers in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat zurückverlangen darf?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(2. April 2014)

1. Die Schadenregulierung bei Unfällen, die durch ein durch die Pflichtversicherung gedecktes Fahrzeug verursacht wurden, ist in Artikel 19 ff. der Richtlinie 2009/103/EG über die Kraftfahrzeug-Haftpflichtversicherung geregelt. Da unter „Fahrzeug“ gemäß Artikel 1 Absatz 1 dieser Richtlinie auch angekoppelte oder nicht angekoppelte Anhänger zu verstehen sind, gelten die Schadenregulierungsbestimmungen ebenfalls für Anhänger.

2. Die Schadenregulierung in Fällen, in denen die Zugmaschine und der Anhänger desselben Gespanns bei zwei verschiedenen Unternehmen versichert sind, wird in der Richtlinie 2009/103/EG nicht geregelt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000923/14
to the Commission
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: Insurance of trailers

1. Is there a European regulation for the settlement of insurance claims for heavy-transport trailers or does this lie completely with the Member States?

2. If there is European legislation in this regard, then does it comply with European law that an insurer of heavy-transport tractor units in one Member State may, in the event of road accidents caused which concern the trailer, demand back 50% of the expense from the insurer of the trailer in another Member State?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2014)

1. Article 19 et seq. of Directive 2009/103/EC on motor insurance covers the issue of settlements of claims arising from any accident caused by a vehicle covered by compulsory vehicle insurance. Since in accordance with Article 1(1) of this directive the term 'vehicle' includes trailers, whether coupled or not, the provisions on claims settlements apply to trailers as well.

2. Directive 2009/103/EC does not address the issue of claims settlements in the case when the trailer and the tractor of the same unit are insured by two different insurers.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000929/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(30 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Il-mobbiltà edukattiva

Iċ-ċifri uffiċjali ppubblikati mill-Eurostat fil-11 ta' Diċembru 2013 dwar it-trażmissjoni tal-livell tal-edukazzjoni bejn il-ġenerazzjonijiet fl-UE-28 juru li, għalkemm hemm tendenza ġenerali lejn titjib fil-livell edukattiv milħuq fl-UE fil-ġenerazzjonijiet kollha, il-persistenza tal-livell edukattiv milħuq bejn il-ġenerazzjonijiet tvarja skont il-livell ta' edukazzjoni tal-ġenituri u x'aktarx li tvarja wkoll minn Stat Membru għal iehor.

Il-mobbiltà edukattiva minn livelli medji għal livelli ogħla bejn il-ġenerazzjonijiet, kif jindikaw dawn iċ-ċifri, hija pjuttost waħda limitata.

1. X'inhuma l-azzjonijiet li qed jittieħdu mill-UE biex tiffaċilita l-mobbiltà interġenerazzjonali għal nies li ġejjin minn familji bi dħul baxx u medju?

2. Liema strateġiji qed jiġu adottati biex jgħinu lil individwi żvantaġġati jtejbu l-kapital kulturali tagħhom?

3. Il-Kummissjoni kif beħsiebha theġġeġ riċerka intiża biex tidentifika l-fatturi ewlenin li jxekklu l-mobbiltà edukattiva interġenerazzjonali u kif beħsiebha tipproponi modi li permezz tagħhom dawn l-ostakoli jkunu jistgħu jingħelbu kemm fil-livell tal-UE kif ukoll f'dak tal-Istati Membri?

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

L-Istħarriġ Annwali dwar it-Tkabbir tal-2014 jistieden lill-Istati Membri jipproteġu l-investiment fl-edukazzjoni fuq perjodu ta' zmien twil, jaqdu l-bżonnijiet tal-persuni l-aktar vulnerabbli u jnaqqsu l-inugwaljanzi. Bosta Rakkomandazzjonijiet Speċifiċi għall-Pajjiżi huma rilevanti għall-inklużjoni fl-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ ta' persuni żvantaġġati.

Fil-kuntest tal-qafas dwar l-Edukazzjoni u t-Taħriġ ([1]) tal-2020, il-Kummissjoni kienet qed taħdem mal-Istati Membri biex flimkien jippromwovu l-edukazzjoni inklużiva, pereżempju billi jiġġieldu kontra t-tluq bikri mill-iskola u billi jtejbu l-edukazzjoni u l-kura bikrija tat-tfal. Barra minn hekk, il-Komunikazzjonijiet tal-Kummissjoni "Reviżjoni tal-Edukazzjoni" ([2]) u "Nifthu l-Edukazzjoni" ([3]) jissuġġerixxu metodi kif bihom jistgħu jittejbu l-kontenut u t-twassil tal-edukazzjoni bil-għan li jitnaqqsu l-inugwaljanzi.

L-Istati Membri jistgħu jużaw l-ESIF ([4]) biex jappoġġaw l-investimenti li jnaqqsu l-inugwaljanzi fl-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ. Fil-Fond Soċjali Ewropew b'mod partikolari, hemm allokati prijoritajiet ta' investiment speċifiċi biex inaqqsu u jevitaw it-tluq bikri mill-iskola u biex jippromwovu l-aċċess għal edukazzjoni ta' kwalità tajba, speċjalment għal gruppi żvantaġġati. Il-programm Erasmus+ il-ġdid jipprovdi wkoll opportunitajiet ta' ffinanzjar għal netwerking fost l-atturi li jaħdmu f'dan il-qasam.

Il-bini tal-kapital kulturali jfisser żieda fl-aċċess għall-kultura għal gruppi żvantaġġati. Din il-kwistjoni ġiet indirizzata minn grupp ta' esperti tal-Istati Membri fil-kuntest tal-Metodu Miftuħ ta' Koordinazzjoni ([5]). Ir-riżultati tal-ħidma tagħhom jinsabu disponibbli fuq http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/documents/201212access-to-culture-omc-report.pdf. Il-programm il-ġdid Ewropa Kreattiva jipprovdi opportunitajiet rilevanti ta' ffinanzjar.

([1]) Edukazzjoni u Taħriġ.
([2]) COM/2012/0669 final.
([3]) COM/2013/0654 final.
([4]) Il-Fondi Ewropej Strutturali u ta' Investiment.
([5]) Open Method of Coordination (OMC).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000929/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Educational mobility

Official figures published by Eurostat on 11 December 2013 on the transmission of the level of education between generations in the EU28 show that, although there is a general trend of improved educational attainment in the EU across generations, the persistence of educational attainment between generations differs according to the level of education of the parents and tends to differ also from one Member State to another.

Educational mobility from medium to higher levels between generations, as indicated in these figures, is quite limited.

1. What actions are being taken by the EU to facilitate intergenerational mobility for people coming from medium and low-income families?

2. What strategies are being adopted to help disadvantaged individuals enhance their cultural capital?

3. How does the Commission intend to encourage research aimed at identifying the major factors that impede intergenerational educational mobility and suggest ways in which these barriers can be overcome at both EU and Member State level?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The 2014 Annual Growth Survey calls on Member States to protect long-term investment in education and catering for the needs of the most vulnerable, and reducing inequalities. Several Country-Specific Recommendations are relevant to the inclusion of disadvantaged persons in education and training.

In the context of the ET ([1])2020 framework, the Commission has been working with MS to promote inclusive education, e.g. by combatting early school leaving and improving early childhood education and care. Also, the Commission Communications on Rethinking Education ([2]) and on Opening-up Education ([3]) suggest ways to improve the content and delivery of education to reduce inequalities.

MS can use the ESIF ([4]) to support investments to reduce inequalities in education and training. Under the ESF in particular, specific investment priorities are assigned to reducing and preventing early school-leaving and promoting access to good quality education, especially for disadvantaged groups. The new Erasmus+ programme also provides funding opportunities for networking among actors working in this field.

Building cultural capital implies increasing access to culture for disadvantaged groups. This issue was addressed by a group of MS experts in the context of the OMC ([5]). The results of their work are available at http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/documents/201212access-to-culture-omc-report.pdf. The new programme Creative Europe provides relevant funding opportunities.

([1]) Education and Training.
([2]) COM(2012)0669 final.
([3]) COM(2013)0654 final.
([4]) European Structural and Investment Funds.
([5]) Open Method of Coordination.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-000937/14
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(30 januari 2014)

Betreft: Bloedpaspoort als bewijs voor dopinggebruik

In augustus 2013 antwoordde commissaris Vassiliou (op vraag E-007480/2013) dat de Commissie „bezorgd is over het feit dat schommelingen in de bloedwaarden tot sancties kunnen leiden, hoewel deze schommelingen verschillende onderliggende oorzaken kunnen hebben". De Commissie stelde dat „er moet worden betwijfeld of uitsluitend op het biologisch paspoort kan worden vertrouwd, zonder dat gebruik wordt gemaakt van andere vormen van bewijsmateriaal". De thematiek werd ook aan de orde gesteld bij de lidstaten.

Op 30 december 2013 werd Leif Hoste louter op basis van afwijkende waarden in zijn bloedpaspoort door de Belgische wielerbond veroordeeld tot het betalen van een boete van 150 000 euro en twee jaar schorsing. Hij werd ook „gediskwalificeerd verklaard van alle competitieresultaten behaald tussen 1 juli 2008 en 31 december 2010".

Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie deze veroordeling?

Op welke manier kan gegarandeerd worden dat de sportrechtbanken de rechten van de beschuldigde in dezen geen tekort doen?

Ziet de Commissie een rol voor zichzelf in dezen?

Welke conclusies werden getrokken uit de bespreking van deze thematiek met de lidstaten?

Antwoord van mevrouw Vassiliou namens de Commissie
(7 april 2014)

Zoals aangegeven in antwoord E-007480/2013, betwijfelt de Commissie of bij het bepalen van sancties uitsluitend op het biologisch paspoort voor sporters kan worden vertrouwd, zonder dat gebruik wordt gemaakt van andere vormen van bewijsmateriaal. De wereldantidopingcode maakt duidelijk dat „de bewijsnorm in alle zaken meer dan alleen een afweging van waarschijnlijkheid is, maar minder dan een onomstotelijk vaststaand bewijs" (artikel 3.1). Hoewel kan worden verwacht dat de uitspraak van de Belgische Wielrijdersbond voldoet aan de eisen die in de code zijn vastgelegd, valt nog te bezien of zulke uitspraken ook worden bevestigd door nationale rechtbanken.

Overeenkomstig artikel 51, lid 1, is het Handvest van de grondrechten van de EU uitsluitend gericht tot de lidstaten wanneer zij het recht van de Unie ten uitvoer brengen. Aangezien er geen sprake is van EU-wetgeving in de zaak waarnaar door het geachte Parlementslid wordt verwezen, is het Handvest niet van toepassing in deze zaak.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000937/14
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Blood passport as evidence of doping

In August 2013, Commissioner Vassiliou replied (to Question E-007480/2013) that the Commission was 'concerned that fluctuations in blood values may lead to sanctions, whereas these fluctuations may have various root causes'. The Commission stated that 'whether the ABP (Athlete Biological Passport) can be relied on exclusively, without recourse to other types of evidence, seems doubtful.' The subject was also raised with Member States.

On 30 December 2013, the Belgian Cycling Association sentenced Leif Hoste to pay a fine of EUR 150 000 and suspended him for two years purely on the basis of suspect values recorded in his blood passport. He was also 'disqualified in respect of all competition results achieved between 1 July 2008 and 31 December 2010'.

What view does the Commission take of this sentence?

What can be done to ensure that sports tribunals fully respect the rights of the accused in such cases?

Does the Commission think that it could play any part in dealing with this issue?

What conclusions have been drawn from the discussion of the subject with the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 April 2014)

As pointed out in reply E-007480/2013, the Commission has some doubts that the ABP (Athlete Biological Passport) can be relied on exclusively, without recourse to other types of evidence, when deciding on sactions. The World Anti-Doping Code makes it clear that 'the standard of proof in all cases is greater than a mere balance of probability but less than proof beyond a reasonable doubt' (Article 3.1). While the ruling of the Belgian Cycling Association can be expected to meet the requirements laid down in the Code, it remains to be seen whether such rulings will be upheld by national courts.

In accordance with its Article 51 (1), the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is addressed to Member States only when they are implementing EC law. As there is no EC law involved in the case referred to by the Honourable Member, the Charter is not applicable in this case.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000948/14
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(30. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Lage der Frauen in Bahrain

Die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin ist sich der Lage von Frauen und Kindern in Bahrain wohl nur zu sehr bewusst.

Obwohl das Land von konservativen Werten geprägt ist, sind Berichte über schwere Verletzungen der Menschenrechte nicht selten. Leider gibt es auch Berichte darüber, dass Frauen sexuell missbraucht und genötigt werden, etwa wenn bei nächtlichen Razzien in ihren Dörfern Häuser gestürmt werden.

1. Ist der Vizepräsidentin/Hohen Vertreter in dieser Sachverhalt bekannt? Wenn ja, welche Empfehlungen an Bahrain hat sie ausgesprochen, um die Lebensbedingungen von Frauen generell zu verbessern?

Derzeit sind rund 60 Frauen in Gefängnissen in Bahrain inhaftiert. Sie sind gezwungen, mit nahezu täglichen Schmähungen zu leben und während Verhören sexuellen Missbrauch zu erdulden.

2. Ist der Vizepräsidentin/Hohen Vertreterin dieser Sachverhalt bekannt? Wenn ja, was beabsichtigt die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin zu unternehmen, um die Lage dieser inhaftierten Frauen zu verbessern?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohen Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(4. April 2014)

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin verfolgt die Lage in Bahrain sehr genau und wird dies auch weiterhin tun.

Die EU-Maßnahmen auf dem Gebiet der Rechte der Frau stützen sich auf die 2008 angenommenen EU-Leitlinien betreffend Gewalt gegen Frauen. Die Leitlinien zielen auf die Bekämpfung aller Formen der Diskriminierung, auf die Förderung der Geschlechtergleichstellung sowie auf die Einführung effizienter und abgestimmter Strategien ab und sehen eine Unterstützung der Bekämpfung der Straffreiheit bei Gewalt gegen Frauen vor.

Die EU hat am 11. Februar 2014 in Genf an der Überprüfung der Umsetzung des Übereinkommens zur Beseitigung jeder Form von Diskriminierung der Frau (CEDAW) durch das Königreich Bahrain teilgenommen. Bei dieser Gelegenheit wurde auf den positiven Wandel der gesellschaftlichen Haltung gegenüber Frauen in Bahrain hingewiesen, aber auch auf das Schicksal der Menschenrechtsverfechterinnen, die während der Ereignisse von 2011 und danach inhaftiert wurden. Die Europäische Union unterstützt insbesondere die in der CEDAW enthaltenen Forderungen nach einem Erlass von Rechtsvorschriften auf dem Gebiet der Gewalt gegen Frauen, einschließlich häuslicher Gewalt. Dem EAD liegen allerdings keine spezifischen Angaben zu Anschuldigungen wegen sexuellen Missbrauchs bei Verhören oder während der Haft vor.

Was die allgemeine Lage in Bahrain anbelangt, so weist die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin immer wieder darauf hin, dass nur bedeutende und konkrete vertrauensbildenden Maßnahmen, einschließlich der Freilassung von im Rahmen friedlicher politischer Aktivitäten inhaftierten Personen, der Achtung der Versammlungsfreiheit und des Rechts auf freie Meinungsäußerung sowie eines Bekenntnisses aller Seiten zu politischen Reformen und einem nationalen Dialog das Potenzial haben, das Vertrauen wiederherzustellen und so eine echte nationale Aussöhnung sowie Frieden und Stabilität im Land zu erreichen.

Weitere Einzelheiten zur Position der EU zur Lage in Bahrain findet die Frau Abgeordnete insbesondere in den Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-007781/2013 und E-006473/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000948/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation of women in Bahrain

The Vice-President/High Representative is presumably well aware of the situation of women and children in Bahrain.

Even though the country has conservative values, reports of severe violations of human rights are common. Unfortunately, there are also reports that women are sexually abused and harassed, for example in their villages during nightly house-raids.

1. Is the VP/HR aware of this situation? If so, what recommendations has she made to Bahrain with a view to improving the living conditions for women in general?

Currently, about 60 women are being held in Bahraini prisons. They are forced to live with almost daily insults and to suffer sexual abuse during interrogations.

2. Is the VP/HR aware of this situation? If so, what does the VP/HR intend to do to improve the situation for these imprisoned women?

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

The HR/VP follows the situation in Bahrain very closely and will continue to do so.

EU actions in the field of women's rights are based on the 2008 EU Guidelines on violence against women and girls. The guidelines aim at combating all forms of discrimination against them, promote gender equality, put in place effective, coordinated strategies, and address the impunity of those who have perpetrated violence against women.

The EU recently took part in the Review of the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by the Kingdom of Bahrain in Geneva on 11 February 2014. On that occasion, positive changing societal attitudes towards women in Bahrain were noted, while the fate of imprisoned female HR defenders during and after the 2011 events was raised. The EU supports in particular the calls made by the CEDAW to enact legislation on violence against women, including domestic violence. However, the EEAS has not received specific information related to allegations of sexual abuse during interrogations or in detention.

More broadly on the situation in Bahrain, the HR/VP has steadily stressed that only significant and concrete confidence building steps, including the release of those arrested in the context of peaceful political activities, the respect for freedom of assembly and expression, and commitment to political reform and National Dialogue on all sides, have the potential to restore confidence leading up to genuine national reconciliation, peace and stability in the country.

