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 331/01)

Treść Strona

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001153/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Oligopolio energético en España

Uno de los grandes problemas del sector eléctrico español se debe a que el 80 % de la generación de la electricidad y un 90 % de su comercialización están controlados por cinco grandes empresas (Iberdrola, Gas Natural Fenosa, Endesa, EDP y E.ON), por lo que podemos afirmar que nos encontramos ante un mercado eléctrico oligopolizado.

Este sistema eléctrico oligopolizado vulnera claramente la Directiva 2009/72/CE, por no garantizar la separación efectiva entre empresas de generación, distribución y comercialización de electricidad y por violar el artículo 56 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea (TFUE), y la Directiva 2009/72/CE, por las restricciones existentes para la prestación de los servicios de generación, distribución y comercialización de energía.

El mercado eléctrico español incumple el artículo 106 del TFUE, en especial en relación con las normas de derecho de la competencia y del mercado, al impedir la entrada en el sistema de las energías renovables.

El mercado eléctrico oligopolizado permite fenómenos como la convivencia de un déficit tarifario de 26 000 millones de euros (Comisión Nacional de Energía, 2013), que a día de hoy algunas fuentes apuntan que ya llega a los 28 000 de euros, con unos beneficios de las compañías eléctricas que doblan los de las europeas y con una subida de un 80 % del precio de la factura eléctrica desde 2004 (actualmente España paga la tercera electricidad más cara de Europa después de Chipre y Malta).

El nuevo regulador único introducido en España (Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia) no garantiza una autoridad reguladora independiente que controle y supervise el mercado eléctrico, por lo que se incumple la Directiva 2009/72/CE.

Teniendo en cuenta todo esto, ¿qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre la situación actual del mercado eléctrico español? ¿Qué mecanismos tiene la Comisión para garantizar que los órganos competentes y responsables exigen el cumplimiento de la normativa comunitaria citada anteriormente? ¿Piensa actuar la Comisión para asegurar el cumplimiento de la normativa europea por parte del Gobierno español?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001872/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Vulneración de la Directiva 2009/72/CE por la reforma energética española

Considerando que España todavía no cumple con la Directiva 2009/72/CE sobre el mercado interior de la electricidad, por no garantizar la separación efectiva entre empresas de generación, distribución y comercialización de electricidad y por las restricciones existentes para la prestación de los servicios de generación, distribución y comercialización de energía.

Considerando que el plazo de transposición de la Directiva era el 3 de marzo de 2011 y que el 15 de octubre de 2012 la Comisión advirtió a España que no estaba cumpliendo con las fechas establecidas.

Considerando que la nueva Ley 24/2013 del sector eléctrico español (conocida como reforma energética) no resuelve ninguno de los problemas del sector eléctrico, ya que las grandes empresas siguen sin separación vertical, el sector clave de la distribución sigue como monopolio territorial y las grandes empresas se benefician de su posición perjudicando a los otros actores.

Considerando que mediante la Ley 3/2013 se suprimieron toda una serie de organismos reguladores independientes y se creó la nueva Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC), contradiciendo las indicaciones de la Directiva 2009/72/CE.

1. ¿Conocía la Comisión la infracción por parte del Gobierno español de dicha Directiva?

2. ¿Qué mecanismos tiene la Comisión para garantizar que, por parte de los órganos competentes y responsables, se exige el cumplimiento de la normativa comunitaria citada anteriormente?

3. ¿Qué acciones piensa emprender la Comisión para asegurar el cumplimiento de la normativa europea?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión está en efecto preocupada con esta situación que ha dado lugar al déficit tarifario imperante en el sector eléctrico español, y ha exhortado repetidamente a las autoridades españolas para que eliminen sus causas sistémicas. La Comisión espera con expectación los efectos reales de la reforma que se está llevando a cabo para luchar contra el déficit.

Respecto a la aplicación de las normas del mercado interior de la UE y, en particular, de la Directiva 2009/72, la Comisión está estudiando, en colaboración estrecha con las autoridades españolas, si las medidas de transposición españolas cumplen lo dispuesto por dicha Directiva.

En lo relativo a las normas de separación, es verdad que separar las actividades de producción y transporte contribuye de forma fundamental a la aplicación de la normativa del mercado interior. Ahora bien, las disposiciones de la UE son diferentes para las redes de transporte y distribución. Respecto a esta última, la legislación de la UE no impide que la empresa de distribución forme parte de una empresa integrada verticalmente, siempre que cumpla otros requisitos. La conformidad de la red de transporte gestionada por Red Eléctrica Española con las normas de separación de la UE ha sido confirmada por el regulador español en colaboración con la Comisión Europea.

La existencia de un regulador sólido e independiente es una pieza fundamental de la normativa del mercado interior de la energía en la EU. La Comisión se mantendrá vigilante y evaluará la conformidad de la CNMC ([1]) con los requisitos de independencia de la legislación de la UE partiendo del desempeño de las tareas concretas de regulación de dicho organismo y, en particular, de las decisiones adoptadas por esta entidad en su quehacer cotidiano.

([1]) Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y de la Competencia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001153/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Energy oligopoly in Spain

One of the major problems in the Spanish electricity sector is that 80% of electricity generation and 90% of sales are controlled by five major companies (Iberdrola, Gas Natural Fenosa, Endesa, E.ON and EDP), meaning that the electricity market is an oligopoly.

This oligopolistic electricity system is in clear breach of Directive 2009/72/EC in that it fails to ensure effective separation between the companies involved in the generation, distribution and sale of electricity. In addition, the restrictions on the provision of services for the generation, distribution and sale of energy are in violation of Article 56 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and Directive 2009/72/EC.

The Spanish electricity market is in breach of Article 106 TFEU, particularly in relation to competition and market rules, by impeding entry into the renewable energy system.

It is this oligopolistic electricity market which means there can be a tariff deficit of EUR 26 000 million (according to the National Energy Commission, 2013), which some sources suggest has now reached EUR 28 000, at the same time as electricity companies are making double the profits of their counterparts elsewhere in Europe and electricity bills are 80% higher than they were in 2004 (Spaniards currently pay the third highest electricity tariffs in Europe, after Cyprus and Malta).

Spain's new single regulator (the National Markets and Competition Commission) has not established an independent regulatory authority to control and monitor the electricity market, in breach of Directive 2009/72/EC.

In view of the above, what is the Commission's opinion on the current situation in the Spanish electricity market? What mechanisms does the Commission have at its disposal to ensure that the relevant authorities demand compliance with the abovementioned EU rules? Is the Commission intending to take steps to ensure that the Spanish Government complies with EU rules?