The Honourable MEP can find more details on EU positions towards the situation in Bahrain in the replies given to written questions E-007781/2013 and E-006473/2013 in particular.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000954/14
à Comissão
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(30 de janeiro de 2014)

Assunto: Alteração de regulamentos da pesca resultantes da mudança do estatuto de Maiote

No dia 12 de dezembro de 2013, o Parlamento Europeu adotou em plenário uma resolução legislativa relativa à alteração de regulamentos no domínio das pescas resultante da passagem de Maiote a Região Ultraperiférica da União Europeia (2013/0191(COD)), alguns dos quais decorrentes da necessidade de proteção da situação ecológica e biológica sensível das águas ao largo desta ilha e de preservação da economia local, visando limitar certas atividades de pesca aos navios registados em Maiote.

Estas alterações regulamentares contemplam a definição do Parque Natural Marinho de Maiote como toda a Zona Económica Exclusiva (ZEE) de Maiote e incluem uma derrogação que permite à França limitar a pesca dentro do limite das 100 milhas náuticas à frota local, bem como adotar as medidas de conservação consideradas necessárias à preservação dos valores naturais protegidos em toda a área do Parque Natural Marinho de Maiote.

Em termos de sensibilidade ambiental e dependência da atividade da pesca, a situação é análoga entre todas as regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP). Com efeito, as RUP atlânticas caracterizam-se por uma elevada biodiversidade marinha e pela existência de ecossistemas profundos com elevada fragilidade e vulnerabilidade, nomeadamente os montes submarinos. A atividade piscatória nas RUP atlânticas, exercida principalmente em zonas de mar profundo, assume uma enorme importância socioeconómica do sector das pescas para as comunidades locais.

Neste contexto, e no sentido de garantir a não-discriminação de tratamento entre todas as RUP da União Europeia, pergunto o seguinte:

Face à identificação, caracterização e delimitação de zonas biogeograficamente sensíveis também fora das ZEE das RUP, nomeadamente montes submarinos, considera a Comissão aplicar o mesmo princípio e promover a adoção do mesmo tipo de medidas de proteção ambiental e limitação da atividade da pesca nestas zonas apenas à frota local?

Resposta dada pela Comissária Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(4 de abril de 2014)

A Comissão considera que a alteração à definição do Parque Natural Marinho de Maiote, proposta pelo Parlamento Europeu, como toda a Zona Económica Exclusiva (ZEE) de Maiote transmite uma sólida mensagem sobre a necessidade de proteger zonas sensíveis do ponto de vista ecológico e biológico. O estabelecimento dos limites desse parque incumbe à França e o atual parque natural marinho, por ela definido, abrange toda a ZEE.

A Comissão concorda que as medidas para proteger o ambiente das águas ao largo das regiões ultraperiféricas devem basear-se nos mesmos princípios a aplicar a todas as águas da União. Contudo as medidas específicas para cada região devem ter em conta as particularidades de cada zona, as características ambientais a proteger e as ameaças à sua preservação colocadas por uma ou outra atividade regulada.

No que se refere a outras regiões ultraperiféricas, se os requisitos em matéria de proteção ambiental (nomeadamente os referentes à Diretiva (CE) 92/43/CEE relativa à preservação dos habitats naturais e da fauna e da flora selvagens, à Diretiva 2009/147/CE relativa à conservação das aves selvagens e à Diretiva 2008/56/CE que estabelece um quadro de ação comunitária no domínio da política para o meio marinho — Diretiva-Quadro «Estratégia Marinha») forem melhor satisfeitos com a criação de parques marinhos, a Comissão encoraja os Estados-Membros em causa a adotar as medidas necessárias para esse efeito.

Quanto ao limite do acesso da frota local, a situação em Maiote é idêntica à de todas as outras regiões ultraperiféricas, tal como previsto no artigo 5.°, n.° 3, do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1380/2013 relativo à política comum das pescas ([1]).

([1]) JO L 354 de 28.12.2013, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000954/14
to the Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Amendment of fishing regulations by reason of the change of status of Mayotte

On 12 December 2013, in plenary session, the European Parliament adopted a legislative decision concerning amendments to certain fishery regulations as a result of Mayotte becoming an Ultra-Peripheral Region of the European Union (2013/0191(COD)), some of them due to the need to protect the sensitive ecological and biological position of the waters off the coast of this island and to preserve the local economy, aiming to restrict certain fishing activities to vessels registered in Mayotte.

These regulatory amendments envisage the designation of the Mayotte Marine Natural Park as the entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Mayotte and include a derogation that permits France to restrict fishing within 100 nautical miles to the local fleet, as well as to adopt any conservation measures deemed necessary to preserve the protected natural assets throughout the area of the Mayotte Marine Natural Park.

In terms of environmental sensitivity and dependency on fishing activities, the situation of all the Ultra-Peripheral Regions (UPRs) is similar. This means that UPRs in the Atlantic are characterised by a high level of marine biodiversity and the existence of deep-sea ecosystems that are highly fragile and vulnerable, namely the seamounts. Fishing activity in UPRs in the Atlantic, primarily undertaken in deep sea areas, means that the fishery sector is of enormous socioeconomic importance for local communities.

Against this background and with a view to ensuring that there is no discrimination in treatment between the UPRs of the European Union, I have the following question:

Given the identification, characterisation and delimitation of bio-geographically sensitive areas also outside the EEZs of the UPRs, namely seamounts, does the Commission intend to apply the same principle and promote the adoption of the same kind of measures to protect the environment and restrict fishing in these areas to the local fleet alone?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2014)

The Commission considers the amendment proposed by the European Parliament on the designation of the Mayotte Marine Natural Park as the entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Mayotte sends an important signal on the need to protect sensitive ecological and biological areas. The designation of the boundaries of such Park is primarily a competence for France and the existing Marine Natural Park, as designated by France, covers the entire EEZ.

The Commission agrees that measures to protect the environment in the waters around outermost regions should be based on the same principles in all waters of the Union, but the specific measures in each region need to be tailored to the characteristics of each zone, the environmental features to protect and the threats to conservation posed by one or another regulated activity.

As regards other outermost regions, where environmental protection requirements, in particular those pursuant Directive (EC) 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds and Directive 2008/56/EC establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) would be better met by the creation of marine parks, the Commission would encourage the concerned Member States to adopt the necessary measures for their creation.

As far as restricting access to local fleets is concerned, the situation in Mayotte is identical to that in all other outermost regions, as set out in Article 5(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the common fisheries policy ([1]).

([1]) OJ L 354, 28.12.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000960/14
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(30 janvier 2014)

Objet: Grand marché transatlantique: des experts plutôt que des citoyens

La Commission a annoncé le 27 janvier la création d'un groupe d'expert consultatif pour l'assister dans les négociations du grand marché transatlantique. Le groupe, composé de 14 conseillers issus de différentes associations d'entrepreneurs, de travailleurs ou de consommateurs, sera présidé par Ignacio Garcia Bercero, directeur à la direction générale du commerce de la Commission européenne. Une fois de plus, les parlementaires sont mis de côté.

Ces experts seront chargés d'orienter les négociations en vue d'assurer «le respect de normes européennes élevées relatives à la protection des consommateurs et de l'environnement». De quel droit ces personnes vont-elles recevoir un tel pouvoir? Cependant, la composition du groupe laisse apparaître une prédominance des milieux d'affaires. Comment la Commission envisage-t-elle d'assurer la protection des consommateurs avec de tels experts, plus habitués à défendre les intérêts financiers de leurs clients?

La Commission justifie la création de ce groupe d'expert par une tentative d'améliorer la transparence autour des négociations transatlantiques. C'est une affabulation puisque tous sont tenus au secret. Or, ces experts seront les seuls, avec les négociateurs directs, à avoir accès aux documents en débat. Pourquoi en exclure les parlementaires et les citoyens? Quel est le modèle politique que soutient la Commission avec le recours à de telles pratiques?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(20 mars 2014)

La Commission souhaite rappeler à l'Honorable Parlementaire que le Parlement européen participe pleinement aux négociations du Partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement (TTIP) et qu'il reçoit toutes les informations pertinentes, notamment les documents de négociation, conformément aux dispositions appropriées de l'accord-cadre sur les relations entre la Commission et le Parlement. En outre, le Parlement européen a mis sur pied des organes spécifiques ad hoc pour superviser les négociations: il s'agit du groupe consultatif du TTIP (que la Commission informe avant et après chaque cycle de négociations) et du groupe de coordination présidé par le président du Parlement européen.

Le groupe consultatif est un groupe temporaire et informel d'experts dont la mission est de conseiller la Commission dans tous les domaines clés des négociations du TTIP. Le groupe reflète les intérêts de segments majeurs de la société. Ses membres sont élus en tant qu'individus représentant un intérêt commun partagé par plusieurs parties prenantes dans un domaine spécifique et non une partie prenante en particulier. Tous les membres ont été choisis de façon à garantir une composition équilibrée permettant de représenter les intérêts des consommateurs, des travailleurs, des entreprises et d'autres acteurs de la société civile, notamment dans le domaine de la santé publique et de l'environnement.

Le groupe travaille dans le respect des procédures de la Commission relatives aux groupes d'expert. Pour plus d'informations, veuillez consulter le site web «Groupes d'experts: explication ([1])» et la communication sur l'encadrement des groupes experts de 2010 ([2]).

Le groupe ne fait pas partie de l'équipe de négociation; par conséquent, pour qu'il joue son rôle consultatif efficacement, les négociateurs de la Commission lui transmettent d'une manière franche des explications ainsi que des mises à jour sur les progrès réalisés. Occasionnellement, le groupe peut être amené à avoir accès à certains documents internes à l'UE, à titre confidentiel.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=faq.faq&aide=2&Lang=FR.
([2]) (C(2010) 7649 final et SEC(2010) 1360).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000960/14
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: The large transatlantic market — shaped by experts rather than citizens

On 27 January, the Commission announced the launch of a consultative group of experts to help with negotiations to establish a large transatlantic market. The group, which is to be formed of 14 advisors from a variety of business, worker and consumer groups, will be led by Ignacio Garcia Bercero, a director at the Directorate General for Trade of the European Commission. Members of Parliament have once again been sidelined.

These experts will be tasked with guiding the negotiations to ensure that 'high European standards in respect of consumer and environmental protection are maintained'. What right do these people have to be given such power? In terms of its composition, the group is dominated by representatives from the world of business; how is the Commission going to ensure that consumer rights are protected by these experts, who are more accustomed to defending their clients' financial interests?

The Commission has justified the launch of this group of experts as an attempt to improve transparency in transatlantic negotiations. This is pure fabrication, as they are all bound to secrecy. The experts, together with the direct negotiators, will be the only ones who have access to the documents that are being debated. Why exclude members of Parliament and citizens? What kind of political model is the Commission advocating by resorting to such practices?

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

The Commission would like to remind the Honourable Member that the European Parliament is fully involved in the negotiations of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and is provided with all relevant information, including negotiating documents, in line with the relevant provisions of the framework Agreement between the Commission and the Parliament. In addition, specific ad hoc bodies have been established by the EP to oversee the negotiations, i.e. the Monitoring Group on TTIP (which is (de)briefed by the Commission before and after each round of negotiations) as well as the Coordination Group chaired by the President of the European Parliament.

The Advisory Group is a temporary and informal group of experts whose role is to provide advice to the Commission on all key areas of the TTIP negotiations. The Group reflects the interests of major segments of society. Members are appointed as individuals to represent a common interest shared by stakeholders in a specific area and do not represent a particular stakeholder. All members have been selected in accordance with the need for balanced composition to include consumer, worker, business and other civil society interests, including public health and the environment.

The Group operates in accordance with the Commission procedures on expert groups. More information is available on the webpage 'Expert Groups Explained ([1])', as well as in the 2010 Communication on Expert Groups ([2]).

The Group is not part of the negotiating team but in order for it to perform its advisory role effectively, the Commission negotiators will give frank explanations and updates on progress to the Group. In due course, the Group may see some EU-only documents on a confidential basis.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=faq.faq&aide=2
([2]) (C(2010)7649 final and SEC(2010)1360).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000966/14
an die Kommission
Renate Sommer (PPE)
(30. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Rechtsunsicherheit durch Kollision der Verordnungen (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 und (EU) Nr. 1379/2013

Fischereierzeugnisse fallen klar in den Anwendungsbereich der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel. Dennoch legt Kapitel IV der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1379/2013 obligatorische Angaben zur Verbraucherinformation fest, die in einigen Teilen den Vorgaben der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 widersprechen. So geht die Pflicht zur Angabe darüber, ob das Erzeugnis aufgetaut wurde, über die in Anhang VI der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 festgelegte Pflicht zur Angabe des Einfrierdatums hinaus. Da aus der Angabe des Einfrierdatums automatisch ersichtlich wird, dass ein Produkt aufgetaut wurde, hat diese zusätzliche Angabe keinen Zusatznutzen für Verbraucher.

Auch die neue Pflicht zur Angabe des Mindesthaltbarkeitsdatums ist überflüssig, da die Regeln für die Angabe des Mindesthaltbarkeits- oder Verbrauchsdatums nach Artikel 24 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 bereits klargestellt sind. Da es sich bei Fischereierzeugnissen um Lebensmittel handelt, die leicht verderblich sind und eine Gefahr für die menschliche Gesundheit darstellen können, müssen Lebensmittel aus Fisch sogar mit dem Verbrauchsdatum versehen werden. Eine zusätzliche Angabe des Mindesthaltbarkeitsdatums ist deshalb überflüssig und sogar dazu geeignet, Verbraucher in die Irre zu führen.

Ebenso geht Artikel 35 Absatz 2 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1379/2013 über die Pflichtangaben für nicht vorverpackte Produkte der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 hinaus, da diese in Artikel 44 für nicht vorverpackte Produkte lediglich die Angabe der Allergene vorschreibt.

Artikel 39 Absatz 1 Buchstabe h hingegen nennt die Information über den Nährwert des Erzeugnisses als zusätzliche freiwillige Angabe, obwohl die Nährwertangabe das Kernstück der verpflichtenden Angaben gemäß Artikel 9 Absatz 1 Buchstabe l der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 bildet.

Hierzu ersuche ich die Kommission um Beantwortung folgender Fragen:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Konflikte, die sich hinsichtlich der unterschiedlichen Kennzeichnungsvorschriften der beiden Verordnungen ergeben?

2. Plant die Kommission, die Vorschriften durch den Erlass von Umsetzungsrichtlinien anzupassen?

Antwort von Frau Damanaki im Namen der Kommission
(4. April 2014)

In der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 ([1]) sind die horizontalen Anforderungen an die Verbraucherinformation für alle Lebensmittel festgelegt. Gemäß Artikel 1 Absatz 4 und Artikel 26 Absatz 1 der genannten Verordnung gilt diese jedoch unbeschadet der in speziellen Rechtsvorschriften der Union für bestimmte Lebensmittel enthaltenen Kennzeichnungsvorschriften. Die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1379/2013 ([2]) enthält solche besonderen Regeln für freiwillige und obligatorische Angaben zur Verbraucherinformation für vorverpackte und nicht vorverpackte Fischerei- und Aquakulturerzeugnisse gemäß den Buchstaben a, b, c und e des Anhangs I.

Insbesondere Artikel 35 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1379/2013 definiert die Vorschriften für obligatorische Angaben, die gemacht werden müssen, wenn solche Erzeugnisse zum Verkauf angeboten werden. Zu diesen obligatorischen Informationen zählen die Angabe, ob das Produkt aufgetaut wurde, und gegebenenfalls das Mindesthaltbarkeitsdatum. Letzteres bedeutet, dass die angemessene Kennzeichnung oder Etikettierung des Erzeugnisses entweder die Angabe des Mindesthaltbarkeitsdatums oder des Verbrauchsdatums gemäß der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 umfassen muss. Artikel 39 Absatz 1 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1379/2013 präzisiert, welche anderen Angaben auf freiwilliger Basis bereitgestellt werden können (einschließlich Informationen über den Nährwert des Erzeugnisses).

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 25. Oktober 2011 betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel und zur Änderung der Verordnungen (EG) Nr. 1924/2006 und (EG) Nr. 1925/2006 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates und zur Aufhebung der Richtlinie 87/250/EWG der Kommission, der Richtlinie 90/496/EWG des Rates, der Richtlinie 1999/10/EG der Kommission, der Richtlinie 2000/13/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates, der Richtlinien 2002/67/EG und 2008/5/EG der Kommission und der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 608/2004 der Kommission; ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011.

([2]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1379/2013 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 11. Dezember 2013 über die Gemeinsame Marktorganisation für Erzeugnisse der Fischerei und der Aquakultur, zur Änderung der Verordnungen (EG) Nr. 1184/2006 und (EG) Nr. 1224/2009 des Rates und zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 104/2000 des Rates; ABl. L 354 vom 28.12.2013.

Enthält die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1379/2013 keine speziellen Regeln, so gilt die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 weiterhin. Die Verordnungen (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 und (EU) Nr. 1379/2013 ergänzen einander und die Kommission sieht keinen Grund für eine Änderung dieser beiden Rechtsakte.

Um alle Akteure der Lebensmittelkette zu unterstützen sowie die einheitliche Anwendung dieser EU-Vorschriften zu gewährleisten, arbeitet die Kommission gemeinsam mit den Mitgliedstaaten an einem praktischen Dokument zur Zusammenfassung bestimmter Vorschriften, wozu auch die von Ihnen angeführten Bestimmungen zählen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000966/14
to the Commission
Renate Sommer (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Legal uncertainty due to the collision of Regulations (EU) No 1169/2011 and (EU) No 1379/2013

Fishery products clearly fall within the scope of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers. However, Chapter IV of Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 defines obligatory indications for consumer information which in some parts contradict the requirements of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011. For example, the obligation to indicate if the product has been defrosted goes beyond the obligation to indicate the date of freezing as defined in Annex VI of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011. Because it is automatically apparent from the specification of the date of freezing that a product has been defrosted, this additional indication has no added value for consumers.

The new obligation to indicate the date of minimum durability is also superfluous, because the rules for indicating the minimum durability or use-by date have already been made clear in accordance with Article 24 of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011. Because fish products are food products that are easily perishable and may represent a risk to human health, food products made of fish must be provided with the use-by date. An additional indication of the minimum durability date is therefore superfluous and may even mislead the consumer.

Article 35(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 also goes beyond the obligatory indications for non-prepackaged products of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011, because in Article 44 this regulation only prescribes the indication of allergens for non-prepackaged products.

On the other hand, Article 39(1) (h) states that information about the nutritional value of the product is an additional voluntary indication, although the indication of the nutritional value is at the heart of the required indications according to Article 9(1) (1) of Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011.

Concerning this I ask the Commission to answer the following questions:

1. How does the Commission assess the conflicts that arise regarding the different labelling requirements of the two Regulations?

2. Is the Commission planning to adapt the regulations by adopting implementing Directives?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2014)

Regulation 1169/2011 ([1]) establishes horizontal consumer information requirements applicable to all foodstuffs. Articles 1(4) and 26(1) of that regulation provide, however, that it shall apply without prejudice to labelling requirements provided for in specific Union provisions applicable to particular foods. Regulation 1379/2013 ([2]) provides such specific rules for consumer mandatory and voluntary information for pre-packed and non-prepacked fishery and aquaculture products referred to in points (a), (b), (c) and (e) of its Annex I.

In particular, Article 35 of Regulation 1379/2013 defines rules on mandatory information that has to be provided where such products are offered for sale. Among such mandatory information is an indication on whether the product was 'defrosted' and of 'date of minimum durability, where appropriate'. The latter means that the appropriate marking or labelling of the product will either need to indicate the 'date of minimum durability' or the 'use-by date' as specified in Regulation 1169/2011. Article 39(1) of Regulation 1379/2013 states what other information can be provided on a voluntary basis (including an information on nutritional content).

Where Regulation 1379/2013 does not provide for specific rules, Regulation 1169/2011 continues to apply. The regulations 1169/2011 and 1379/2013 therefore complement each other and the Commission does not see any reason for modifying any of these two legal acts.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004; OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1184/2006 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000; OJ L 354, 28.12.2013.

In order to assist all players in the food chain as well as to ensure the uniform application of these EU rules, the Commission is working, together with the Member States, on a practical document summarising the substance of certain provisions, as those mentioned by the Honorable Member.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000967/14
Komisijai (Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotojai ir vyriausiajai įgaliotinei)
Leonidas Donskis (ALDE)
(2014 m. sausio 30 d.)

Tema: VP/HR – Tibeto nomadų perkėlimas ir pavojus jų kultūros paveldui

Kinijos vyriausybė inicijavo naują statybų projektą, kurį vykdant siekiama 2,3 mln. tibetiečių iš jų namų perkelti gyventi į naujus gyvenamuosius rajonus. Kinijos vyriausybės paskirtas pareigūnas nurodo, kad laikui bėgant pagerėjo ūkininkų ir piemenų gyvenimo sąlygos, jų gyvenimo būdas labai pasikeitė, taip pat visiškai pasikeitė ir regionas. Visgi įvykdžius panašius projektus praeityje, kaip antai, susijusius su inuitų, masajų ir apačių bendruomenėmis, šios bendruomenės atsisakė klajokliško gyvenimo būdo, todėl asimiliavosi su didesnėmis gyventojų grupėmis ir iš esmės išnyko. Atsižvelgdama į šią oficialią politiką, kuria, atrodo, siekiama atitolinti tibetiečius nuo jų praeities ir galutinai suvienodinti su likusiais Kinijos gyventojais,

1. ar Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotoja ir Sąjungos vyriausioji įgaliotinė, kai pasinaudojant dvišaliais kanalais vykdomos derybos su Kinijos administracija, reguliariai kelia klausimą dėl to, kad nuolat pažeidžiamos Tibeto gyventojų pagrindinės žmogaus teisės ir laisvės?

2. Kokių veiksmų imasi ES, kad apsaugotų Tibeto gyventojų kultūrinę aplinką ir paveldą nuo kultūrinės invazijos, kurią siekia vykdyti Kinijos vyriausybė?

Vyriausiosios įgaliotinės ir Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotojos Catherine Ashton atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. birželio 23 d.)

ES daug kartų viešai kėlė klausimą dėl mažumoms priklausančių asmenų, taip pat ir tibetiečių, teisių. 2012 m. gruodžio 14 d. paskelbtame pareiškime dėl Tibete vykdomų susideginimų Vyriausioji įgaliotinė Catherine Ashton išreiškė susirūpinimą dėl „tibetiečių identiteto raiškos ribojimų, dėl kurių, panašu, regione kyla nepasitenkinimas“ ir pridūrė, kad „ES gerbia Kinijos teritorinį vientisumą, tačiau ragina Kinijos valdžios institucijas pašalinti giliai įsišaknijusias Tibeto gyventojų nepasitenkinimo priežastis ir užtikrinti, kad būtų gerbiamos jų pilietinės, politinės, ekonominės, socialinės ir kultūrinės teisės, įskaitant jų teisę turėti savo kultūrą, išpažinti savo religiją ir vartoti savo kalbą“. 2014 m. vasario 1 d. C. Ashton paskelbė pareiškimą dėl elgesio su žmogaus teisių gynėjais ir jų artimaisiais Kinijoje, taip pat su tais, kurie propaguoja mažumoms priklausančių asmenų teises. Žmogaus teisių padėtis Tibete nuolat pabrėžiama ES pareiškimuose JT žmogaus teisių taryboje ir JT Generalinėje Asamblėjoje.

2013 m. birželio 25 d. Guijange (Guidžou provincijoje) surengtame ES ir Kinijos dialogo žmogaus teisių klausimais susitikime padėtis Tibete išsamiai apsvarstyta su įvairiomis Kinijos ministerijomis. 2013 m. rugsėjo mėn. vizito į Kiniją, įskaitant Tibetą, metu ES specialusis įgaliotinis žmogaus teisių klausimais S. Lambrinidis surengė visapusiškas diskusijas su Kinijos valdžios institucijomis dėl tibetiečių žmogaus teisių ir Tibeto kultūros paveldo. Galiausiai dėl Tibeto kultūros paveldo apsaugos klausimo EIVT kreipėsi į susijusias Komisijos tarnybas ir UNESCO.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000967/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Leonidas Donskis (ALDE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Resettlement and relocation of Tibetan nomads and risks to their cultural heritage

A new building project initiated by the Chinese Government is aimed at relocating 2.3 million Tibetans from their homes to new residential areas. According to a China-appointed government official, 'the living conditions of farmers and herdsmen have improved over time. Their lifestyles have experienced dramatic change, and the area has taken on a brand-new look'. However, similar projects in the past, such as those relating to the Inuit, the Masai and the Apache communities, which put an end to their nomadic lifestyles, resulted in those communities being absorbed by the larger population and then eventually virtually disappearing. In view of this official policy, which appears to be an attempt to alienate Tibetans from their past and ultimately homogenise them with the rest of the Chinese population:

1. Does the VP/HR regularly bring up the issue of the ongoing suppression of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Tibetan population in its bilateral channels of negotiation with the Chinese administration?

2. What steps is the EU taking to protect the cultural environment and heritage of the people of Tibet from the cultural invasion attempted by the Chinese Government?

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

The EU has publicly raised the rights of persons belonging to minorities, including that of Tibetans on many occasions. In the statement on Tibetan self-immolations issued on 14 December 2012, HR/VP Ashton expressed concerns over " the restrictions on expressions of Tibetan identity, which appear to be giving rise to a surge of discontent in the region", adding that 'while respecting China's territorial integrity, the EU calls upon the Chinese authorities to address the deep-rooted causes of the frustration of the Tibetan people and ensure that their civil, political, economic and social and cultural rights are respected, including their right to enjoy their own culture, to practice their own religion and to use their own language.' On 1 February 2014, HR/VP Ashton released a statement about the treatment of human rights defenders and their relatives in China, including those who promote the human rights of persons belonging to minorities. The Human rights situation in Tibet is also highlighted regularly in EU statements at the UN Human Rights Council and before the UN General Assembly.

During the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which was held in Guiyang (Guizhou province) on 25 June 2013, the situation in Tibet was discussed extensively with various Chinese ministries. During his visit to China, including to the Tibetan region, in September 2013 the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Mr Lambrinidis, had in-depth discussions with the Chinese authorities about the human rights of Tibetans and Tibet's culural heritage. Finally, the EEAS is in contact with the relevant services of the Commission and Unesco regarding the more specific question of the protection of Tibet's cultural heritage.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000973/14
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 januari 2014)

Betreft: Feitelijke gevolgen van opting-outclausules (follow-up)

In haar antwoord op mijn schriftelijke vraag E-013247/2013, bevestigde de Commissie dat de bepalingen van het Handvest voor de grondrechten van de Europese Unie in het kader van de uitvoering van Unierecht ook van toepassing zijn op het Verenigd Koninkrijk, ondanks het feit dat het VK, samen met Polen, een protocol heeft getekend dat erop gericht is om de vrijstelling van deze bepalingen te waarborgen. Voorts verklaarde de Commissie dat in geval van een rechtszaak de bepalingen van deze protocollen ook kunnen worden uitgelegd door het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie.

1. Kan de Commissie de rol toelichten van protocol nr. 30 bij de toepassing van het Handvest? In hoeverre bevat dit protocol een vrijstelling van de bepalingen van het Handvest voor het VK en Polen?

2. Betekent de voormelde verklaring van de Commissie dat zelfs een protocol dat een vrijstelling voor een lidstaat bevat, door een uitspraak van het Hof van Justitie buiten werking kan worden gesteld?

3. Wat zijn eventueel de gevolgen van het in vraag 2 vermelde scenario, een mogelijkheid die niet denkbeeldig is gezien de activistische houding van rechters van het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie? Wat adviseert de Commissie om een dergelijke situatie te voorkomen?

4. Kan de Commissie ons haar standpunt mededelen over de handhaving van het rechtszekerheidsbeginsel in Europees recht, dat tengevolge van de vrije uitleg van de protocollen bij de Verdragen daadwerkelijk in gedrang is gekomen?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(10 april 2014)

1. De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-000973/2014.

2. en 3. Protocol nr. 30, betreffende de toepassing van het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie op Polen en het Verenigd Koninkrijk is, in zoverre het betrekking heeft op het primaire recht van de Unie, onderworpen aan de interpretatie van het Hof van Justitie.

4. Het rechtszekerheidsbeginsel — een van de algemene beginselen van het recht van de Europese Unie — vereist dat rechtsregels helder, nauwkeurig en voorspelbaar moeten zijn, opdat belanghebbende partijen hun plaats in door het Unierecht beheerste situaties en rechtsbetrekkingen kunnen nagaan. Het Hof van Justitie waarborgt dat bij de interpretatie en toepassing van de Verdragen het rechtszekerheidsbeginsel in acht wordt genomen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000973/14
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Actual consequences of opt-outs (follow-up)

In its answer to my Written Question E-013247/2013, the Commission confirmed that the provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union also apply to the United Kingdom when it is implementing Union law, despite the fact that the UK, together with Poland, signed a protocol aimed at ensuring an opt-out from the provisions. Furthermore, the Commission stated that the provisions of these protocols could also be interpreted by the European Court of Justice in the case of a legal dispute.

1. Can the Commission specify the role of Protocol No 30 on the application of the Charter? To what extent does this protocol provide for an exemption from the provisions of the Charter for the UK and Poland?

2. Does the Commission's aforementioned statement mean that even a protocol providing an opt-out for a Member State could be overridden by a judgment of the Court of Justice?

3. What would be the consequences of the scenario mentioned in question 2, a possibility which cannot be totally ruled out given the activist behaviour of judges at the European Court of Justice? What are the Commission's suggestions on how to avoid such a situation?

4. Can the Commission share its views on the enforcement of the principle of legal certainty in European law, which is in real danger as a result of the free interpretation of the protocols to the Treaties?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2014)

1. The Commission refers the Honourable Member its answer to Written Question E-000973/2014.

2 and 3. Protocol No 30 on the application of the Charter to Poland and to the United Kingdom as pertaining to Union primary law are subject to the interpretation by the Court of Justice.

4. The principle of legal certainty — which is one of the general principles of European Union law — requires that rules of law be clear and precise and predictable in their effect, so that interested parties can ascertain their position in situations and legal relationships governed by European Union law. The Court of Justice ensures that in the interpretation and application of the Treaties the principle of legal certainty is observed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000980/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Presenza di sostanze chimiche negli indumenti per bambini

Una delle più grandi organizzazioni non governative ha recentemente diffuso i risultati di una ricerca dalla quale emerge la presenza di sostanze chimiche pericolose in indumenti destinati a bambini e neonati.

Nell'ambito di questo studio si rivela come tali sostanze siano presenti, nei prodotti per i più piccoli, in tessuti che sono quotidianamente a contatto con la pelle.

In particolare, tra maggio e giugno 2013 sono stati acquistati in 25 paesi del mondo 82 articoli per bambini, prodotti in 12 paesi. Gli indumenti sono stati poi sottoposti ad analisi in laboratori indipendenti accreditati.

Nel 61 % dei prodotti testati è stata riscontrata la presenza di nonilfenoli etossilati e si sottolinea che almeno un prodotto di ciascun marchio ne presentava tracce. Gli ftalati sono stati individuati in 33 sui 35 campioni con stampe al plastisol. I composti organo-stannici sono stati rinvenuti in tre articoli con stampe al plastisol (sui 21 testati) e in tre calzature su cinque. Uno o più PFC (composti iperfluorurati) sono stati rilevati in ciascuno dei 15 articoli testati per il rilevamento di tali sostanze. Infine, l'antimonio è stato ritrovato in tutti e 36 gli articoli nei quali è stato cercato.

Considerato che:

— questi prodotti appartengono a marchi e catene di abbigliamento presenti in tutto il mondo, compresa l'Europa;

— tali articoli sono realizzati in quei paesi quali la Cina, nelle quali l'utilizzo di tale sostanze non è vietato,

si chiede alla Commissione se:

1. ritiene che sia necessario esercitare pressioni sui governi dei paesi che autorizzano, nella produzione di abbigliamento, l'uso di sostanze chimiche nocive per gli uomini e per l'ambiente?

2. Ritiene opportuno sollecitare le imprese multinazionali affinché s'impegnino a eliminare progressivamente tutte le sostanze chimiche pericolose dagli indumenti che vendono?

3. Considera essenziale informare i consumatori sulla presenza di queste sostanze chimiche negli indumenti, in modo che essi possano effettuare decisioni di acquisto più consapevoli?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(8 aprile 2014)

Al fine di limitare la presenza di sostanze pericolose negli indumenti di ogni genere, inclusi quelli per bambini, gli operatori dell'UE devono conformarsi all'opportuna normativa in materia di salute e tutela dell'ambiente, incluso il regolamento REACH ([1]).

Diverse restrizioni imposte dal regolamento in questione riguardano la commercializzazione di manufatti tessili contenenti determinate sostanze pericolose e si applicano sia ai tessili prodotti in UE che a quelli importati da paesi terzi.

L'EU Ecolabel è un sistema volontario di marchio di qualità ecologica che incoraggia la produzione e il consumo sostenibili di prodotti e servizi. I criteri stabiliti dall'EU Ecolabel in tema di prodotti tessili sono finalizzati a ridurre l'inquinamento idrico, limitando l'impiego di sostanze pericolose ([2]) e incrementando la trasparenza nella catena di valore dei prodotti. La Commissione rinvia l'Onorevole deputato alle risposte date alle interrogazioni scritte E-000365/2014, E-000366/2014, ed E-000724/2014.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1907/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 18 dicembre 2006 concernente la registrazione, la valutazione, l'autorizzazione e la restrizione delle sostanze chimiche.

([2]) Ad esempio composti organici dello stagno, antimonio nel poliestere e additivi plastisol.

A livello internazionale il tema delle sostanze chimiche nei prodotti è stato presentato nel 2009 dalla Commissione e dagli Stati membri come una delle tematiche emergenti ([3]) all'interno del SAICM ([4]). L'attuale lavoro condotto dall' UNEP ([5]) coinvolge un progetto nonché iniziative multilaterali e mira a sviluppare un programma volontario diretto a fornire informazioni sulle sostanze chimiche presenti nei prodotti, includendo tessili e abbigliamento nelle categorie prioritarie.