Question for written answer E-001872/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Violation of Directive 2009/72/EC by Spanish energy reform

Spain is still in breach of Directive 2009/72/EC on the internal market in electricity, as it fails to guarantee the effective separation of electricity supply and generation activities from network operations, and imposes restrictions on the provision of these services.

The deadline for transposition of the directive was 3 March 2011, and on 15 October 2012 the Commission reminded Spain that this deadline had not been met.

The new Spanish Law 24/2013 on the Electricity Sector (known as the energy reform) resolves none of the sector's problems, since large companies are still not required to comply with rules on vertical separation, the distribution sector is still a territorial monopoly and large companies are pushing smaller companies off the market.

Law 3/2013 did away with a whole series of independent regulatory bodies and facilitated the creation of the new National Markets and Competition Commission, in direct contradiction to the guidelines laid down in Directive 2009/72/EC.

In light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware that the Spanish Government is in breach of Directive 2009/72/EC?

2. What mechanisms does the Commission have at its disposal to guarantee that this directive is enforced by the competent bodies?

3. What measures does the Commission envisage to ensure compliance with the directive?

Joint answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

The Commission is indeed concerned about the situation that gave rise to the existing tariff deficit in Spain electricity sector and has repeatedly encouraged the Spanish authorities to remove its systemic causes. The Commission looks forward to seeing the actual impact of the ongoing reform on that deficit.

Concerning the implementation of the EU internal market rules, and in particular Directive 2009/72, the Commission is currently assessing, in close contact with the Spanish authorities, whether the Spanish implementing measures comply with the provisions of this directive.

As for the rules on unbundling, it is true that a separation between production and transmission activities is an important element of the internal market rules. However, the EU provisions are different for transmission and for distribution networks. For the latter, the EU rules do not prevent the distribution company from being a part of a vertically integrated company, provided other requirements are met. The compliance with EU unbundling rules for the transmission network managed by Red Eléctrica Española has been confirmed by the Spanish Regulator, in cooperation with the EU Commission.

A strong independent regulator is one of the cornerstones of the EU internal energy market rules. The Commission remains alert and will assess CNMC ([1]) compliance with the independence requirements under EC law based on the actual performance of the regulatory tasks by this organisation and, in particular, on the formal decisions adopted by this collective body in its daily work.

([1]) Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y de la Competencia.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-001296/14
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(10. helmikuuta 2014)

Aihe: Kasvisterolit ja -stanolit

Vastauksessaan kirjalliseen kysymykseen E-012957/2013 komissio sivuuttaa kysymyksen siitä, onko yksinomaan kasvisterolien tehokkuutta arvioitu 2,6–3,0 gramman päiväsaannin pohjalta. Sen sijaan komissio väittää, että Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomaisen (EFSA) lausunnossa (EFSA-Q-2011-01241) mainittu analyysi (Talati ym. (2010)) osoittaa, että ei ole havaittu tilastollisesti merkittäviä eroja siinä, miten tehokkaasti kasvistanolit ja kasvisterolit vähentävät kolesterolitasoa, kun päiväsaanti on 1,5–3,0 grammaa. Tätä taustaa vasten komissio ei suunnittele antavansa EFSAlle uutta toimeksiantoa kasvisterolien tehokkuudesta yksinään.

Tämä argumentti ei ole pätevä, koska meta-analyysiin Talati ym. ei sisälly yhtään tutkimusta, joissa verrataan suoraan kasvistanolien (kasvistanoliesterien) ja kasvisterolien tehokkuutta päiväsaannin ollessa 2,6–3,0 grammaa.

Tämän meta-analyysin perusteella ei voida todeta, että kasvistanoliesterin teho vastaa kasvisterolien tehoa päiväsaannin ollessa 2,6–3,0 grammaa.

Lausuntojen EFSA-Q-2011-00851 ja EFSA-Q-2011-01241 asiakirjoihin sisältyy kahdeksantoista kasvistanoliesterien tutkimusta koskevaa ositetta ja kuusi kasvisterolien tutkimusta koskevaa ositetta, jotka kattavat 2,6–3,0 gramman päiväsaannin. Nämä ositteet muodostaisivat vakaan pohjan tehokkuuden vertailulle päiväsaannin ollessa 2,6–3,0 grammaa, mutta arviointia ei ole suoritettu yksinomaan kasvisteroleista.

Koska komission vastauksessa kirjalliseen kysymykseen E-012957/2013 ei käsitellä tätä asiaa, kehotan komissiota konsultoimaan EFSA:ta ja antamaan tieteellisesti pätevän vastauksen.

1. Onko EFSA arvioinut erikseen kasvisterolien LDL-kolesterolia alentavaa vaikutusta päiväsaannin ollessa 2,6–3,0 grammaa ottamatta mukaan kasvistanoliestereitä koskevista tutkimuksista saatuja tietoja?

2. Perustuvatko EFSA:n suorittamat vaaditut tieteelliset analyysit kaikkeen näyttöön, jonka mukaan voidaan päätellä, että kasvisterolien ja kasvistanoliesterin tehokkuus on sama päiväsaannin ollessa 2,6–3,0 grammaa?

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

Kirjalliseen kysymykseen E-012957/2013 ([1]) annettuun vastaukseen viitaten komissio haluaisi vielä korostaa, että vastineessaan tiedusteluun, joka koski kasvisteroliesterin ja kasvistanoliesterin kolesterolitasoa alentavan vaikutuksen vastaavuutta päiväsaannin ollessa yli 2,5 grammaa, Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomainen (EFSA) käsitteli muun muassa kirjallisessa kysymyksessä esiin tulleita näkökohtia ja totesi seuraavaa: ”… meta-analyysin Talati ym. (2010) ja ihmisillä suoritetun pitkän aikavälin tehokkuutta koskevan tutkimuksen Jong ym. (2008), joissa molemmissa verrattiin suoraan kasvisterolien ja kasvistanolien tehokkuutta, osalta EFSA haluaa edelleen muistuttaa EFSA:n lausunnon (EFSA-Q-2011-01241 ([2])) 2 jaksossa kuvatuista EU:n elintarvikeviraston ravitsemuslautakunnan (NDA) näkemyksistä. Näiden tutkimusten antaman näytön perusteella lautakunta katsoi, että kasvisteroleilla ja kasvistanoleilla on tehokkuudeltaan samankaltainen vaikutus veren LDL-kolesterolitason alenemiseen. Lausunnon 3 jaksossa esitettiin yhteenveto Unileverin tekemästä meta-analyysistä (2011, ei julkaistu); lautakunnan mukaan kasvisterolien ja kasvistanoliesterien tehokkuus päiväsaannin ollessa 3 grammaa (vaihteluväli 2,6–3,4 g) asetuksen (EY) N:o 376/2010 ([3]) mukaisesti hyväksytyissä elintarvikematriiseissa osoittaa yhdistetyn LDL-kolesterolitason alenevan keskimäärin 11,3 prosenttia (95 % CI: 10,0–12,5). Lautakunta viittasi samassa jaksossa myös julkaistuun meta-analyysiin Katan ym. (2003), jossa päädyttiin samankaltaisiin tuloksiin”.