Nel febbraio 2014 l'UNEP ha approvato un progetto mirante ad individuare pratiche che consentano di accedere alle informazioni sulle sostanze chimiche contenute negli articoli tessili prodotti in Cina. Il progetto coinvolge il Ministero dell'ambiente cinese nonché una serie di marchi che producono abbigliamento, calzature ed indumenti per attività all'aria aperta. Scopo di tale progetto è sostenere l'industria tessile nel compito di impiegare in modo corretto le sostanze chimiche e adottare provvedimenti volti a ridurre l'uso di quelle meno raccomandabili.

([3]) http://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/UNEPsWork/ChemicalsinProductsproject/tabid/56141/Default.aspx
([4]) Approccio strategico alla gestione internazionale delle sostanze chimiche.
([5]) Programma delle Nazioni Unite per l'ambiente (United Nations Environmental Programme).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000980/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Presence of chemicals in children's clothing

One of the largest NGOs recently published research findings revealing the presence of dangerous chemicals in clothing for babies and children.

The study indicates that these substances are present in clothing for the very young, in fabrics that are in daily contact with the skin.

In particular, in May and June 2013, 82 items of children's clothing produced in 12 countries were bought in 25 countries around the world. These clothes were then submitted for analysis by accredited independent laboratories.

Nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEs) were detected in 61% of products tested and, notably, at least one product of each brand showed traces of NPEs. Pthalates were found in 33 out of 35 samples with plastisol transfers, and organostannic compounds were discovered in three items with plastisol transfers (out of 21 tested) and in three out of five items of footwear. One or more PFCs (perfluorinated compounds) were found in all 15 items tested for these substances. Finally, antimony was detected in all 36 items tested for its presence.

In view of the fact that:

— these products belong to clothing brands and chains with a worldwide presence, including in Europe;

— these items are made in countries such as China, where use of these substances is not banned,

I ask the Commission whether:

1. it considers it necessary to exert pressure on the governments of countries that allow chemical substances that are toxic to human beings and the environment to be used in the manufacture of clothing?

2. It considers it appropriate to ask multinational companies to undertake to gradually eliminate all dangerous chemicals from the clothing they sell?

3. It considers it vital to inform consumers of the presence of these chemicals in clothing, so they can make more informed purchasing decisions?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2014)

In order to limit the presence of hazardous substances in clothing for all consumer groups including children, EU operators have to comply with relevant health and environmental legislation, including also the REACH Regulation ([1]).

Under REACH, several restrictions cover placing on the market of textile articles containing certain hazardous substances and apply to textiles manufactured in the EU as well as those imported from third countries.

The EU Ecolabel is a voluntary environmental labelling scheme encouraging the sustainable production and consumption of products and services. The EU Ecolabel criteria established for textile products aim at promoting the reduction of water pollution, limiting the use of toxic chemicals ([2]) and increasing transparency in the products value chain. The Commission also refers the Honourable Member to the answers to questions E-000365/2014, E-000366/2014 and E-000724/2014.

At the international level, in 2009 the Commission and EU Member States put forward the topic of chemicals in products as one of the emerging issues ([3]) within SAICM ([4]). The on-going work entailing a multi-stakeholder project and actions is led by UNEP ([5]) and aims at developing a voluntary programme for providing information on chemicals in products, including textile and clothing as one of the priority product categories.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals.
([2]) E.g. organotin compounds, antimony in polyester, plastisol additives.
([3]) http://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/UNEPsWork/ChemicalsinProductsproject/tabid/56141/Default.aspx
([4]) The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.
([5]) United Nations Environmental Programme.

In February 2014, UNEP approved a project to identify practices that provide access to information on chemicals contained in textiles made in China. The project involves the Ministry of Environmental Protection in China and a number of apparel, footwear and outdoor-clothing brands. Its aim is to support the textile industry to apply sound chemicals management and to take measures to reduce the use of less desirable chemicals.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000990/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Acaparamiento de tierras por parte de una compañía española en Guinea-Bisáu

La compañía española Agrogeba, dedicada a la producción de arroz, está participando en el acaparamiento de tierras por parte de compañías transnacionales en diferentes países del continente africano. En concreto, esta compañía está involucrada en la expulsión de más de 600 campesinos de sus tierras en la localidad de Bafatá, en Guinea-Bisáu.

La ONG Alianza por la Solidaridad ha publicado un informe en el que denuncia los desastrosos efectos que esta multinacional está ocasionando en la región en la que está acaparando tierras. Los 600 campesinos están siendo expulsados de sus tierras por carecer de documentos acreditativos sobre el empleo tradicional de las tierras, de titularidad pública, cuyo usufructo ha sido adquirido por la citada compañía española. Las comunidades afectadas llevan años trabajando las citadas tierras y el desembarco de la compañía de capital español está provocando un ataque directo a sus condiciones de vida.

El vallado generalizado, la contratación de guardias que han llegado a sacrificar el ganado, el empleo de pesticidas contaminantes y que desvían insectos de los cultivos a las poblaciones cercanas, incrementando la incidencia de la malaria, son solo algunos de los efectos producidos por la llegada de dicha empresa. La compañía ejerció sus derechos de explotación en los terrenos sin un mínimo atisbo de información o negociación con las comunidades locales.

Estas poblaciones están viendo cómo la compañía pisa sus derechos sin que puedan recurrir a ninguna instancia del Estado, que ha malvendido el usufructo de las tierras. La empresa emplea en las aproximadamente 6 000 hectáreas a trabajadores sin contrato, violando cualquier tipo de legislación laboral nacional o internacional.

¿Conoce la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante el citado caso de acaparamiento de tierras en Guinea-Bisáu?

¿Considera instar al Gobierno de Guinea-Bisáu a que cancele la venta de tierras hasta que no se garanticen los derechos de las personas que originariamente las habitan? ¿Piensa instar al Gobierno de Guinea-Bisáu a que cancele sus contratos de venta de tierras a empresas extranjeras hasta que tenga la garantía de que se respetan las normativas internacionales en el ámbito laboral y ambiental? ¿Piensa que este acaparamiento de tierras llevado a cabo por empresas europeas se hace de manera acorde con los objetivos de la acción exterior europea en Guinea-Bisáu?

Respuesta de la alta representante/vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de mayo de 2014)

La UE es plenamente consciente del carácter sensible de las adquisiciones de tierras a gran escala a nivel mundial, y en África en particular. Esa es la razón por la cual ha participado activamente en la elaboración de las Directrices voluntarias sobre gobernanza responsable de la tenencia de la tierra, la pesca y los bosques, ratificadas por el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial en 2012. Dichas Directrices fomentan un acceso equitativo y seguro a la tierra y el reconocimiento del derecho consuetudinario de tenencia de la tierra como medio para erradicar el hambre y la pobreza. La UE participa también de forma activa en la elaboración de principios orientados a una inversión responsable en el ámbito de la agricultura y con vistas a garantizar el respeto del consentimiento previo, informado y libre en el marco de las inversiones en tierras a gran escala.

En este contexto, cualquier empresa que practique el acaparamiento de tierras y no respete los derechos humanos y las normas internacionales en materia laboral se estará oponiendo a los objetivos de la acción europea en el exterior.

Tanto la Comisión como el SEAE están informados de que, en 2010, la empresa española AGROGEBA celebró un contrato de arrendamiento de tierras con las autoridades de Guinea-Bissau y de que actualmente opera en el sector de producción de arroz. La Comisión no ha recibido información alguna en la que se denuncie la actividad de esta empresa y que aporte elementos que le permitan evaluar la situación y profundizar en el análisis de la cuestión. De confirmarse las acusaciones realizadas, la UE planteará la cuestión ante las autoridades legítimas de Guinea Bissau una vez se hayan celebrado las elecciones.

La UE está comprometida en la ayuda a la población de Guinea Bissau y sigue apoyando el desarrollo agrario, la seguridad alimentaria y los servicios sanitarios, al tiempo que promueve los derechos humanos, incluido el respeto de las normas internacionales en materia ambiental y laboral.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000990/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Land grabbing by a Spanish company in Guinea-Bissau

The Spanish company Agrogeba, which operates in the rice production sector, is participating in the practice of land grabbing which is carried out by transnational companies in a variety of countries across Africa. To be precise, Agrogeba is involved in driving out more than 600 people from their land in the region of Bafatá in Guinea-Bissau.

The NGO Alianza por la Solidaridad has published a report denouncing the disastrous effects that this multinational is having in the region where it is acquiring land. The 600 people are being driven out from their land as they do not have any documentation proving the traditional use of the land, under public ownership, and the right to use this land has been acquired by Agrogeba. The communities affected have been working on this land for many years and the arrival of the Spanish company is having a direct impact on their living conditions.

The widespread construction of fencing, the hiring of guards who have started to slaughter livestock, the use of polluting pesticides that are diverting insects from the crops to nearby villages, increasing the incidence of malaria: these are just some of the effects that the arrival of this company has caused. The company exercised its rights to exploit the land without holding any negotiations with the local communities or providing them with the slightest bit of information.

These villages are witnessing how the company is trampling all over their rights without having any recourse to the State, which sold off the right to use the land. On the approximately 6000 hectares it has acquired, Agrogeba is employing workers without a contract, violating any kind of national or international employment law.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the above case of land grabbing in Guinea-Bissau?

Is she considering urging the government of Guinea-Bissau to cancel the sale of land until the rights of the people originally living there have been guaranteed? Does she intend to urge the government of Guinea-Bissau to terminate its land-sale agreements with foreign companies until it is guaranteed that international laws on employment and the environment will be complied with? Does she believe that this land grabbing by European companies is consistent with the aims of European external action in Guinea-Bissau?

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

The EU is well aware of the sensitive nature of large-scale land acquisitions all over the world and in particular in Africa. That is why it has actively participated to the drafting of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT), endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security in 2012. These guidelines promote equitable and secure access to land and the recognition of customary tenure rights, as a means of eradicating hunger and poverty. The EU is also active in the preparation of principles for responsible agricultural investments and in the respect of Free Prior and Informed Consent in the scope of large scale land investments.

In this context, any company which practices land grabbing and does not respect human rights and international labour standards is not acting in a manner consistent with the aims of the European external action.

The Commission and the EEAS are aware that the Spanish company Agrogeba concluded an agricultural land lease with the authorities of Guinea-Bissau in 2010 and is operating in the rice production sector. To our knowledge, we have not received any information on allegations against this company that could provide us with the elements to evaluate the situation and which could allow us to look in more depth into this matter. If the allegations are confirmed, the EU will raise this issue with legitimate authorities in Guinea Bissau after the elections.

The EU is committed to helping the people of Guinea Bissau and has been supporting agricultural development, food security and health services, as well as promoting the respect for human rights, including international labour and environmental standards.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000991/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Acaparamiento de tierras por parte de una compañía española en Guinea-Bisáu

La compañía española Agrogeba, dedicada a la producción de arroz, está formando parte del procedimiento de acaparamiento de tierras por parte de compañías transnacionales en diferentes países del continente africano. En concreto, esta compañía está involucrada en la expulsión de más 600 campesinos de sus tierras en la localidad de Bafatá, en Guinea-Bisáu.

La ONG Alianza por la Solidaridad ha publicado un informe en el que denuncia los desastrosos efectos que esta multinacional está produciendo en la región donde está acaparando tierras. Los 600 campesinos están siendo expulsados de sus tierras por carecer de documentos acreditativos sobre el empleo tradicional de las tierras, de titularidad pública, cuyo usufructo ha sido adquirido por la citada compañía española. Las comunidades afectadas llevan años trabajando las citadas tierras y el desembarco de la compañía de capital español está produciendo un ataque directo a sus condiciones de vida.

El vallado generalizado, la contratación de guardias que han llegado a sacrificar el ganado, el empleo de pesticidas contaminantes y que desvían insectos de los cultivos a las poblaciones cercanas, incrementando la incidencia de la malaria, son solo algunos de los efectos producidos por la llegada de dicha empresa. La compañía ejerció sus derechos de explotación en los terrenos sin un mínimo atisbo de información o negociación con las comunidades locales.

Estas poblaciones están viendo como la compañía pisa sus derechos sin que puedan recurrir a ninguna instancia del Estado, que ha malvendido el usufructo de las tierras. La empresa emplea en las aproximadamente 6 000 hectáreas a trabajadores sin contrato, violando cualquier tipo de legislación laboral nacional o internacional.

¿Conoce la Comisión las actividades de la compañía Agrogeba en Guinea-Bisáu?

¿Dispone la Comisión de sistemas de control para comprobar si la actividad de una empresa de un Estado miembro, operando en Guinea-Bisáu, viola las normativas laborales nacionales e internacionales así como los derechos humanos?

¿De qué mecanismos de trazabilidad dispone la UE para poder informar al consumidor de las violaciones de derechos llevadas a cabo por la citada empresa?

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

La UE es muy consciente de la delicada naturaleza de las adquisiciones de tierras a gran escala en todo el mundo y, en particular, en África. Esta es la razón por la que ha participado activamente en la elaboración de las Directrices voluntarias sobre la gobernanza responsable de la tenencia de la tierra, la pesca y los bosques (VGGT, en sus siglas en inglés), refrendadas por el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial en 2012. Estas Directrices propugnan un acceso equitativo y seguro a la tierra, así como el reconocimiento de los derechos consuetudinarios sobre la tierra como medio de erradicar el hambre y la pobreza. La UE también interviene en la elaboración de principios para la inversión responsable en agricultura y en el respeto del consentimiento libre, previo e informado en el ámbito de las inversiones en tierras a gran escala.

La Comisión no dispone de ningún mecanismo que le permita recoger información sobre las inversiones de las empresas europeas en el sector de la agricultura en el extranjero, pero incita a terceros países y a las empresas de la UE a que asuman la responsabilidad de su impacto en la sociedad, mediante el establecimiento de un proceso que integre las preocupaciones sociales, éticas y las relacionadas con los derechos humanos en sus operaciones y estrategias comerciales, incluso mediante la adhesión a normas internacionales de conducta responsable de las empresas.

La UE se ha comprometido a ayudar al pueblo de Guinea Bissau y ha apoyado el desarrollo de la agricultura, la seguridad alimentaria y los servicios sanitarios, así como el fomento del respeto de los derechos humanos, incluidas las normas laborales y medioambientales internacionales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000991/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Land grabbing by a Spanish company in Guinea-Bissau

The Spanish company Agrogeba, which operates in the rice production sector, is participating in the practice of land grabbing which is carried out by transnational companies in a variety of countries across Africa. To be precise, Agrogeba is involved in driving out more than 600 people from their land in the region of Bafatá in Guinea-Bissau.

The NGO Alianza por la Solidaridad has published a report denouncing the disastrous effects that this multinational is having in the region where it is acquiring land. The 600 people are being driven out from their land as they do not have any documentation proving the traditional use of the land, under public ownership, and the right to use this land has been acquired by Agrogeba. The communities affected have been working on this land for many years and the arrival of the Spanish company is having a direct impact on their living conditions.

The widespread construction of fencing, the hiring of guards who have started to slaughter livestock, the use of polluting pesticides that are diverting insects from the crops to nearby villages, increasing the incidence of malaria: these are just some of the effects that the arrival of this company has caused. The company exercised its rights to exploit the land without holding any negotiations with the local communities or providing them with the slightest bit of information.

These villages are witnessing how the company is trampling all over their rights without having any recourse to the State, which sold off the right to use the land. On the approximately 6000 hectares it has acquired, Agrogeba is employing workers without a contract, violating any kind of national or international employment law.

Is the Commission aware of Agrogeba's activities in Guinea-Bissau?

Does the Commission have any control systems at its disposal to check whether the activity of a company from a Member State, operating in Guinea-Bissau, is violating national and international employment rules as well as human rights?

What kind of traceability mechanisms does the EU have at its disposal in order to provide consumers with information about human rights violations that are being committed by this company?

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

The EU is well aware of the sensitive nature of large-scale land acquisitions all over the world and in particular in Africa. That is why it has actively participated to the drafting of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT), endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security in 2012. These guidelines promote equitable and secure access to land and the recognition of customary tenure rights, as a means of eradicating hunger and poverty. The EU is also active in the preparation of principles for responsible agricultural investments and in the respect of Free Prior and Informed Consent in the scope of large scale land investments.

The Commission does not have any mechanism allowing it to collect information on European companies' foreign investments in agriculture, but it encourages third countries and EU enterprises to take responsibility for their impacts on society, by setting a process in place to integrate social, ethical and human rights concerns into their business operations and strategy, including through adhering to international standards of responsible business conduct.

The EU is committed to helping the people of Guinea Bissau and has been supporting agricultural development, food security and health services, as well as promoting the respect for human rights, including international labour and environmental standards.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000992/14
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(31. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Gemeinsame Schädlingsbekämpfung im Unionsgebiet

Laut neuesten Medienberichten plant die Kommission auf Empfehlung des Kommissars für Umweltschutz, Janez Potočnik, einen Legislativvorschlag, der alle 28 Mitgliedstaaten zu einer einheitlichen Bekämpfung der unerwünschten und umweltgefährdenden Schädlinge verpflichten soll. Die Verbreitung von gebietsfremden und somit schädlichen Arten stellt demnach eine ernste Bedrohung für die EU-Bevölkerung und -Wirtschaft dar. Hierbei stehen Krankheitsübertragungen, Allergien sowie gravierende Umsatzeinbrüche aufgrund von Ernteverlusten im Mittelpunkt der Besorgnis. Die EU-Kommission schätzt den jährlichen Schaden, der durch biologische Invasion hervorgerufen wird, auf rund 12 Milliarden Euro.

1. Wie stellt sich die Kommission die Strategie genau vor, mit der alle Mitgliedstaaten gemeinsam gegen die 50 schädlichsten Arten von Tieren und Pflanzen im Unionsgebiet vorgehen sollen?

2. Nach welchen Kriterien werden die schädlichsten Arten bestimmt, so dass es für alle Mitgliedstaaten gleich lohnend und in keinem Fall benachteiligend ist, diese Strategie zu verfolgen?

3. Woher sollen die zur Bekämpfung benötigten finanziellen Mittel im Einzelnen genommen werden? Nach welchem Finanzierungsschema werden diese Mittel auf die Mitgliedstaaten verteilt?

4. Die Kommission arbeitet zurzeit daran, Datensammlungen über die eingewanderten Arten zusammenzuführen, um sie dann für alle Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten zugänglich und nutzbar zu machen. Mit welchen Mitteln wird diese Forschungstätigkeit genau finanziert? Was erhofft sich die Kommission im Einzelnen von der Bereitstellung dieser Daten?

5. Wie sieht die Kommission genau vor, Kriterien und Auflagen zu bestimmen und sie für alle Mitgliedstaaten rechtlich festzulegen, damit der Bestand und die Vielfalt der Nicht-Schädlinge nicht weiter abnehmen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(10. April 2014)

1. Am 9. September 2013 hat die Kommission einen Verordnungsvorschlag veröffentlicht, um das Problem der invasiven gebietsfremden Arten anzugehen ([1]). Die Maßnahmen werden insbesondere auf Arten abzielen, die unter Einbeziehung eines Ausschusses von Mitgliedstaaten ausgewählt werden, und vor allem die Prävention, die Frühwarnung, Sofortmaßnahmen und die Kontrolle zum Gegenstand haben.

2. Der Vorschlag sieht einen risikobasierten Ansatz vor, der sich auf vorgegebene Kriterien und eine strenge Risikobewertung stützt, um Arten auszuwählen, die von EU-weiter Bedeutung sind. Berücksichtigt werden insbesondere folgende Kriterien: Fähigkeit zur Bildung lebensfähiger Populationen, Fortpflanzungs- und Ausbreitungsmuster, derzeitige Verteilung, potenzielles Verteilungsgebiet, Risiko der Einbringung, Etablierung und Ausbreitung, negative Auswirkungen auf Biodiversität und Ökosystemdienstleistungen, Ausmaß künftiger Auswirkungen, Kosten der Schäden sowie Nutzen und sozioökonomische Vorteile.

3. Diese Arten verursachen hohe Schadens- und Bekämpfungskosten, und die diesbezüglichen Bemühungen der Mitgliedstaaten werden oft durch fehlende grenzübergreifende Koordinierung zunichte gemacht. Durch die EU-Maßnahmen zur Zusammenarbeit können solche Fälle angegangen und Ressourcen effizienter eingesetzt werden. Für die Finanzierung der Maßnahmen sind die Mitgliedstaaten zuständig, sie können aber durch vorhandene Finanzierungsmechanismen Unterstützung erhalten ([2]).

4. Mit dem von der Kommission eingerichteten Informationsnetz für gebietsfremde Arten (EASIN) ([3]) sollen vorhandene Daten zu invasiven gebietsfremden Arten gebündelt werden. Hierdurch werden Effizienzgewinne und Kostenersparnisse für die Mitgliedstaaten erzielt, weil diese direkten Zugang zu verschiedenen Datenquellen erhalten. Diese Maßnahme wird aus Haushaltsmitteln der Kommission finanziert.

5. In dem Vorschlag sind alle Anforderungen an die Bekämpfung invasiver gebietsfremder Arten festgelegt, also Präventionsmaßnahmen, Bestimmungen zur Frühwarnung und sofortigen Tilgung sowie zur Kontrolle und Eindämmung in den Fällen, wo Tilgung nicht mehr möglich ist. Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung invasiver gebietsfremder Arten wirken dem Biodiversitätsverlust entgegen, so dass sich bisher gefährdete Ökosysteme wieder erholen können.

([1]) KOM(2013)620 endg. — Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über die Prävention und die Kontrolle der Einbringung und Verbreitung invasiver gebietsfremder Arten.

([2]) Einschließlich des Programms LIFE, des Europäischen Landwirtschaftsfonds für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums und des Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE).

([3]) European Alien Species Information Network.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000992/14
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Common pest control in the territory of the Union

According to the latest media reports, at the recommendation of the Commissioner for the Environment, Janez Potočnik, the Commission is planning a legislative proposal that will commit all 28 Member States to uniformly combating undesirable and environmentally hazardous pests. According to the proposal, the spreading of species from outside the territory, which are therefore harmful, represents a serious threat to the EU population and economy. Disease transmissions, allergies as well as severe declines in sales due to harvest losses are at the centre of this concern. The EU Commission estimates the annual damage caused by biological invasion to be approximately EUR 12 billion.

1. How precisely does the Commission envisage the strategy with which all Member States should proceed together against the 50 most harmful species of animals and plants within the territory of the Union?

2. What will the criteria be for determining the most harmful species, so that for all Member States it is equally rewarding and in no way discriminatory to pursue this strategy?

3. In detail, from where should the required financial resources be taken to combat these pests? According to what financing plan will these resources be distributed to the Member States?

4. The Commission is currently working on bringing together data collections about the invasive species in order to make them accessible and usable to all authorities of the Member States. Precisely with what resources is this research activity being funded? In detail, what does the Commission hope to gain from making these data available?

5. How exactly does the Commission plan to determine criteria and requirements and to define them legally for all Member States so that the population and the diversity of non-pests is not further reduced?

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

1. The Commission published a proposal for a regulation to tackle invasive alien species on 9 September 2013 ([1]). Action will focus primarily on species selected with the involvement of a Committee of Member States and focus on prevention, early warning and rapid reaction and management.

2. The proposal sets out a risk-based approach based on set criteria and a rigorous risk assessment, to select species of concern to the EU, with particular regard to: the ability of an alien species to establish a viable population; reproduction and spread patterns; current distribution; potential range; risk of entry, establishment and spread; negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services; magnitude of future impacts; damage costs; uses and socioeconomic benefits.

3. These species cause large damage and control costs and national efforts to tackle them are often undermined by lack of cross border coordination. Collaborative EU action will address such situations and lead to a more efficient resource use. Member States will be responsible for financing actions, but can find support through existing financing mechanisms ([2]).

4. The Commission's EASIN project ([3]) seeks to pool available data on invasive alien species, leading to efficiency gains and less costs for Member States, by enabling access to different data sources. This work is funded by the Commission's budget.

5. The proposal sets out all the requirements to tackle invasive alien species, through: prevention measures; provisions on early warning and rapid eradication; and control or containment in those cases where eradication is no longer possible. Actions to tackle invasive alien species lead to reduced rates of biodiversity loss and to the recovery of previously threatened ecosystems.

([1]) COM(2013) 620 final — Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species.
([2]) Including the LIFE programme, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).
([3]) European Alien Species Information Network.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000998/14
à la Commission
Hélène Flautre (Verts/ALE)
(31 janvier 2014)

Objet: Conformité de l'utilisation des laissez-passer européens au droit communautaire

Le laissez-passer européen est un modèle-type de document de voyage pour l'éloignement des ressortissants de pays tiers, défini par le Conseil en annexe de sa Recommandation du 30 novembre 1994.

En Belgique, les autorités diplomatiques afghanes acceptent de délivrer des laissez-passer aux Afghans seulement lorsqu'ils le demandent eux-mêmes, par exemple dans le cadre d'un retour volontaire. D'une part, parce que la sécurité n'est pas garantie en Afghanistan et, d'autre part, parce qu'il y a souvent des doutes sur la nationalité réelle de la personne concernée. L'Office des étrangers délivre donc unilatéralement des «laissez-passer européens» pour renvoyer ces personnes en Afghanistan, et cela en l'absence d'accord de réadmission.

En dehors d'un accord de réadmission bilatéral ou d'un accord de réadmission européen le prévoyant explicitement, quelles sont les hypothèses, si elles existent, dans lesquelles ce laissez-passer européen pourrait être utilisé par un État membre?

Comment la Commission contrôle-t-elle la portée de ces documents et l'usage qui en est fait par les États membres? Combien de laissez-passer européens sont-ils émis annuellement par les États membres? Leur utilisation est-elle conforme au droit communautaire?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(31 mars 2014)

Le modèle type de document de voyage de l'UE à des fins d'éloignement de ressortissants de pays tiers a été élaboré en 1994, avant que l'Union n'ait la compétence de conclure des accords de réadmission de l'UE. Ce document peut être utilisé pour tout type d'éloignement d'un ressortissant d'un pays tiers hors du territoire de l'UE.

La recommandation du Conseil ([1]) en question ne définit pas les conditions de délivrance de ce document. Par conséquent, la Commission ne contrôle pas l'utilisation qu'en font les États membres, sauf dans les cas où sa délivrance est prévue par des accords de réadmission de l'UE et qu'un tel contrôle est utile pour le suivi global de la mise en œuvre de ces accords de réadmission par les États membres.

Dans ce contexte, la délivrance de ces documents de voyage est principalement destinée aux cas de retour de ressortissants de pays tiers (c'est-à-dire ceux qui sont renvoyés vers le pays tiers de transit qui a conclu un accord de réadmission avec l'UE) ou aux cas exceptionnels où le pays tiers (de nouveau, avec un accord de réadmission de l'UE) ne délivre pas à ses propres ressortissants, dans un délai convenu, de documents de voyage aux fins de leur réadmission. Ces cas sont relativement rares, comme en témoigne l'évaluation, par la Commission ([2]), des accords de réadmission de l'UE.

La simple délivrance du document type de voyage de l'Union ne garantit pas que le pays tiers réadmettra une personne sur son territoire (sauf lorsqu'un pays tiers a accepté que ce document soit utilisé dans le cadre d'un accord de réadmission). Toute délivrance d'un tel document doit être précédée d'une décision de retour/d'éloignement et de contacts appropriés avec le pays tiers dans le respect de la législation nationale applicable dans les États membres, de l'acquis de l'Union (en particulier la directive retour ([3])) et des normes et accords internationaux.

([1]) Recommandation du Conseil du 30 novembre 1994 relative à l'adoption d'un modèle type de document de voyage pour l'éloignement de ressortissants de pays tiers; JO C 274 du 19.9.1996, pp. 18-19.
([2]) COM(2011) 76 final.
([3]) Directive 2008/115/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 16 décembre 2008 relative aux normes et procédures communes applicables dans les États membres au retour des ressortissants de pays tiers en séjour irrégulier; JO L 348 du 24.12.2008, pp. 98-107.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000998/14
to the Commission
Hélène Flautre (Verts/ALE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Use of the European laissez-passer in accordance with Community law

The European laissez-passer is a standard travel document for the return of third-country nationals, as defined by the Council in an annex to its Recommendation of 30 November 1994.

In Belgium, the Afghan diplomatic authorities only agree to issue a laissez-passer to Afghans when it has been requested by them, for example in the context of a voluntary return. This is firstly because security is not guaranteed in Afghanistan and secondly because there are often doubts as to the actual nationality of the person in question. The Aliens Office therefore unilaterally issues a 'European laissez-passer' to send these people back to Afghanistan, despite the lack of a readmission agreement.

Without a bilateral readmission agreement or a European readmission agreement specifically providing for this, under what situations, if any, could this European laissez-passer be used by a Member State?

How does the Commission monitor the scope of these documents and their use by Member States? How many European laissez-passer are issued each year by Member States? Is their use in accordance with Community law?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The EU standard travel document for the expulsion of third-country nationals was elaborated in 1994. It predates the EU competence to conclude EU readmission agreements. The document may be used for any type of expulsion of a third-country national from EU territory.

The Council Recommendation ([1]) in question does not set out conditions for the issuance of the document. The Commission therefore does not monitor its use by the Member States except where its issuance is provided for by EU readmission agreements and when such monitoring is useful for the overall monitoring of the implementation of EU readmission agreements by the Member States.

In this context, the issuing of such travel documents is intended mainly either for the return of third-country nationals (i.e. those who are being returned to the third country of their transit which concluded a readmission agremeent with the EU) or in those exceptional cases where the third country (again, with an EU readmission agreement) does not, within an agreed deadline, issue its own nationals with travel documents for their readmission. These cases are relatively rare, as shown by the Commission's evaluation ([2]) of EU readmission agreements.

The mere issuing of the EU standard travel document does not guarantee that the third country will readmit a person to its territory (except when a third country has accepted the use of this document in a readmission agreement). Any issuing of such a document should be preceded by a return/removal decision as well as appropriate contact with the third country in respect of the applicable national law of the Member States, the EU *acquis* (in particular the Return Directive ([3])), and international standards and agreements.

([1]) Council Recommendation of 30 November 1994 concerning the adoption of a standard travel document for the expulsion of third-country nationals; OJ C 274, 19.9.1996, p. 18-19.
([2]) COM(2011) 76 final.
([3]) Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals; OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 98-107.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-000999/14
upućeno Komisiji
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(31. siječnja 2014.)

Predmet: Zaštita hrvatskih potrošača prilikom kupovine na internetu

Kupovanje preko interneta često je najbrži i najjeftiniji način kupovine određenog proizvoda kojim se koristi većina građana Europske unije. Prema dostupnim podacima u Hrvatskoj se 64 % ljudi koristi internetom i na njemu provodi više od 15 sati tjedno, dok gotovo trećina njih već sad obavlja kupovinu preko interneta. Statistički podaci također pokazuju kako je od rujna 2011. do veljače 2012. u Hrvatskoj na kupnju na internetu potrošen 401 milijun eura. Prosječan hrvatski kupac u tih je šest mjeseci napravio sedam kupnji i pri tome potrošio prosječno 227 eura. Razna istraživanja govore o različitim postocima hrvatskih građana koji su se u protekloj godini koristili takvom vrstom kupovine, no sva istraživanja jasno pokazuju snažan trend porasta broja korisnika kupnje na internetu.

Unatoč trendu porasta i poboljšanja zaštite kupovine na internetu proizašlih iz nedavnog pristupanja Hrvatske Europskoj uniji, potrošači su često skeptični prema takvoj vrsti kupovine zbog transparentnosti i troškova dostave kupljene robe. Upravo je otklanjanje nepovjerenja potrošača, uz poboljšanje kvalitete pristupa, jedan od preduvjeta za daljnji razvoj prema takvom obliku trgovanja koji je kao jedan od ciljeva postavila upravo Europska komisija u Digitalnom programu.

Dodatni problem s kojim se suočavaju konkretno hrvatski potrošači jest taj što Hrvatska od nekih ponuđača, najčešće u Velikoj Britaniji, još uvijek nije prepoznata kao članica Europske unije, što dodatno povećava ionako već visoke troškove dostave. Nastavljajući se na trenutne regulative, koje mjere Komisija planira poduzeti kako bi dodatno zaštitila hrvatske potrošače i omogućila im ravnopravan status na koji pristupanjem Hrvatske Europskoj uniji imaju pravo?

Odgovor gđe Reding u ime Komisije
(11. travnja 2014.)

U svojoj komunikaciji „Europska potrošačka agenda — Jačanje povjerenja i pospješivanje rasta” ([1]) Komisija se pozabavila pitanjem povjerenja potrošača u internetsku kupnju i iznijela detaljne planove kojima se osigurava da je primjena zakonodavstva u području zaštite potrošača prilagođena digitalnom dobu. Godišnji sastanak na vrhu o zaštiti potrošača, održan 1. — 2. travnja 2014., bio je posvećen „Potrošačima EU-a u digitalnom dobu.”

Zahvaljujući Direktivi o pravima potrošača (CRD), koja će 13. lipnja 2014. stupiti na snagu u državama članicama, u EU-u će se ojačati prava potrošača, posebice pravo na primanje transparentnih informacija. Utvrđivanjem jedinstvenih zahtjeva za zaštitu potrošača diljem EU-a Direktivom o pravima potrošača olakšat će se i prekogranična trgovina. Komisija će 2014. provesti niz aktivnosti u nekim državama članicama, uključujući Hrvatsku, kako bi potrošači ojačali svijest o svojim pravima.

Nadalje, skupom mjera predloženih u nedavno donesenom „Planu za ostvarenje jedinstvenog tržišta za dostavu paketa” ([2]) Komisija rješava problem previsokih tarifa u prekograničnoj isporuci. Mjere uključuju povećanje transparentnosti u odnosu na tarife isporuke različitih pružatelja usluga na tržištu tako što će prikaz ponude na *web*-mjestima prodavatelja biti jasniji te će se olakšati upotreba internetskih alata usporedbe.

Najzad, službe Komisije izdale su upute za primjenu članka 20. stavka 2. Direktive o uslugama ([3]) i time dodatno objasnile zabranu diskriminacije primatelja usluga na temelju nacionalnosti ili boravišta kako bi nacionalnim tijelima pomogle u boljoj procjeni opravdanja na koja se mogu pozivati pružatelji usluga.