EFSA päättelee lopuksi vastauksessaan, että sen mukaan ei ole aihetta kyseenalaistaa kyseisessä lausunnossa (EFSA-Q-2011-01241) esitettyjen ravitsemuslautakunnan näkemysten ja päätelmien luotettavuutta.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2693.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:111:0003:0004:FI:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001296/14
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Plant sterols and stanols

In its answer to Written Question E-012957/2013, the Commission dismisses the question of whether or not plant sterols alone have been assessed for efficacy with daily intakes of 2.6 to 3.0g. Instead, the Commission argues that the meta-analysis by Talati et al. (2010), cited in the European Food Safety Authority Opinion (EFSA-Q-2011-01241), shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the cholesterol-lowering efficacy of plant sterols and plant stanol ester at intakes ranging from 1.5 to 3.0g per day. In light of this, the Commission is not going to submit a new request to the EFSA.

This argument is not valid because the meta-analysis by Talati et al. does not contain any studies directly comparing the efficacy of plant stanols (as plant stanol ester) and plant sterols with daily intakes of 2.6 to 3.0g.

Based on this meta-analysis, it cannot be concluded that the efficacy of plant stanol ester is similar to that of plant sterols with daily intakes of 2.6 to 3.0g

The EFSA-Q-2011-00851 and EFSA-Q-2011-01241 dossiers contain 18 strata from plant stanol ester studies and six strata from plant sterol studies falling inside the intake range of 2.6 to 3.0g. These strata would provide a firm basis for comparing the efficacy at daily intakes between 2.6 to 3.0g, but the assessment has not been conducted for plant sterols alone.

As the Commission's answer to Written Question E-012957/2013 does not address the issue raised, I encourage the Commission to consult with the EFSA and to provide a scientifically sound answer.

1. Has the EFSA separately assessed the LDL-cholesterol-lowering effect of plant sterols with daily intakes of 2.6-3.0g, without including data from plant stanol ester studies?

2. Are the required scientific analyses carried out by the EFSA based on all the evidence that allows a conclusion that the efficacy of plant sterols and plant stanol ester is the same with daily intakes of 2.6-3.0g?

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

In line with the answer given to Written Question E-012957/2013 ([1]), the Commission would like to further point out that, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in its response to an enquiry on the substantiation of the similarity in cholesterol lowering effects of plant sterol ester and plant stanol ester in the daily intake range exceeding 2.5 g per day , addressing, *inter alia*, the questions raised in the Written Question, stated that: 'with regards to the meta-analysis by Talati et al. (2010) and the long-term efficacy human study by de Jong et al. (2008b), which both compared directly the efficacy of plant sterols and stanols, EFSA reiterates the considerations of the NDA Panel described in Section 2 of the EFSA Opinion (EFSA-Q-2011-01241 ([2])). Taking into account the evidence provided by these studies, the Panel considered that plant sterols and stanols have a similar efficacy on lowering blood LDL-cholesterol. Section 3 of this Opinion summarised the meta-analysis conducted by Unilever (unpublished, 2011); the Panel considered that plant sterols and stanol esters at a daily intake of 3 g (range 2.6 — 3.4 g) in matrices approved by Regulation (EC) No 376/2010 ([3]) show an average pooled LDL-cholesterol reduction of 11.3% (95% CI: 10.0 — 12.5). In this section the Panel made also reference to the published meta-analysis by Katan et al. (2003), which came to similar results'.

Finally, EFSA concludes in its reply, that it considers that there is no reason to question the robustness of the NDA Panel's approach and conclusions as expressed in the concerned Opinion (EFSA-Q-2011-01241).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2693.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:111:0003:0004:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001302/14
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(10 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Responsabilità in tema di etichettatura dei prodotti tessili — regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011

Premesso che:

— ai sensi dell'articolo 15 del regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011, all'immissione di un prodotto sul mercato il fabbricante garantisce la fornitura dell'etichetta o del contrassegno e l'esattezza delle informazioni ivi contenute; se il fabbricante non è stabilito nell'UE, l'importatore garantisce la fornitura dell'etichetta o del contrassegno e l'esattezza delle informazioni ivi contenute;

— gli operatori commerciali non possono essere nelle condizioni di conoscere, al momento della sottoscrizione dell'ordine e né tantomeno al momento della ricezione della fornitura, se effettivamente la composizione fibrosa degli articoli acquistati dai produttori/fornitori sia rispondente a quanto dichiarato dai produttori/fornitori in etichetta, contrassegno o nei documenti commerciali;

— questa asimmetria informativa non può prevedere alcuna responsabilità da parte dei commercianti che, tra l'altro, rilevano la presenza, in numerosissimi contratti di fornitura, di una clausola secondo la quale «Il cliente (commerciante) rinuncia sin d'ora al diritto di regresso nei confronti del fornitore ai sensi dell'articolo 1519 — quinquies del codice civile italiano».

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

qualora, a seguito di una specifica analisi sulla composizione fibrosa del prodotto condotta da un'azienda specializzata autorizzata, risulti che le indicazioni di composizione fibrosa indicate nell'etichetta del prodotto tessile analizzato non sono corrispondenti all'effettiva composizione, la responsabilità va imputata soltanto al produttore/fornitore?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001303/14
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(10 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Responsabilità in tema di etichettatura dei prodotti tessili — regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011

Premesso che:

— ai sensi degli articoli 4 e 16 del regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011, all'atto della messa a disposizione sul mercato i prodotti tessili devono essere etichettati, contrassegnati o accompagnati da documenti commerciali in conformità dello stesso regolamento e le descrizioni della composizione fibrosa vanno indicate nei cataloghi, nei prospetti, sugli imballaggi, sulle etichette e sui contrassegni;

— ai sensi degli articoli 9 e 16 del regolamento l'etichetta di un prodotto tessile deve indicare la denominazione per esteso delle fibre tessili nella lingua ufficiale dello Stato membro sul cui territorio i prodotti tessili sono messi a disposizione del consumatore e con percentuale in peso di tutte le fibre in ordine decrescente;

— i piccoli operatori commerciali, nel caso di etichette non conformi, si trovano in una posizione di estrema debolezza di mercato, subendo un danno emergente e un lucro cessante e dovendo rispedire la merce al fornitore, senza alcuna possibilità di vendita nel proprio negozio.