([1]) COM(2012) 225 završna verzija.
([2]) COM(2013) 886 završna verzija.
([3]) SWD(2012) 146 završna verzija.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000999/14
to the Commission
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Protection of Croatian consumers shopping online

Shopping online is often the quickest and cheapest way to buy a given product and a method employed by most European citizens. According to the figures available, 64% of people in Croatia use the Internet and spend more than 15 hours a week browsing. Out of that number, almost a third now shop online. The statistics also show that a total of EUR 401 million was spent on online shopping in Croatia from September 2011 to February 2012. In that period the average Croatian shopper made seven purchases, spending an average of EUR 227. Regarding the percentage of Croatians who have taken advantage of this way to shop within the past year, the findings differ from one study to the next, but all the research points to a strong upward trend in the number of online shoppers.

Although a trend towards more and better protection for online shopping has arisen from Croatia's recent accession to the EU, consumers are often sceptical about this way to shop for reasons of transparency and on account of the delivery charges. Overcoming consumer distrust, combined with qualitative improvements to access, is one of the preconditions for the further development of e-commerce, an aim which the Commission has charted in its Digital Agenda.

An additional specific problem for Croatian consumers is that some suppliers, mostly in the United Kingdom, are still not aware that Croatia belongs to the EU, a fact which adds to the already high delivery costs. Building on the present regulations, what steps will the Commission take to protect Croatian consumers more securely and ensure that they can enjoy the equal status to which — now that Croatia has joined the EU — they are entitled?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2014)

In its communication 'A European Consumer Agenda — Boosting confidence and growth' ([1]) the Commission has addressed the issue of consumer confidence in online shopping and detailed its plans to ensure that the applicable consumer legislation is adapted to the digital age. It dedicated to 'EU Consumers in the Digital Era' the annual Consumer Summit, which took place on 1-2 April 2014.

The consumer rights, in particular the right to receive transparent information, will be reinforced in the EU thanks to the Consumer Rights Directive (CRD), which will take effect in the Member States as from by 13 June 2014. By setting uniform consumer protection requirements across the EU, the CRD will also facilitate cross-border trade. In 2014 the Commission will carry out a set of activities in some Member States, including Croatia to increase consumers' awareness of their rights.

Furthermore, the Commission is addressing the concern of excessively high cross-border delivery tariffs through the set of actions proposed in the recently adopted 'Roadmap for completing the single market for parcel delivery' ([2]). These include enhancing transparency about delivery tariffs of different operators on the market by clearer presentation of their offers on sellers' websites and by facilitating use of web comparison tools.

Finally, the Commission services issued a guidance document on the application of Article 20 (2) of the Services Directive ([3]) providing further clarification on the non-discrimination of the service recipients on grounds of nationality or residence in order to help national authorities to better assess any justifications potentially invoked by the service providers.

([1]) COM(2012) 225 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 886 final.
([3]) SWD(2012) 146 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001000/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rischio di attentati da parte di ribelli siriani affiliati a Al-Qaeda

Un importante funzionario dell'intelligence americana ha affermato lo scorso 29 gennaio che i servizi segreti americani dispongono di informazioni secondo cui, il Fronte al-Nusra, gruppo di ribelli siriani legati a Al-Qaeda, sia intenzionato ad attaccare gli Stati Uniti. Lo scorso anno Assad aveva avvertito della presenza di nuclei terroristici di matrice qaedista tra i ribelli, ma nonostante ciò il governo americano ha fatto pressioni per un intervento armato contro il governo siriano e rifornito di armi i ribelli, mentre ora si sospetta che questi ultimi abbiano organizzato dei campi di addestramento in vista di nuovi attentati.

Alla luce di queste informazioni, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire:

1. se dispone di informazioni concordanti con quanto affermato dai servizi americani;

2. la propria posizione nei confronti del conflitto civile siriano;

3. in che modo intende valutare la veridicità delle informazioni rilasciate dall'intelligence americana e come intende reagire in caso risultino fondate?

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

L'AR/VP non dispone di informazioni dirette da cui risulti che al-Nusra o altri gruppi estremistici intendano attaccare gli Stati Uniti e pertanto non è in grado di corroborare quanto riferito dalla stampa.

L'AR/VP ha esposto chiaramente la propria posizione nei confronti del conflitto siriano in numerose dichiarazioni pubbliche, anche dinanzi al Parlamento europeo. Il punto di vista ufficiale del Consiglio Affari esteri sulla situazione in Siria è stato illustrato da ultimo nelle conclusioni del Consiglio del 20 gennaio 2014.

L'AR/VP viene informata regolarmente sugli sviluppi in Siria. Il SEAE collabora strettamente con il coordinatore antiterrorismo dell'UE per garantire un'adeguata preparazione contro tutte le eventuali minacce derivanti dall'attuale situazione della Siria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001000/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Risk of attacks by Syrian rebels affiliated to Al-Qaeda

A leading American intelligence official has stated that, on 29 January, the American secret services had information to the effect that the al-Nusra Front, a group of Syrian rebels linked to Al-Qaeda, intended to attack the United States. Last year Assad warned of the presence among the rebels of terrorist squads with Al-Qaeda roots, but in spite of this the American Government has exerted pressure for armed intervention against the Syrian Government and supplied the rebels with weapons, although it is now suspected that the rebels have organised training camps with a view to fresh attacks.

In the light of this information, can the Vice-President/High Representative clarify:

1. whether she has information which tallies with the information claimed by the American intelligence services;

2. her position vis-à-vis the Syrian civil conflict;

3. the means by which she intends to evaluate the authenticity of the information released by the American intelligence services and how she intends to react if this information proves well-founded?

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

The HR/VP has not been directly informed of any plans from al- Nusra or any other extremist group to attack the United States and is not in a position to corroborate the cited news reports.

The HR/VP's position vis-à-vis the Syrian conflict has been made repeatedly clear in her many public pronouncements on the subject, including in the European Parliament. The official view of the Foreign Affairs Council on the situation in Syria has been last expressed in the Council Conclusions of 20 January 2014.

The HR/VP is briefed regularly on developments in Syria. The EEAS works closely with the EU Counter Terrorism coordinator on preparing for any threats that may result from the current situation in Syria.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001001/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Giornalisti europei arrestati in Egitto

Un pubblico ministero egiziano ha reso noto, lo scorso 29 gennaio, che 20 giornalisti di un nota agenzia di informazioni, tra cui anche alcuni cittadini europei, saranno processati con l'accusa di aver assistito o di far parte di una organizzazione terroristica. La data del processo non è stata ad oggi ancora fissata.

Le accuse potrebbero dipendere dal fatto che il mese scorso il movimento dell'ex presidente egiziano era stato dichiarato come organizzazione terroristica e che i giornalisti appartengono a una rete televisiva che le autorità egiziane avevano già considerato come simpatizzante del movimento. La rete televisiva ha subito richiesto il rilascio dei propri dipendenti, negando qualsiasi affiliazione politica.

Alla luce di questi eventi, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire se:

1. ritiene che l'arresto in questione possa rappresentare una violazione dei diritti fondamentali in Egitto, quali la libertà di espressione e la libertà di stampa;

2. intende verificare che un eventuale processo si svolga nel pieno rispetto dei diritti degli imputati, nello specifico il diritto a un equo processo, a un giudice imparziale, alla difesa a alla presunzione di innocenza;

3. intende fornire il supporto necessario ai cittadini europei coinvolti nella questione in oggetto?

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

L'Unione europea segue con attenzione, e con crescente preoccupazione, la situazione dei diritti umani in Egitto, anche per quanto riguarda i media e i giornalisti. L'AR/VP ha espresso la propria preoccupazione in merito in numerose dichiarazioni e in occasione di incontri con gli interlocutori egiziani.

Nelle conclusioni del 10 febbraio 2014, i ministri degli Esteri degli Stati membri dell'UE hanno deplorato «il deterioramento delle condizioni in cui opera la stampa» e hanno esortato «le autorità provvisorie egiziane e i media statali a garantire la sicurezza delle condizioni di lavoro di tutti i giornalisti e a porre fine agli arresti politicizzati nonché all'intimidazione e all'istigazione contro i giornalisti nazionali e stranieri», dichiarando inoltre che «devono essere garantite la libertà di espressione e di riunione e la protesta pacifica».

L'UE ha espresso alle autorità provvisorie l'auspicio che i processi annunciati si svolgano in modo equo e nel rispetto delle procedure. Nelle suddette conclusioni del Consiglio, i ministri hanno espresso preoccupazione per la detenzione arbitraria e l'applicazione selettiva della giustizia e hanno invitato le autorità provvisorie egiziane ad assicurare i diritti del convenuto ad un processo equo e tempestivo, basato su accuse precise, a indagini corrette e indipendenti, nonché il diritto di accesso e di contatto con gli avvocati e i familiari, conformemente alle norme internazionali.

L'AR/VP e, in particolare, la delegazione dell'UE al Cairo si impegnano a fornire il necessario sostegno ai cittadini europei interessati entro i limiti del loro mandato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001001/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — European journalists arrested in Egypt

An Egyptian public prosecutor has announced that, on 29 January, 20 journalists from a well-known news agency, including a number of European citizens, will stand trial to face a charge of assisting or belonging to a terrorist organisation. The date of the trial has not yet been set.

The charges may be due to the fact that, last month, the movement of the former Egyptian President was declared a terrorist organisation and that the journalists belong to a television network regarded by the Egyptian authorities as sympathising with the movement. The television network has immediately requested the release of its employees, denying any political affiliation.

In the light of these events, can the Vice-President/High Representative clarify whether :

1. she considers that the arrest in question could represent a breach of fundamental rights in the region, namely freedom of expression and freedom of the press;

2. she intends to ensure that a possible trial will take place with full respect for the rights of the defendants, specifically the right to a fair trial, an impartial judge, proper defence and presumption of innocence;

3. she intends to provide the necessary support to European citizens involved in the matter in question?

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

The European Union is following the human rights' situation in Egypt closely and with growing concern, including the situation of the media and journalists. The HRVP expressed her concern on the worrying human rights' situation in numerous statements and in meetings with Egyptian counterparts.

The Foreign Ministers of the EU Member States deplore in their 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'. They state further that 'freedoms of expression, assembly and peaceful arrest must be safeguarded'.

The EU expressed its expectation vis-à-vis the interim authorities that the upcoming trials will be fair and due process will be respected. In the abovementioned Council conclusions, ministers expressed their concern about arbitrary detention and a selective application of justice, and called on the Egyptian interim authorities to ensure 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.

The HR/VP and in particular the EU Delegation on the ground in Cairo, are committed to provide the necessary support to European citizens involved within the limits of their mandate.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001002/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Misure a favore dei profughi siriani

La drammatica situazione dei civili in Siria, in particolar modo di categorie svantaggiate quali donne, bambini, anziani e diversamente abili, richiede estrema attenzione e volontà di intervento da parte della comunità internazionale, specie nei riguardi dei profughi.

Nello specifico, l'Onu ha già predisposto un piano ad hoc per i rifugiati siriani, al quale paesi europei come la Germania hanno aderito pienamente, mentre, paesi quali il Regno Unito hanno garantito un coinvolgimento più limitato e temporaneo.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quale serie di interventi e impegni l'UE concepisce nei riguardi di una tragedia umanitaria che richiede quanto meno una risposta nei confronti dell'accoglienza dei civili in fuga;

2. con quali modalità e iniziative l'UE intende sensibilizzare Stati membri e società civile europea ai fini di una concreta azione, fattiva e non aleatoria, volta alla costituzione di una rete solidale, atta a accogliere i cittadini siriani in fuga;

3. quale grado di impegno l'UE prefigura per un proprio intervento ai tavoli dei negoziati di pace?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(16 aprile 2014)

Le persone che arrivano spontaneamente nell'UE per cercare protezione in uno degli Stati membri devono essere trattate conformemente alla legislazione dell'UE. Nei casi in cui il sistema d'asilo sia sotto pressione a causa di grossi afflussi la Commissione, in stretta cooperazione con l'Ufficio europeo di sostegno per l'asilo (UESA), può offrire assistenza in natura. Attualmente tre Stati membri beneficiano di tale sostegno. Il supporto dell'UE può anche rivestire la forma dell'assistenza finanziaria. Nel 2013 la Commissione ha assegnato circa 28,4 milioni di EUR a otto Stati membri a titolo di assistenza d'emergenza nell'ambito del Fondo europeo per i rifugiati, principalmente per migliorare la capacità ricettiva dei loro sistemi d'asilo. La Commissione e l'UESA hanno anche preso provvedimenti per garantire che gli Stati membri adottino approcci più omogenei nei confronti dei richiedenti asilo siriani e nel trattamento delle loro domande.

L'ACNUR ha invitato la comunità internazionale a offrire reinsediamento a 30 000 siriani entro la fine del 2014. Per gli Stati membri le offerte di reinsediamento sono volontarie, e la Commissione, a livello ministeriale e nel contesto di un forum annuale UE sul reinsediamento, sta continuando a sollecitare tali impegni. Anche l'Unione europea stanzia finanziamenti destinati ad attività di reinsediamento. Finora, vari Stati membri hanno offerto ai siriani 15 000 posti, ossia un numero senza precedenti rispetto ad altre attività di reinsediamento anteriori.

L'UE ha inoltre guidato la risposta umanitaria e di sviluppo alla crisi e ha mobilitato un sostegno di più di 2,6 miliardi di EUR da parte sua e degli Stati membri.

L'Unione europea ha appoggiato l'invito di Stati Uniti e Russia per una conferenza di pace al fine di promuovere un processo politico fondato sul comunicato di Ginevra del 2012. L'UE invita entrambe le parti del conflitto a restare impegnate nei negoziati e propugna misure di rafforzamento della fiducia, come l'accesso dell'aiuto umanitario e il cessate il fuoco.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001002/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Measures to help Syrian refugees

The dramatic situation for civilians in Syria, in particular more vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities, calls for immediate attention and a willingness to intervene on the part of the international community, especially with regard to refugees.

More specifically, the UN has already drawn up an ad hoc plan for Syrian refugees, to which European countries such as Germany have fully signed up. On the other hand, countries such as the United Kingdom have pledged a more limited and temporary involvement.

In the light of the above, can the Commission tell us:

1. what action and commitments the EU has planned to deal with a humanitarian tragedy which at the very least requires a response in terms of welcoming civilian refugees?

2. what procedures and initiatives the EU plans to raise awareness of this issue among the Member States and civil society, and thus promote concrete, proactive and concerted action creating a support network to welcome Syrian refugees?

3. what commitments the EU intends to make as part of the peace negotiations?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2014)

People who arrive in the EU spontaneously to seek protection in one of the Member States are to be treated in accordance with EC law. In cases where a Member State's asylum system is under pressure due to increased inflows, the Commission, in close cooperation with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), can offer assistance in kind. Currently, three Member States benefit from such support. EU support may also take the form of financial assistance. In 2013, the Commission committed some EUR 28.4 million to eight Member States in emergency assistance under the European Refugee Fund, mainly to improve the reception capacity of their asylum systems. The Commission and EASO have also taken steps to ensure a more convergent approach by Member States to Syrian asylum-seekers and how their claims are assessed.

UNHCR has called on the international community to offer resettlement to up to 30 000 Syrians by the end of 2014. While resettlement is voluntary for the Member States, the Commission continues to call, at ministerial level and in the context of an annual EU resettlement forum, for such commitments. EU funding is also available for resettlement activities. So far, several Member States have offered 15 000 places to Syrians, which is an unprecedented number comparing to earlier resettlement activities.

Also, the EU has spearheaded the humanitarian and development response to the crisis and mobilised over EUR 2.6 billion in support from the EU and its Member States.

The EU supported the US-Russian call for a peace conference to promote a political process based on the 2012 Geneva communiqué. The EU calls on both sides of the conflict to remain engaged in the negotiations, advocates for confidence building measures such as humanitarian access and ceasefires.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001004/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Espionaje a ciudadanos europeos (2)

En respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-012347/2013 sobre el asunto del espionaje, la Comisión respondió, por un lado, que estaba «tomando las medidas adecuadas» y, por otro lado, que les tocaba a los Estados miembros «garantizar la correcta aplicación y la ejecución de la legislación de protección de datos de la UE».

El Parlamento Europeo, por su lado, condenó las actuaciones de los Estados Unidos e invitó al Consejo, a la Comisión y a los Estados miembros a hacer lo posible para presionar a los EE.UU. El PE adoptó una resolución, pidiendo que se suspenda el acuerdo sobre la transmisión de algunos datos financieros de la UE hacia EE.UU. La Comisión LIBE del PE fue encargada de redactar un informe sobre este tema (informe A7-0402/2013). La eurodiputada holandesa Sophie in't Veld aconseja la suspensión de los acuerdos PNR (Passenger Name Record), que constituyen la base jurídica de la transmisión a las autoridades estadounidenses de los datos de los pasajeros que viajan hacia EE.UU. por medio de compañías aéreas europeas. Otros preconizan también que se denuncie el acuerdo «Safe Harbor» que ofrece garantías a los ciudadanos europeos sobre la transferencia de datos a los EE.UU. por medio de sociedades comerciales ([1]).