Tanto premesso, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. La responsabilità e le relative sanzioni, in caso di immissione in commercio e quindi al consumatore finale di un prodotto con etichetta tessile senza la scritta nella lingua dello Stato membro oppure che presenti solo codici meccanografici, sono da imputare al solo produttore/fornitore o anche al commerciante al dettaglio?

2. Il commerciante al dettaglio italiano va esentato da eventuali responsabilità e sanzioni se produce azioni volte ad informare: da un lato, il produttore/fornitore della mancanza di conformità dell'etichetta (con apposizione di un timbro sul contratto di fornitura con «la merce deve essere etichettata in lingua italiana, ex regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011» e con l'invio di una lettera in cui chiede al produttore/fornitore di sanare il vizio; dall'altro, il consumatore con l'esposizione di un cartello con l'elenco delle denominazioni delle fibre tessili di cui all'articolo 5 regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011 (allegato I), con traduzione multilingue (italiano, inglese, francese e tedesco) delle fibre dei prodotti tessili?

Risposta congiunta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2014)

Rivenditori al dettaglio, grossisti e altri distributori della catena logistica devono conoscere le prescrizioni applicabili, come quelle stabilite dagli articoli 4, 5, 9, 15 e 16 del regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011 e devono essere in grado di identificare i prodotti palesemente non conformi.

Nel caso in cui l'etichetta di un prodotto tessile non sia redatta nella lingua dello Stato membro interessato o rechi solo un codice meccanografico, il distributore che abbia acconsentito a commercializzare tali prodotti non conformi diventa responsabile e si espone alle conseguenti sanzioni, a meno che non abbia direttamente posto rimedio alla non conformità e reso i prodotti tessili conformi a tutte le prescrizioni del regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011 e non solo a quelle dell'articolo 5.

Nel caso in cui la composizione fibrosa di un prodotto tessile non risulti corrispondere a ciò che il fabbricante o l'importatore ha indicato sull'etichetta o sul contrassegno, il distributore deve essere in grado di dimostrare alle autorità nazionali di aver agito con la dovuta diligenza e di avere avuto conferma dal fornitore circa la corretta indicazione della composizione fibrosa del prodotto tessile.

Nell'ipotesi in cui il fabbricante abbia sede al di fuori dell'Unione, si possono intraprendere azioni legali o amministrative nei confronti del distributore per la non conformità di un prodotto. Inoltre, se il distributore commercializza i prodotti a proprio nome o sotto la propria responsabilità incorre nella responsabilità del fabbricante, in particolar modo nel caso in cui abbia esplicitamente rinunciato in un contratto all'esercizio del diritto di regresso nei confronti del fornitore.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001302/14
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Liability relating to the labelling of textile products — Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011

Whereas:

— pursuant to Article 15 of Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011, when placing a textile product on the market, the manufacturer shall ensure the supply of the label or marking and the accuracy of the information contained therein; if the manufacturer is not established in the EU, the importer shall ensure the supply of the label or marking and the accuracy of the information contained therein;

— when placing orders or receiving deliveries, traders simply cannot know whether the fibre composition of the items purchased from the manufacturers/suppliers actually corresponds to what the manufacturers/suppliers have indicated on the label or marking or in the contractual documentation;

— traders are unable to make claims for any damage or losses arising from this information asymmetry; among other things, a clause is inserted to that effect in a great many supply contracts, according to which 'the client (trader) as of now waives the right of recourse against the supplier within the meaning of Article 1519-quinquies of the Italian Civil Code'.

Taking the above into account, can the Commission please answer the following question:

If a specific analysis of the fibre composition of a textile product, carried out by a specialist licensed body, reveals that the fibre composition information given on the label of the analysed product does not tally with the actual composition, does the liability lie solely with the manufacturer/supplier?

Question for written answer E-001303/14
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Liability relating to the labelling of textile products — Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011

Whereas:

— pursuant to Articles 4 and 16 of Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011, when being made available on the market, textile products must be labelled, marked or accompanied with commercial documents in compliance with that regulation, and the textile fibre composition descriptions must be indicated in catalogues and trade literature, on packaging, labels and markings;

— pursuant to Articles 9 and 16 of the above-cited Regulation, the label of a textile product must indicate the textile fibre names in full in the official language of the Member State on the territory of which the textile products are made available to the consumer and the percentage by weight of all constituent fibres in descending order;

— the market position of small-scale retailers is extremely vulnerable when labels do not comply with these provisions, since they sustain damage and losses and are forced to send the products back to the supplier, without there being any possibility of selling them in their own shop.

Taking the above into account, can the Commission please answer the following questions:

1. In the event that a textile product is made available on the market, and hence to the consumer, with a label that either is not written in the language of the relevant Member State or only bears mechanised processing code, who is liable and must face the resulting penalties: the manufacturer/supplier alone, or also the retailer?

2. Should Italian retailers be exempt from any liability and penalties if they firstly inform the manufacturer/supplier that the label is non-compliant (by stamping the supply contract with 'the goods must be labelled in Italian, in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011', and sending a letter asking the manufacturer/supplier to remedy the fault) and secondly inform the consumer of the constituent fibres of the textile products in question by displaying a board listing, in various languages (Italian, English, French and German), the textile fibre names, worded in such a way as to meet the requirements of Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 (Annex I)?

Joint answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

Retailers, wholesalers and other distributors in the supply chain must have knowledge of the applicable requirements, such as the requirements set out in Articles 4, 5, 9, 15 and 16 of Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011, and they must be able to identify products that are clearly not in compliance.

In the event when a label of a textile product is not indicated in the language of the relevant Member State or it only bears a mechanised processing code, the distributor who agreed to market such non-compliant products, becomes responsible and must face the resulting penalties unless he remedied himself the incompliance and rendered the textile products compliant with all requirements of Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011, and not only with its Article 5.

In the event when it appears that a fibre composition of a textile product does not correspond to what the manufacturer or the importer has indicated on the label or marking, the distributor must be able to demonstrate to national authorities that he has acted with due care and has affirmation from his supplier that the fibre composition of a textile product was indicated correctly.