Finalmente, el Supervisor Europeo de Protección de Datos (SEPD), Peter Hustinx, hizo una contribución a la Comisión LIBE del PE, mostrando su desaprobación respecto a la implicación de la NSA y su impacto en el derecho a la vida privada y la protección de los derechos fundamentales de los ciudadanos de la UE.

¿Considera la Comisión que se deberían suspender los acuerdos sobre la transmisión de datos de la UE hacia los EE.UU.?

¿Piensa la Comisión seguir los pasos dados por el PE y el SEPD?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de abril de 2014)

El 27 de noviembre de 2013, la Comisión adoptó una Comunicación ([2]) al Parlamento Europeo y al Consejo sobre el funcionamiento del principio de puerto seguro desde la perspectiva de los ciudadanos europeos y de las empresas establecidas en la EU. La Comunicación recoge una serie de cuestiones que deben tratarse en los Estados Unidos para mejorar el régimen de protección de datos personales creado en 2000 para permitir la libre circulación de datos personales entre la UE y las empresas de los Estados Unidos acogidas al régimen de puerto seguro. En especial, la Comisión formuló trece recomendaciones a los Estados Unidos para reforzar el sistema. La Comunicación ([3]) titulada «Restablecer la confianza en los flujos de datos entre la UE y los EE.UU.», adoptada también el 27 de noviembre de 2013, pide a los Estados Unidos que encuentren soluciones antes del verano de 2014 y que las apliquen a la mayor brevedad.

El Programa de Seguimiento de la Financiación del Terrorismo (TFTP) y los acuerdos relativos al registro de nombres de los pasajeros (PNR) contribuyen a mejorar la seguridad de los ciudadanos de la Unión al regular y proteger la transmisión y el tratamiento de los datos necesarios mediante una serie de salvaguardias y controles sólidos y eficaces.

([1]) http://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2013/10/23/le-parlement-europeen-tente-de-s-imposer-comme-le-fer-de-lance-de-la-resistance-a-la-nsa_3501369_3210.html
([2]) COM(2013) 847.
([3]) COM(2013) 846.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001004/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Mass spying on European citizens (2)

In its answer to Written Question E-012347/2013 on mass spying, the Commission replied that, on the one hand, it was 'taking the necessary measures' and, on the other hand, that it was the responsibility of Member States 'to ensure the correct implementation and enforcement of EU data protection legislation'.

For its part, the European Parliament condemned the United States' actions and asked the Council, the Commission and the Member States to make every effort to put pressure on the US. The EP adopted a resolution requesting that the agreement for the transmission of some financial data from the EU to the US be suspended. The EP's LIBE Committee was asked to draw up a report on this matter (report A7-0402/2013). Dutch MEP Sophie in't Veld has called for the PNR (Passenger Name Record) agreements, which form the legal basis for the transmission of data to American authorities from European airlines on passengers travelling to the US, to be suspended. Others have also called for the 'Safe Harbor' agreement, which offers guarantees to EU citizens on the transfer of data by commercial companies to the US, to be revoked. ([1])

Finally, the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS), Peter Hustinx, voiced his disapproval to the EP's LIBE Committee on the NSA's involvement and its impact on EU citizens' right to a private life and the protection of their fundamental rights.

Does the Commission believe that the agreements on the transmission of data from the EU to the US should be suspended?

Is the Commission thinking about taking the action recommended by the EP and the EDPS?

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

The Commission adopted on 27 November 2013 a communication ([2]) to the European Parliament and the Council on the Functioning of the Safe Harbour from the Perspective of EU Citizens and Companies Established in the EU. The communication identifies a range of issues that need to be addressed by the US to improve the data privacy scheme which was put in place in 2000 to allow free flow of personal data between the EU and companies in the US adhering to Safe Harbour. The Commission made notably thirteen recommendations to the US to reinforce the scheme. The communication ([3]) on Rebuilding Trust in EU-US Data Flows, adopted also on 27 November 2013, calls on the US to identify remedies by summer 2014 and implement them as soon as possible.

The TFTP and PNR Agreements contribute to enhance security of our citizens. They regulate and protect the transfer and handling of necessary data through a set of robust and effective safeguards and controls.

([1]) http://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2013/10/23/le-parlement-europeen-tente-de-s-imposer-comme-le-fer-de-lance-de-la-resistance-a-la-nsa_3501369_3210.html
([2]) COM(2013) 847.
([3]) COM(2013) 846.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001006/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(31 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: L-epatite Ċ

L-epatite Ċ hi waħda mill-kawżi ewlenin tal-mard kroniku tal-fwied fid-dinja, fejn ta' kull sena madwar 350 000 mewt hi kkawżata minn mard relatat mal-fwied.

Skont studju reċenti ppubblikat f'Malta, 1 074 persuna rriżultaw pożittivi għall-vajrus tal-epatite Ċ bejn Jannar tal-2008 u Mejju tal-2012. L-istudju wera wkoll li 68 % ta' dawk li rriżultaw pożittivi għall-vajrus kienu jieħdu d-droga minn ġol-vina; każ wieħed biss ġie attribwit għal infezzjoni sesswali, u ieħor għal ferita kkawżata minn labra tal-injezzjoni. Fi 2 % tal-każijiet, l-allegat mod ta' infezzjoni kien permezz tat-transfużjoni tad-demm qabel l-introduzzjoni tal-iskrining tad-demm. Ir-riċerka wriet ukoll li 56 % tan-nies kellhom appuntament skedat ma' speċjalista tal-mard infettiv.

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tipprovdi statistika dwar l-għadd ta' nies fit-28 Stat Membru tal-UE li rriżultaw pożittivi għall-epatite Ċ matul l-aħħar tliet snin?

2. Mod wieħed ta' kif il-vajrus jista' jinfirex malajr hu permess tal-kondiviżjoni tal-labar. Xi strateġija qed tiġi adottata biex jitqajjem għarfien fost dawk li jieħdu d-droga fl-UE-28 dwar l-importanza li ma ssirx kondiviżjoni tal-labar jew ta' kwalunkwe strument ieħor tad-droga?

3. X'inhi tagħmel il-Kummissjoni biex tiżgura li n-nies li huma suxxettibbli għal dan il-vajrus jagħmlu t-testijiet mediċi u c-check-ups neċessarji qabel ma jkun tard wisq?

4. X'inhi tagħmel il-Kummissjoni biex tiżgura li l-kura u l-medikazzjoni għall-epatite Ċ jkunu disponibbli u bi prezz raġonevoli għall-pazjenti?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(9 ta' April 2014)

1. Skont iċ-Ċentru Ewropew għall-Prevenzjoni u l-Kontroll tal-Mard (ECDC), fl-2012 ġew irrappurtati 29.042 każ ta' epatite Ċ minn 24 Stat Membru tal-UE. Fl-2011 u fl-2010, ġew irrappurtati 28.598 u 25.327 każ, rispettivament. Għall-Belġju, il-Kroazja, Franza u Spanja m'hemm l-ebda dejta disponibbli.

2. Iċ-Ċentru Ewropew għall-Monitoraġġ tad-Droga u d-Dipendenza fuq id-Droga (EMCDDA) u l-ECDC ippubblikaw gwida dwar "Il-prevenzjoni u l-kontroll ta' mard infettuż fost il-persuni li jinjettaw id-droga (Prevention and control of infectious diseases among people who inject drugs) ([1])".

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni ffinanzjat bosta proġetti fil-qafas tal-Programm tas-Saħħa, li jindirizzaw il-prevenzjoni ta' mard li jinxtered permezz tad-demm, b'mod partikolari fost il-persuni li jinjettaw id-drogi. Dawn jinkludu n-Netwerk ta' "Korrelazzjoni", biex itejjeb is-servizzi ta' prevenzjoni, kura u trattament; u "H-cube", biex jidentifika u jxerred il-prattiki tajba dwar programmi ta' taħriġ u l-kampanji ta' prevenzjoni, u biex iżid it-tnaqqis tal-ħsara, it-trattament u l-kura għall-persuni li jinjettaw id-drogi.

3. L-EMCDDA ħareġ ukoll linji gwida għall-ittestjar tal-epatite virali fost il-persuni li jinjettaw id-droga ([2]). L-ECDC ippubblika rapporti dwar il-politiki ta' kontroll preventiv fl-UE ([3]), u dwar l-ittestjar għal infezzjonijiet trażmessi sesswalment, inkluża l-epatite Ċ ([4]). Fil-preżent l-ECDC qed twettaq ukoll studju dwar il-kost-effettività tal-istrateġiji ta' kontroll preventiv għall-epatite.

4. Filwaqt li skont il-proċedura ċentralizzata l-Aġenzija Ewropea għall-Mediċini (EMA) hija responsabbli għall-evalwazzjoni xjentifika tal-applikazzjonijiet għall-awtorizzazzjonijiet ta' kummerċjalizzazzjoni fl-UE fir-rigward tal-mediċini, u l-awtorizzazzjoni ta' kummerċjalizzazzjoni tingħata mill-Kummissjoni Ewropea, id-definizzjoni tal-politika tas-saħħa flimkien mal-organizzazzjoni u l-għoti tas-servizzi tas-saħħa hija r-responsabbiltà tal-Istati Membri tal-UE.

([1]) http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/ecdc-emcdda-guidance
([2]) http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/manuals/testing-guidelines
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/TER_100914_Hep_B_C%20_EU_neighbourhood.pdf
http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/101012_TER_HepBandC_survey.pdf
([4]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/publications/novel_approaches_to_testing_for_stis_.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001006/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is one of the main causes of chronic liver disease in the world, causing 350 000 deaths worldwide from related liver diseases every year.

According to a recent study published in Malta, 1 074 people tested positive for the hepatitis C virus between January 2008 and May 2012. The study also showed that 68% of those who tested positive for the virus were users of intravenous drugs; only one case was attributed to a sexual infection, and another to a needlestick injury. In 2% of the cases, the alleged mode of infection was via blood transfusion prior to the introduction of blood screening. The research also found that only 56% of these people had an appointment scheduled with an infectious disease specialist.

1. Can the Commission provide statistics for the number of people in the EU-28 who have tested positive for hepatitis C during the last three years?

2. One way in which this virus can spread quickly is through the sharing of needles. What strategy is being adopted to raise awareness among drug users in the EU-28 of the importance of not sharing needles or other drug-related apparatus?

3. What is the Commission doing to make sure that people who are prone to this virus undergo the necessary medical tests and check-ups before it is too late?

4. What is the Commission doing to ensure that treatment and medication for hepatitis C are available and affordable for patients?

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

1. According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), 29 042 cases of hepatitis C were reported by 24 EU Member States in 2012. In 2011 and 2010, 28 598 and 25 327 cases were reported respectively. There is no data available for Belgium, Croatia, France and Spain.

2. The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (Emcdda) and ECDC have published guidance on the 'Prevention and control of infectious diseases among people who inject drugs ([1])'.

In addition, the Commission has funded several projects under the Health Programme, which address the prevention of blood-borne diseases particularly amongst people who inject drugs. These include the 'Correlation' Network, to improve prevention, care and treatment services; and 'H-Cube', to identify and disseminate good practices on training programmes and prevention campaigns, and scale up harm reduction, treatment and care for people who inject drugs.

3. The Emcdda has further issued guidelines for testing viral hepatitis in people who inject drugs ([2]). The ECDC has published reports on screening policies in the EU ([3]), and on testing for sexually transmitted infections, including hepatitis C ([4]). It is currently also carrying out a study on the cost-effectiveness of screening strategies for hepatitis.

4. While the European Medicines Agency (EMA) is responsible for the scientific evaluation of applications for EU marketing authorisations for medicines under the centralised procedure, and marketing authorisation is granted by the European Commission, the definition of health policy and the organisation and delivery of health services is the responsibility of EU Member States.

([1]) http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/ecdc-emcdda-guidance
([2]) http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/manuals/testing-guidelines
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/TER_100914_Hep_B_C%20_EU_neighbourhood.pdf
http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/101012_TER_HepBandC_survey.pdf
([4]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/publications/novel_approaches_to_testing_for_stis_.pdf

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-001008/14
Komisijai
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(2014 m. sausio 31 d.)

Tema: Ukrainos ketinimai apmokestinti ES piliečių keliones į šią šalį

Ukrainos Vyriausybė ketina sugriežtinti ES valstybių narių, taip pat JAV ir Kanados, piliečių įvažiavimo į Ukrainą tvarką, nepaisant 2005 m. ES ir Ukrainos susitarimo dėl vizų režimo supaprastinimo. Teigiama, kad bus renkamas ne vizos mokestis, o „apmokėjimas“ už asmens duomenų įtraukimą į tam tikrą registrą, ES piliečiui kertant Ukrainos pasienį.

Ar Komisijai yra žinoma apie šiuos ketinimus? Ar, Komisijos nuomone, tokių iš esmės ES piliečių keliones ribojančių priemonių įvedimas nepažeistų ligšiolinių ES ir Ukrainos susitarimų dėl vizų režimo supaprastinimo? Ar tokiu atveju turėtų galioti abipusiškumo principas, t. y. ES galėtų įsivesti panašų mokestį atvykstantiems Ukrainos piliečiams?

C. Malmström atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. balandžio 16 d.)

Komisijai žinoma, kad prieš prasidedant pastarojo meto įvykiams Ukrainoje, dėl kurių pasikeitė šalies vyriausybė, Ukrainos valdžios institucijose buvo diskutuojama apie tai, ar Ukraina turėtų nustatyti tam tikras papildomas į Ukrainos teritoriją atvykstančių ES keliautojų kontrolės priemones ir jiems taikyti tam tikrą mokestį.

Tačiau atsižvelgdama į tai, kad pasikeitė Ukrainos vyriausybė ir kad naujos valdžios institucijos nustatė naujas politikos kryptis, Komisija mano, kad nebėra prasmės teikti pastabų dėl šių su vizomis susijusių Ukrainos teisės aktų pokyčių, kuriuos buvo numačiusi ankstesnė Ukrainos valdžia.

Informacijos apie naujosios Ukrainos vyriausybės ketinimus Ukrainos sieną kertantiems ES piliečiams taikyti kokius nors mokesčius Komisija neturi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001008/14
to the Commission
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Ukraine's intention to charge EU citizens to travel to their country

The Government of Ukraine, despite the Agreement between the European Community and Ukraine on the facilitation of the issuing of visas entered into in 2005, intends to tighten control over citizens of the EU, USA and Canada entering their territory. It is argued that it is not a visa fee that will be levied, but a 'payment' to enter personal data into a certain registry when a person crosses the border.

Is the Commission aware of these intentions? Does the Commission not believe that such measures — which essentially restrict travel for EU citizens — undermine the current agreements between the EU and Ukraine on the facilitation of the issuing of visas? In this case should the parties not be subject to the principle of reciprocity, i.e. could the EU adopt a similar tax on incoming Ukrainian citizens?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2014)

The Commission is aware of the fact that, before recent developments in Ukraine which led to the change of government, within the Ukrainian administration there was a debate about whether Ukraine should introduce some form of additional control for EU travellers and whether some form of payment should be requested from EU travellers upon entering Ukrainian territory.

However, taking into consideration the change of government in Ukraine and the new policy lines adopted by the new Ukrainian administration, the Commission considers that it would no longer be appropriate to comment on those changes of the Ukrainian visa legislation envisaged by the previous administration.

The Commission is not aware of any projects of the new government of Ukraine leading to the introduction of payments or fees related to the crossing of the border of Ukraine by EU citizens.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-001009/14
Komisijai
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(2014 m. sausio 31 d.)

Tema: ES teisės išimtys energetikos infrastruktūros projektams su Rusija

Įvairių aukštų Rusijos Federacijos pareigūnų vieši pareiškimai rodo, kad Rusija siekia išimčių iš Trečiojo energetikos paketo, pirmiausiai, kad jis nebūtų taikomas Pietų Srauto (angl. *Southstream*) dujotiekiui. Argumentuojama, kad ES yra leidusi nesilaikyti kai kurių ES teisės nuostatų Šiaurės Srovės (angl. *Nordstream*) dujotiekio atveju, todėl panašiai turėtų elgtis ir minėto projekto atžvilgiu. Be to, situacija, susidariusi po to, kai paaiškėjo, kad sudaryti dvišaliai susitarimai tarp projekte dalyvaujančių ES šalių narių ir Rusijos esmingai pažeidžia kai kurias ES teisės nuostatas, rodo, kad Komisija turi būti laiku ir tinkamai informuojama apie ketinamus sudaryti susitarimus su trečiosiomis šalimis.

Ar yra suteiktos išimtys iš ES teisės, ir kokios konkrečiai, Šiaurės Srovės dujotiekiui? Ar Komisija ketina suteikti tokias ar panašias išimtis Pietų Srovės dujotiekio projektui?

Ar, Komisijos nuomone, ji yra tinkamai ir laiku informuojama apie dvišales derybas tarp Lietuvos Vyriausybės ir *Gazprom* ir apie ketinamą pasirašyti susitarimą dėl gamtinių dujų tiekimo?

Ar yra šalių, kurios iki šiol nepasinaudojo tarpvyriausybinių susitarimų energetikos srityje informavimo procedūra, ir, jei taip, kurios tai šalys?

Komisijos nario G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. kovo 31 d.)

Dujotiekio „Nord Stream“ projektui jokių išimčių nebuvo nei padaryta, nei prašyta. Jei „South Stream“ projekto iniciatoriai nuspręstų prašyti Trečiojo energetikos paketo taikymo išimčių, Komisija yra pasirengusi peržiūrėti nacionalinių reguliuotojų sprendimus dėl tokių prašymų. Kol kas tokio prašymo negauta.