In the case when the manufacturer is established outside the Union, legal or administrative action may take place against the distributor for a non-compliant product. Further, the distributor takes over the manufacturer's responsibilities, if he markets the products under his own name or responsibility, notably in the event when he explicitly resigned in a contract to the right of recourse against the supplier.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001304/14
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(10 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Standardizzazione del sito internet della Commissione — accessibilità e informazione

Premesso che:

— nell'ambito della mia attività parlamentare, sono stata relatrice del regolamento sulla normazione tecnica e ho appreso l'importanza degli standard nei vari settori, a vantaggio sia dei cittadini, sia delle imprese europee;

— attraverso gli standard si può promuovere l'accessibilità, l'interoperabilità, la trasparenza e tanti altri interessi pubblici rilevanti;

— navigando sul sito internet della Commissione europea, in particolare sulla sezione relativa alle Direzioni Generali e Servizi o le pagine relative alle Agenzie, si può subito notare che le pagine web non rispettano alcuno standard e appare molto faticoso accedere alle informazioni, soprattutto a quelle connesse alle sovvenzioni e ai finanziamenti europei;

— i finanziamenti europei connessi ai vari programmi non sono sufficientemente conosciuti, per cui non sono sempre sfruttati per le finalità per le quali sono stabiliti.

Si chiede alla Commissione:

1. non ritiene che standardizzare le pagine web delle varie Direzioni Generali, dei Servizi e delle Agenzie possa agevolare l'accessibilità alle informazioni fornite e, in particolare, la conoscenza dei finanziamenti europei con una ricaduta positiva sul loro utilizzo?

2. non ritiene che pubblicare tali informazioni in inglese e in francese limiti i cittadini, le imprese e le autorità pubbliche che non sono di madrelingua inglese o francese e che ciò possa determinare una discriminazione reale nell'utilizzo dei fondi?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(21 marzo 2014)

1. Per quanto riguarda l'obiettivo di migliorare la prestazione dei propri siti Internet la Commissione sta ad esempio rivedendo la propria presenza sul web. A questo fine si presenteranno in maniera uniforme le informazioni riguardanti direzioni generali e politiche nonché quelle riguardanti i finanziamenti.

2. La Commissione sta facendo del proprio meglio per mettere a disposizione contenuti online in più lingue possibili. Il sito interinstituzionale www.europa.eu così come le pagine di primo livello del sito Internet della Commissione www.ec.europa.eu sono ad esempio disponibili in 24 lingue. Vi sono tuttavia diverse restrizioni, dettate dalla disponibilità delle risorse per la traduzione (umane e finanziarie), dalla convenienza economica e vincoli tecnici che impediscono di tradurre l'integralità del contenuto online in tutte le lingue. La Commissione sta invece procedendo ad analisi approfondite dei bacini d'utenza per decidere quali lingue usare in ciascun sito Internet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001304/14
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Standardisation of the Commission's website — accessibility and information

Since:

— within the scope of my parliamentary activity, I have been rapporteur on the regulation on technical standardisation and I have learnt the importance of standards in various sectors, to the benefit of both citizens and European undertakings;

— standards encourage accessibility, interoperability, transparency and many other relevant public interests;

— navigating through the European Commission's website, in particular the section relating to the Directorates-General and Services, or the pages relating to the Agencies, it is immediately evident that the web pages do not follow any standard and it appears very laborious to access information, particularly that relating to European grants and funding;

— European funding for the various programmes is not sufficiently well known, and accordingly it is not always used for the purposes for which it is provided.

1. Does the Commission consider that standardising the web pages of the various Directorates-General, Services and Agencies could improve the accessibility of the information provided and, in particular, awareness of European funding, with a positive impact on take-up?

2. Does it consider that publishing such information in English and French restricts non-English- or French-speaking citizens, undertakings and public authorities, and that this may lead to real discrimination in the take-up of funds?

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

1. With the aim of improving user experience on its websites, for example the Commission is redesigning its online presence. This will include presenting information on Directorates-General, policy areas and information on funding in a standardised way.

2. The Commission is doing its utmost to provide online content in as many languages as possible. The interinstitutional site 'europa.eu' as well as the Commission website's top level pages 'ec.europa.eu' are, for example, available in 24 languages. There are, however, several constraints including translation resources (human and financial), cost-effectiveness and technical constraints that prevent us from translating all web content into all languages. Instead, the Commission is using in-depth audience research to decide on what languages to use for individual websites.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001311/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(10 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Commercializzazione del vaccino anti-meningite epidemica

È stato recentemente messo in commercio in Italia un nuovo vaccino efficace contro la meningite B. Una casa farmaceutica toscana è riuscita, grazie all'utilizzo di una tecnica innovativa, la *reverse vaccinology*, a mettere a punto un vaccino efficace partendo dal genoma del batterio. I profili di tollerabilità e immunogenicità del nuovo vaccino sono stati valutati in un ampio programma clinico che ha coinvolto oltre 7 000 persone tra cui, in Italia, 11 istituti diversi e circa 1 500 tra neonati, bambini, adolescenti e adulti.

La meningite da meningococco B rappresenta il 60-70 % dei casi totali di meningite epidemica in Italia, prevalenza condivisa nella maggior parte dell'Occidente. In Italia vengono notificati 300 casi l'anno, con un tasso di letalità del 15 % nonostante il trattamento, un dato piuttosto alto che può arrivare anche al 50 % in assenza di terapia antibiotica. Inoltre sono particolarmente esposti al rischio i bambini sotto l'anno di età. Gli altri ceppi A, C, W, Y135 costituiscono il restante 30-40 % dei casi; questi sono molto più diffusi in Asia e Africa, ma sono già coperti dalla corrente vaccinazione, disponibile da decenni.

Particolare attenzione dovrà essere rivolta a evitare le co-somministrazioni del vaccino anti-meningococco B con altri vaccini, visto l'incremento delle febbri di grado moderato/elevato conseguente alla co-somministrazione, ma non riscontrabile dopo la sola vaccinazione contro meningococco B. Bisognerà inoltre associare negli stessi individui, a tempo debito, per evitare sovrapposizione, la vaccinazione contro i ceppi A, C, W, Y135 di meningococco. In questo caso, proteggere la popolazione unicamente contro il ceppo B potrebbe determinare un'espansione nella diffusione dei ceppi ora meno prevalenti, in quanto non contrastati da uno stato di immunizzazione specifica.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione far sapere se intende predisporre uno studio aggiornato sulla valutazione dei rischi e benefici derivanti dall'assunzione di tale farmaco?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2014)

Un vaccino può essere immesso sul mercato dell'UE soltanto dopo che gli è stata rilasciata un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione ([1]) dall'autorità competente di uno Stato membro o dalla Commissione.

Il 14 gennaio 2013 la Commissione europea ha rilasciato un'autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio per un vaccino destinato all'immunizzazione attiva contro la malattia meningococcica causata dalla Neisseria meningitidis gruppo B: il «Bexsero». L'informazione sul prodotto, che è parte dell'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione, indica l'uso approvato del medicinale nonché le sue interazioni con altri vaccini di routine. Da studi effettuati a cura del titolare dell'autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio emerge che il Bexsero può essere somministrato in concomitanza con diversi altri antigeni vaccinici, o monovalenti o quali vaccini combinati, ma la somministrazione concomitante del Bexsero con vaccini del gruppo meningococcico A, C, W-135 e Y non è stata studiata in modo specifico. Il vaccino dovrebbe essere usato conformemente alle raccomandazioni ufficiali stabilite dagli Stati membri in linea con la situazione epidemiologica. Non vi sono controindicazioni per quanto concerne la co-somministrazione con altri vaccini.

La sicurezza di un vaccino è seguita anche dopo l'autorizzazione lungo il suo intero ciclo di vita. Il piano di gestione del rischio prevede ulteriori attività di farmacovigilanza a cura del titolare dell'autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio. Tra queste vi sono studi volti ad affrontare i rischi potenziali e ad ovviare alle informazioni mancanti e comprendono studi osservazionali in tema di sicurezza. I risultati di tali studi sono trasmessi all'Agenzia europea per i medicinali che procede a effettuarne la valutazione. In caso di criticità la Commissione può adottare azioni tra cui rientrano l'aggiornamento dell'informazione sul prodotto o l'invio di una comunicazione agli operatori sanitari.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 726/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 31 marzo 2004, che istituisce procedure comunitarie per l'autorizzazione e la sorveglianza dei medicinali per uso umano e veterinario, e che istituisce l'Agenzia europea per i medicinali, GU L 136 del 30.4.2004; direttiva 2001/83/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 novembre 2001, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano, GU L 311 del 28.11.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001311/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Marketing of vaccine against epidemic meningitis

A new vaccine which is effective against meningitis B has recently become available in Italy. By means of the use of an innovative technique, reverse vaccinology, a Tuscan drug manufacturer has been able to develop an effective vaccine based on the genome of the bacterium. The tolerability and immunogenicity profiles of the new vaccine have been assessed in an extensive clinical programme involving more than 7 000 people, including, in Italy, 11 different institutions and around 1 500 newborn babies, children, teenagers and adults.

Meningitis B represents 60-70% of the total number of epidemic meningitis cases in Italy, a prevalence shared in most Western countries. In Italy 300 cases are reported each year, with a mortality rate of 15% despite treatment, a rather high figure which may even reach 50% in the absence of antibiotic treatment. Also, children under 1 year of age are at particularly high risk. The other strains, A, C, W and Y135, make up the remaining 30-40% of cases; these are much more widespread in Asia and Africa, but are already covered by the current vaccine, which has been available for decades.

Particular attention must be paid to avoiding the combined supply of meningococcus B vaccine with other vaccines, in view of the increase in moderate/high fever associated with combined supply, not present after vaccination against meningococcus B alone. In order to avoid overlap, it will also be necessary to combine vaccination against meningococcus strains A, C, W and Y135 in the same individuals, in due time. In this case, protecting the population solely against the B strain could lead to a growth in the spread of the strains which are currently less prevalent, if not countered by a specific immunisation status.

In view of the above, can the Commission say whether it intends to make available an updated study on the assessment of the risks and benefits deriving from the use of this drug?

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

A vaccine can be placed on the EU market only after a marketing authorisation has been granted ([1]) either by the competent authority of a Member State or by the Commission.

On 14 January 2013, the European Commission granted a marketing authorisation on one vaccine for active immunisation against meningococcal disease caused by Neisseria meningitidis group B: 'Bexsero'. Product information, which is part of the marketing authorisation, states the approved use of the medicine, including its interactions with other routine vaccines. Studies, conducted by the Marketing Authorisation Holder, show that Bexsero can be given concomitantly with several other vaccine antigens, either as monovalent or as combination vaccines, but concomitant administration of Bexsero with meningococcal group A, C, W-135 and Y vaccines has not been specifically studied. The vaccine should be used according to the official recommendations laid down by the Member States in line with the epidemiological situation. There is no contra-indication regarding co-administration with other vaccines.

The safety of a vaccine is also monitored post authorisation during its whole life-cycle. The Risk Management Plan foresees additional pharmacovigilance activities by the Marketing Authorisation Holder. These consist of studies to address potential risks and missing information and include observational studies on safety. Results of these studies are provided to the European Medicines Agency and will be assessed. In case of concern, the Commission can take action, which could include an update of product information or communication to healthcare professionals.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004; Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-001320/14
upućeno Komisiji
Nikola Vuljanić (GUE/NGL)
(10. veljače 2014.)

Predmet: Mjere za rješavanje krize u Bosni i Hercegovini

Bosna i Hercegovina je godinama pod međunarodnom upravom, zapravo protektoratom, ali ta uprava nije osigurala ekonomski i politički napredak. Ekonomska i socijalna kriza u Bosni i Hercegovini prijeti stabilnosti cijele jugoistočne Europe. Umjesto da joj stanje međunarodnog nadzora bude prednost, jer su međunarodni zaštitnici obvezni štititi interese Bosne i Hercegovine, protektorat je postao njezin hendikep jer se bavi pretežito unutarnjopolitičkim pitanjima i lošim posljedicama Daytona. EU je prisutna u Bosni i Hercegovini u okviru zajedničke vanjske i sigurnosne politike, te europske sigurnosne i obrambene politike. EU je s BiH potpisala Sporazum o stabilizaciji i pridruživanju (SSP) 2008. godine i ima obaveze u odnosu na Bosnu i Hercegovinu.

Nemiri i nasilje koji se upravo događaju u BiH izravna su posljedica nesposobnosti i korumpiranosti političkih elita zemlje, ali i nedovoljne političke volje EU-a da se zaista pomogne zemlji koja je najviše propatila u nedavnim ratovima na Balkanu.

Planira li Europska komisija izvanredne mjere financijske pomoći za rješavanje dugoročne krize Bosne i Hercegovine?

Hoće li Europska komisija pokrenuti održavanje međunarodne konferencije koja bi bila usredotočena na pronalaženje rješenja za funkcioniranje države Bosne i Hercegovine s konkretnim rokovima, mehanizmima i konkretnim financijskim sredstvima?