Komisija nuolat palaiko ryšius su Lietuvos valdžios institucijomis, yra jų reguliariai informuojama ir teikė šioms institucijoms pagalbą Lietuvai derantis su Rusija ir bendrove „Gazprom“ dėl Trečiojo energetikos paketo nuostatų, visų pirma susijusių su nuosavybės atskyrimo taisyklėmis, įgyvendinimo. 2013 m. vasario 17 d. Komisija peržiūrėjo 114 jai pateiktų tarpvyriausybinių susitarimų ir neturi žinių, kad kokia nors šalis būtų neįvykdžiusi savo įsipareigojimų pagal tą sprendimą.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001009/14
to the Commission
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: European law exemptions for energy infrastructure projects with Russia

The public statements of various high officials from the Russian Federation show that Russia is seeking exemptions from the Third Energy Pack — first and foremost that it is not applied to the South Stream pipeline. Their argument is that the EU has made certain exemptions from provisions of EC law in respect of the Nord Stream pipeline, and that it should therefore behave in a similar way in respect of the project in question. In addition, the situation which arose after it had become clear that entry into bilateral agreements between the participating EU Member States and Russia essentially violated certain provisions of EC law suggests that the Commission should be informed of intended agreements with third parties in a timely and appropriate manner.

Is any exemption from EC law provided for the Nord Stream pipeline? If so, please specify. Does the Commission intend to provide the same or similar exemptions for the South Stream pipeline project?

Does the Commission believe that it was informed in a timely and appropriate manner of the bilateral negotiations between the Government of Lithuania and Gazprom and of the intended agreement on natural gas supply?

Are there any countries that so far have failed to exercise the information exchange mechanism for intergovernmental agreements in the field of energy? If so, which?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

No exemption has been granted or requested for the Nord Stream pipeline project. Should South Stream promoters decide to apply for exemptions under the 3rd Energy Package, the Commission stands ready to review the national regulators' decisions on such requests. So far no such requests have been received.

The Commission is in contact with, has been regularly informed by and has provided support to the Lithuanian authorities in the context of their negotiations with Russia and Gazprom on the implementation of 3rd Energy Package provisions and in particular the ownership unbundling rules. By 17 February 2013, the Commission has reviewed the 114 IGAs submitted to it and is not aware of any country having failed to exercise its obligation under the decision.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001010/14
aan de Raad
Philip Claeys (NI)
(31 januari 2014)

Betreft: Nieuw logo Raad

Vanaf 1 juli 2014 zou de Raad een nieuw logo in gebruik nemen. Volgens persberichten zou de Raad 60 000 euro betaald hebben voor de „visual branding", maar was het logo zelf gratis.

Wat houdt de „visual branding" in? Is de kostprijs voor het ontwerpen en drukken van briefpapier e.d. hierin inbegrepen?

Hoeveel zal de invoering van het nieuwe logo in totaal kosten, eens al het materiaal waarop het oude logo prijkt vervangen zal zijn?

Hoeveel bedrijven werden gevraagd om een logo te ontwerpen?

Antwoord
(14 april 2014)

De keuze van het nieuwe logo van de Raad is tot stand gekomen via een openbare prijsvraag waarin belangstellende ontwerpbedrijven werden uitgenodigd gratis een logo voor te stellen. De prijs voor de winnaar van de prijsvraag was de gunning van een opdracht ter waarde van 60 000 EUR om een volledig grafisch stijlhandboek te ontwikkelen en daarbij ook richtsnoeren uit te werken voor het gebruik van het logo in verschillende toepassingen en voor het ontwerp van template voor documenten, papier (inclusief briefpapier), publicatie- en communicatieproducten, webapplicaties, ondertekenings- en communicatie-evenementen.

De Raad heeft gekozen voor een flexibele aanpak bij de invoering van het nieuwe grafische stijlhandboek; met een zo verantwoord mogelijk gebruik van middelen, wat inhoudt dat materiaal met het vroegere logo pas wordt vervangen wanneer de bestaande voorraden zijn uitgeput. Bovendien komt de opgefriste visuele identiteit door het gekozen tijdstip als de minst kostbare oplossing uit de bus omdat zij voor zowel het geplande herontwerp van de openbare website van de Raad (vanaf juli 2014) als de opdracht voor de vereiste bewegwijzering voor het toekomstige Europagebouw kan worden gebruikt.

Vijf bedrijven hebben aan de prijsvraag deelgenomen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001010/14
to the Council
Philip Claeys (NI)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: New logo for the Council

From 1 July 2014 the Council is to adopt a new logo. According to press reports the Council spent EUR 60 000 on 'visual branding', though the logo itself was free.

What does 'visual branding' involve? Does it include the price of designing and printing letter paper?

How much will it cost in total to introduce the new logo, given that the materials displaying the old logo will have to be replaced?

How many firms were asked to design a logo?

Reply
(14 April 2014)

The choice of the Council's new logo was made through an open contest in which interested design companies were invited to propose a logo for free. The prize for winning the contest was the award of a contract, worth EUR 60 000, for the development of a fully-fledged graphic charter including the creation of guidelines for use of the logo in different applications and the design of templates for documents, stationery (including letter paper), publication and communication products, web applications, signage and communication events.

The Council has chosen a flexible approach in the implementation of the new graphic charter making the most responsible use of resources, meaning that material displaying the former logo will be replaced only as and when existing stocks are exhausted. In addition, because of the timing, the revamped visual identity is designed to be the least-cost solution since it can be used for the planned redesign of the Council's public website (due to be launched in July 2014), and for procurement of the required signage for the future Europa building.

Five companies took part in the contest.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001014/14
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(31 januari 2014)

Betreft: Opleidingen in verband met illegale tabakshandel

In het kader van de overeenkomsten met de vier grote internationale sigarettenbedrijven zijn bepalingen opgenomen in verband met de opleiding van personeel en zelfs van ambtenaren met betrekking tot sigarettensmokkel.

Kan de Commissie ons de lijst overmaken van alle uitnodigingen, mails, documenten, programma's van opleidingen over illegale tabakshandel georganiseerd in 2013 door PMI, BAT, JTI en ITL bestemd voor personeel of ambtenaren, alsook de lijst van de personen, onder meer van het OLAF of andere ambtenaren, die hebben deelgenomen aan deze trainingen?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(1 april 2014)

De samenwerkingsovereenkomsten tussen de EU en de tabaksfabrikanten verplichten de laatsten ertoe om opleidingen voor hun eigen werknemers te organiseren met betrekking tot de illegale handel in hun producten ([1]). Deze verdragen voorzien ook in de deelname aan deze opleidingen door het personeel van de EU.

In overeenstemming met de overeenkomsten tussen de EU en de tabaksproducenten volgen vertegenwoordigers van het Europees Bureau voor fraudebestrijding (OLAF) enkele van de programma's als waarnemers. In 2013 woonden de vertegenwoordigers van OLAF één opleidingsprogramma van JTI bij.

Aangezien informatie over de individuele OLAF-onderzoekers als vertrouwelijk wordt beschouwd, is de Commissie bereid om aanvullende informatie te verstrekken op verzoek van een parlementaire commissie, in overeenstemming met het interinstitutioneel akkoord tussen de Commissie en het Parlement.

([1]) PMI: Protocol 11 van de overeenkomst.
JTI: Deel 4, lid 4.5, van de overeenkomst.
BAT: Artikel 5 van de overeenkomst.
ITL: Aanhangsel 1, protocol 11 van de overeenkomst.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001014/14
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Training on the subject of illicit tobacco trading

The agreements with the four large international cigarette companies include provisions concerning the training of staff and even of officials with regard to cigarette smuggling.

Can the Commission forward to us a list of all the invitations, e-mails, documents and training programmes relating to illicit tobacco trading organised in 2013 by PMI, BAT, JTI and ITL intended for staff or officials, and a list of the persons — including those from OLAF or other officials — who have attended such training?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

The cooperation agreements between the EU and the tobacco manufacturers oblige the latter to set up training programmes for their own employees regarding illicit trade ([1]). The agreements also provide for the participation in this activity by EU staff.

Representatives from the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) attend some of the programmes as observers in accordance with the agreements between the EU and the tobacco manufacturers. In 2013, OLAF representatives attended one training programme organised by JTI.

Since information concerning individual OLAF investigators is considered confidential, the Commission is ready to provide further information upon request by a Parliamentary Committee, in line with the interinstitutional Agreement between the Commission and the Parliament.

([1]) PMI: Protocol 11 of the Agreement.
JTI: Section 4, paragraph 4.5 of the Agreement.
BAT: Article 5 of the Agreement.
ITL: Schedule 1, Protocol 11 of the Agreement.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-001015/14
Tarybai
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(2014 m. sausio 31 d.)

Tema: 2008 m. Pamatinio sprendimo dėl rasizmo ir ksenofobijos įgyvendinimas

2014 m. sausio mėn. Komisija paskelbė 2008 m. Pamatinio sprendimo dėl rasizmo ir ksenofobijos įgyvendinimo ataskaitą, kuri parodė, kad maždaug 20 valstybių narių neperkėlė visų sprendimo nuostatų – būtent susijusių su viešu pritarimu genocido nusikaltimams, nusikaltimams žmoniškumui ir karo nusikaltimams, atsisakymu šiuos nusikaltimus pripažinti ar dideliu jų menkinimu – arba jas perkėlė neteisingai.

Sprendimas buvo priimtas vienbalsiai prieš penkerius metus, o į protokolą įtrauktame Tarybos pareiškime pasmerkti visi genocido nusikaltimai, nusikaltimai žmoniškumui ir karo nusikaltimai, įskaitant įvykdytus totalitarinių režimų. Savo 2013 m. gruodžio mėn. išvadose dėl kovos su neapykantos nusikaltimais Teisingumo ir vidaus reikalų taryba atkreipia dėmesį į Komisijos ketinimą tęsti papildomos teisinės priemonės, susijusios su totalitariniais režimais, nustatymo sąlygų apžvalgą, taip pat ir atsižvelgiant į pirmiau minėtosios ataskaitos išvadas. Be to, 2013 m. spalio mėn. pateiktoje Europos Sąjungos pagrindinių teisių agentūros nuomonėje dėl Pamatinio sprendimo dėl rasizmo ir ksenofobijos nurodyta daug sričių, kur ES veiksmai galėtų pagerinti aukų padėtį.

Ar Tarybai pirmininkaujanti valstybė narė sutinka, kad, be politinės valios, nesama bendro požiūrio į nuostatų, susijusių su viešo pritarimo tam tikriems nusikaltimams, įskaitant įvykdytus totalitarinių režimų, atsisakymo juos pripažinti ar didelio jų menkinimo kriminalizavimu, įgyvendinimą? Ar Tarybai pirmininkaujanti valstybė narė sutinka, kad būtini bendri ES veiksmai? Kokie tolesni veiksmai numatyti? Ar galime tikėtis, kad tinkamu laiku bus parengta papildoma tolesnio sprendimo įgyvendinimo ataskaita?

Atsakymas
(2014 m. gegužės 13 d.)

Tarybos pamatiniu sprendimu 2008/913/TVR dėl kovos su tam tikromis rasizmo ir ksenofobijos formomis bei apraiškomis baudžiamosios teisės priemonėmis valstybės narės įpareigojamos kriminalizuoti viešą pritarimą nusikaltimams taikai, karo nusikaltimams ir nusikaltimams žmoniškumui, atsisakymą šiuos nusikaltimus pripažinti ir didelį jų menkinimą, kaip apibrėžta tame sprendime.

Valstybės narės buvo įpareigotos ne vėliau kaip 2010 m. lapkričio 28 d. pateikti nuostatų, kuriomis pagal pamatinį sprendimą joms nustatytos pareigos perkeliamos į nacionalinę teisę, tekstus. 2014 m. vasario mėn. Komisija Tarybai pateikė 2014 m. sausio 27 d. Komisijos ataskaitą Europos Parlamentui ir Tarybai dėl Pamatinio sprendimo 2008/913/TVR įgyvendinimo, kuri šiuo metu yra nagrinėjama darbo grupių lygiu. Kaip nurodyta ataskaitos pabaigoje, „*2014 m. Komisija su valstybėmis narėmis pradės dvišalius dialogus, kad būtų užtikrintas visiškas ir tinkamas Pamatinio sprendimo perkėlimas į nacionalinę teisę, tinkamai atsižvelgiant į Pagrindinių teisių chartiją ir ypač į saviraiškos ir asociacijų laisvę*“. Pagal Tarybos pamatinio sprendimo 913/2008/TVR 10 straipsnio 2 dalį Taryba taip pat turi įvertinti, kaip valstybės narės laikosi šio pamatinio sprendimo nuostatų.

ES institucijos, įskaitant Tarybą, ėmėsi kai kurių kitų veiksmų, be kita ko, paskutinį kartą paskelbiant Tarybos išvadas ([1]), kuriais siekiama spręsti klausimą dėl nusikaltimų, susijusių su viešu pritarimu genocido nusikaltimams, nusikaltimams žmoniškumui ir karo nusikaltimams, atsisakymu šiuos nusikaltimus pripažinti ar dideliu jų menkinimu. Išvados buvo priimtos praėjusių metų pabaigoje, po lapkričio mėn. Vilniuje įvykusios konferencijos dėl kovos su neapykantos nusikaltimais; šių išvadų 2 punkte valstybių narių prašoma „*atsižvelgti į kitų valstybių narių patirtį savo baudžiamosios teisės aktuose išplečiant baustinų su neapykantos nusikaltimais susijusių veikų aprėptį ir apsvarstyti galimybę įtraukti kitus neapykantos motyvus, dėl kurių įvykdomi šie nusikaltimai*“, o 8 punkte – „*skatinti prevencines priemones, inter alia, atspindint atminimo aspektus vykdant švietimo žmogaus teisių srityje veiklą, įtraukiant juos į istorijos mokymo programas ir atitinkamą mokymą, imantis veiksmų siekiant mokyti visuomenę apie kultūrų įvairovės ir įtraukties vertybes ir siekiant, kad visi visuomenės sektoriai atliktų vaidmenį kovoje su tokia netolerancija*“, o 14 punkte pateiktas prašymas Komisijai „*skirti reikiamą biudžetą, kad būtų finansuojami neapykantos nusikaltimų prevencijos ir kovos su jais projektai, įskaitant su atminimu susijusius projektus ir informuotumo didinimo kampanijas, pagal Sąjungos finansavimo programas*“.

([1]) Dok. 17057/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001015/14
to the Council
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Implementation of 2008 framework decision on racism and xenophobia

In January 2014 the Commission published its report on the implementation of the 2008 framework decision on racism and xenophobia (COM(2014)0027), which reveals that some 20 Member States did not transpose the provisions of the decision fully or correctly, namely as regards publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The framework decision was unanimously adopted five years ago, and the statement by the Council entered into its minutes deplored all crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, including those committed by totalitarian regimes. In its December 2013 conclusions on combating hate crimes, the Justice and Home Affairs Council took note of the Commission's intention to keep under review the conditions for an additional legal instrument as regards totalitarian regimes, including in the light of the findings of the abovementioned report. Moreover, the opinion of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency of October 2013 on the framework decision highlighted many areas in which EU action could improve the situation of victims.

Does the Presidency agree that, despite the necessary political will, there is no common approach as regards the implementation of provisions to criminalise publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising certain crimes, including those committed by totalitarian regimes? Does the Presidency agree that there is a need for joint EU action? What follow-up action is envisaged? Can we expect an additional report on the further implementation of the decision in due course?

Reply
(13 May 2014)

Council Framework Decision 913/2008/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law obliges Member States to criminalise the public condoning, denial and gross trivialisation of crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity as defined therein.

Member States were obliged to transmit the text of the provisions transposing into their national law the obligations imposed on them under the framework Decision by 28 November 2010. The report of 27 January 2014 from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA was presented by the Commission to the Council in February 2014 and is currently being examined at Working Party level. As stated at the end of the report, the 'Commission will engage in bilateral dialogues with Member States during 2014 with a view to ensuring full and correct transposition of the framework Decision, giving due consideration to the Charter of Fundamental Rights and, in particular, to freedom of expression and association'. According to Article 10(2) of the Council Framework Decision 913/2008/JHA, the Council is also to assess the extent to which Member States have complied with the provisions of this framework Decision.

Several other steps have already been taken by the EU institutions, including the Council, to address the offence of publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, most recently in the form of Council conclusions ([1]). The conclusions were adopted at the end of last year, following a conference on hate crime held in Vilnius in November, and included an invitation to Member States, in point 2, to 'consider the experience of other Member States in extending within their criminal legislation, the scope of punishable hate crime offences and the inclusion of other bias motives behind these offences' and, in point 8, to 'enhance preventive measures, inter alia by reflecting remembrance in human rights education, history curricula and relevant training, taking steps to educate the public on the values of cultural diversity and inclusion, and aiming for all sectors of society to have a role in combating such intolerance', and an invitation to the Commission, in point 14, to 'allocate the necessary budget to fund projects to prevent and combat hate crime, including remembrance projects and awareness raising campaigns, under the Union financing programmes'.

([1]) 17057/13.