Odgovor g. Fülea u ime Komisije
(21. ožujka 2014.)

Društveno-gospodarska kriza u Bosni i Hercegovini ima mnogo uzroka. Radi poboljšanja stanja Komisija redovito daje preporuke, među ostalim, u izvješću o napretku, dokumentu strategije proširenja, pri dvostranim kontaktima i na dvostranim sastancima. Komisija podupire reformske procese Bosne i Hercegovine preko IPA fonda. Od 2007. do 2013. Bosni i Hercegovini je u okviru IPA-e dodijeljeno više od 605 milijuna EUR. Zemlja je primila dodatnih 100 milijuna EUR makrofinancijske pomoći. Trenutačno ne postoji plan za dodjelu iznimnih mjera financijske pomoći povrh već dosad dodijeljenih iznosa.

Međutim, Komisija je osnovala zajedničku radnu skupinu EU-BiH kako bi se ubrzala provedba projekata IPA-e u zemlji. U ovom trenutku, u Bosni i Hercegovini provode se projekti u vrijednosti od 210 milijuna EUR, a dodatni projekti vrijedni 150 milijuna EUR još čekaju potpisivanje ugovorâ. Radna skupina održala je svoj prvi sastanak u Sarajevu 13. ožujka.

Komisija surađuje sa zemljom na temelju politika koje je definiralo Europsko vijeće. Komisija redovito analizira svoje politike kako bi ih prilagodila i pomogla zemlji da odgovori na gospodarske izazove. Ipak, gospodarska reforma odgovornost je političara BiH-a.

Komisija će pomoći Bosni i Hercegovini pri izradi nacionalnog programa gospodarske reforme. Dodatno, pokrenut će se program za konkurentnost i rast s ciljem poticanja sektorskih reformi. Unutarnja ustavna reforma u svrhu ostvarivanja funkcionalne i učinkovite države, koja zemlji omogućava izradu politika u korist njezinih građana, odgovornost je institucija jedne zemlje. Komisija stoji na raspolaganju sa svojim stručnim znanjem u tom pogledu.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001320/14
to the Commission
Nikola Vuljanić (GUE/NGL)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Measures to resolve the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina has for years been under international administration, and to all intents and purposes is a protectorate, but this arrangement has failed to bring about economic and political progress. The economic and social crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina is threatening the stability of South-East Europe as a whole. The fact of being under international supervision is not proving to be an advantage for Bosnia and Herzegovina, to the extent that its international patrons have a duty to safeguard its interests. On the contrary, protectorate status has become a handicap because the country is preoccupied chiefly with domestic policy matters and the adverse consequences of Dayton. The EU's involvement in Bosnia and Herzegovina stems from the common foreign and security policy and the European security and defence policy. The EU signed a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2008 and has obligations to the country.

The insecurity and violence occurring now in Bosnia and Herzegovina are a direct consequence of the incompetence and corruption of the national political elite and of the fact that the EU lacks the necessary political will to genuinely help the principal victim of the recent Balkan wars.

Is the Commission planning to adopt exceptional financial aid measures to resolve the protracted crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Will it press for an international conference aimed primarily at finding solutions whereby Bosnia and Herzegovina could become a functioning state on the basis of time-frames, procedures, and financial resources laid down specifically for that purpose?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2014)

The socioeconomic crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina has many causes. Recommendations to improve the situation are given on a regular basis by the Commission including in the progress report, the Enlargement Strategy Paper and in bilateral contacts and meetings. The Commission supports the reform processes of Bosnia and Herzegovina through IPA. From 2007 to 2013 IPA allocated more than EUR 605 million to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The country also received a further EUR 100 million of Macro-Financial Assistance. There is no immediate plan to allocate exceptional financial aid measures over and above already allocated amounts.

The Commission has, however, established a joint EU-BiH working group in order to accelerate the implementation of IPA projects in the country. Presently, projects worth EUR 210 million are being implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina and additional projects worth EUR 150 million EUR still await signature of contracts. The working group held its first meeting on 13 March in Sarajevo.

The Commission is working with the country on the basis of policies defined by the European Council. The Commission is regularly reviewing its policies to adapt them so as to help the country meet its economic challenges. However, economic reform is the responsibility of the BiH politicians.

The Commission will help Bosnia and Herzegovina to prepare a National Economic Reform Programme. In addition, a Competitiveness and Growth Programme shall be launched to push forward sectoral reforms. Internal constitutional reform in order to make a state functional and efficient so as to enable the country to deliver beneficial policies for its citizens is the responsibility of the institutions of a country. The Commission remains available with technical expertise in this regard.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001321/14
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(10 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Mayor mortalidad de las personas con discapacidad intelectual

Un reciente estudio realizado por los investigadores de la Universidad de Bristol (Reino Unido) revela que la esperanza de vida de las personas con discapacidad intelectual es entre 10 y 20 años menor que la de la población general, de tal modo que la edad media de deceso en las personas que sufren discapacidad mental es de 65 y 63 años, en comparación con la media general de 78 y 83 en los hombres y mujeres respectivamente.

El mismo estudio refleja que esta mayor mortalidad podría reducirse sensiblemente si se contara con un apoyo asistencial efectivo, destacando el dato de que, mientras que en la población general, un 13 % de los fallecimientos se podría haber evitado con una mejor atención sanitaria, en el caso de las personas con discapacidad esta cifra aumenta a un 37 %, casi triplicándose la cifra.

Esta necesidad de asistencia se ve reflejada en la necesidad de depender de terceros para comer o desplazarse, vivir en hogares peor acondicionados así como demoras en el diagnóstico y tratamiento de problemas de salud.

¿Está la Comisión de acuerdo con los datos reflejados en el estudio?

En opinión de la Comisión, ¿qué medidas deberían llevarse a cabo para evitar la problemática expuesta?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Los datos facilitados por Su Señoría se presentan en el informe *Confidential Inquiry into premature deaths of people with learning disabilities (Cipold)* (Investigación confidencial sobre la muerte prematura de las personas con dificultades de aprendizaje) ([1]), publicado por el Centro de Investigación Norah Fry de la Universidad de Bristol, en marzo de 2013. De dicho informe se desprende que la calidad y la eficacia de la asistencia sanitaria y social a las personas con dificultades de aprendizaje han resultado ser deficientes en algunos aspectos.

Los servicios de la Comisión no evalúan la validez científica de los resultados de los estudios; por lo tanto, la Comisión no tiene ninguna base sólida para aceptar o rechazar los datos presentados en este estudio.

Por lo que respecta a futuras medidas para mejorar la asistencia sanitaria en este ámbito, según el Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea los Estados miembros son responsables de la gestión de los servicios de salud y de atención médica. Por consiguiente, es responsabilidad de las autoridades sanitarias de los Estados miembros abordar esta cuestión y definir las medidas adecuadas.

([1]) Véase, por ejemplo, http://www.bris.ac.uk/cipold/finalreportexecsum.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001321/14
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Higher mortality among people with learning difficulties

A recent study carried out by researchers at the University of Bristol (United Kingdom) showed that life expectancy for people with learning difficulties is between 10 and 20 years lower than for the general population. The median age of death for people with learning disabilities is 65 years for men and 63 years for women, by comparison with the general population average of 78 years for men and 83 years for women.

The study points out that this higher mortality could be significantly reduced with effective health and social care and highlights the fact that, while 13% of deaths among the general population could have been avoided with better-quality healthcare, this figure rises to 37% in the case of people with learning difficulties, a rate almost three times higher.

The need for better care is demonstrated by factors such as dependence on others for mobility and feeding, inadequate accommodation and delays in the diagnosis and treatment of health problems.

Does the Commission agree with the figures provided in the above study?

What steps does the Commission think should be taken to prevent these problems?

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

The figures mentioned by the Honourable Member of the Parliament are presented in the report 'Confidential Inquiry into premature deaths of people with learning disabilities (CIPOLD)' ([1]), published by Norah Fry Research Centre at the University of Bristol, in March 2013. The report concluded that 'The quality and effectiveness of health and social care given to people with learning disabilities has been shown to be deficient in a number of ways.'

The Commission services do not assess the scientific validity of results of studies; therefore the Commission has no sound basis either to agree or to disagree with the figures provided in this study.

With regard to future action to improve healthcare in this context, according to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Member States are responsible for the management of health services and medical care. Therefore addressing this issue and defining appropriate measures falls under the responsibility of Member States' health authorities.

([1]) See among other http://www.bris.ac.uk/cipold/finalreportexecsum.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001329/14
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 februarie 2014)

Subiect: Raportul din 2014 privind cancerul în lume

Cancerul va continua să se extindă la nivel mondial, cu aproape 22 de milioane de noi cazuri pe an aşteptate la orizontul anului 2030, faţă de 14 milioane în 2012, potrivit Raportului din 2014 privind cancerul în lume, realizat de către Organizaţia Mondială a Sănătăţii cu ajutorul a 250 de experţi din 40 de ţări. Specialiştii susţin că jumătate dintre aceste cazuri pot fi prevenite, ţinând cont de faptul că sunt provocate de un stil haotic de viaţă. În 2010, costul economic anual al cancerului a fost evaluat la 1 160 de miliarde de dolari.

Conform raportului, cele mai întâlnite cauze ale cancerului sunt: fumatul, infecţiile, alcoolul, obezitatea şi lipsa de activitate fizică, radiaţiile, poluarea, amânarea deciziei de a face copii şi lipsa alăptării.

Având în vedere aspectele menţionate mai sus, ce măsuri intenţionează să ia Comisia pentru a sensibiliza cetăţenii din statele membre ale Uniunii Europene şi pentru a-i informa mai bine cu privire la modalităţile de prevenire a cancerului?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(26 martie 2014)

Comisia promovează o serie de iniţiative pentru a sensibiliza populaţia şi pentru a încuraja alegerea unor stiluri de viaţă sănătoase, inclusiv prin informaţii şi campanii de sensibilizare cu privire la principalii factori de risc, cum ar fi fumatul, abuzul de alcool, alimentaţia nesănătoasă şi lipsa activităţii fizice.

În special în domeniul cancerului, Codul european împotriva cancerului ([1]) este un important instrument de prevenire. Acesta cuprinde 11 de recomandări bazate pe probe şi adresate cetăţenilor cu privire la modul în care aceştia pot reduce riscul de anumite tipuri de cancer prin adoptarea unui stil de viaţă mai sănătos, încurajându-i să participe la programe de prevenire inclusiv de screening. Codul este în curs de actualizare de către Agenţia Internaţională de Cercetare în domeniul Cancerului, cu sprijin din partea programului UE în domeniul sănătăţii.

Strategia pentru Europa privind problemele de sănătate legate de alimentaţie, excesul de greutate şi obezitate din 2007 ([2]) promovează o alimentaţie echilibrată şi un stil de viaţă activ pentru toţi cetăţenii. Strategia încurajează parteneriatele orientate pe acţiune care implică cele 28 de state membre ale UE (Grupul la nivel înalt în materie de alimentaţie şi activitate fizică ([3])) şi societatea civilă (Platforma UE privind alimentaţia, activitatea fizică şi sănătatea ([4])).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/cancer/index_en.htm#fragment2
([2]) COM(2007) 279.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_ro.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_ro.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001329/14
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: 2014 Report on cancer in the world

According to the 2014 report on cancer in the world drawn up by the World Health Organisation with the help of 250 experts from 40 countries, cancer will continue to spread throughout the world, increasing to 22 million new cases annually by 2030, compared with 14 million in 2012. According to experts, half of these cases are preventable, being caused by the chaotic pace of modern life. In 2010, the annual economic cost of cancer was estimated at USD 1 160 billion.

According to the report, the commonest causes of cancer are: smoking, infections, alcohol, obesity, lack of exercise, radiation, pollution, childbirth relatively late in life and failure to breastfeed.

In view of this, how does the Commission intend to raise public awareness in the Member States and provide more comprehensive information regarding cancer prevention?

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

The Commission promotes a number of initiatives to raise awareness and encourage healthy lifestyle choices, including information and awareness-raising on major risk factors, such as smoking, alcohol abuse, unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity.

Specifically in the area of cancer, the European Code against Cancer ([1]) is a key prevention tool. It comprises 11 evidence-based recommendations to citizens on how to reduce the risk for certain cancers by adopting healthier lifestyles and encouraging people to take part in prevention programmes including screening. The Code is currently being updated by the International Agency for Research on Cancer with support from the EU Health Programme.

The 2007 Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([2]) promotes a balanced diet and active lifestyles for all. The strategy encourages action-oriented partnerships involving the 28 EU Member States (High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([3])) and civil society (EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([4])).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/cancer/index_en.htm#fragment2
([2]) COM(2007) 279.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001331/14
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 februarie 2014)

Subiect: Drepturile studenților români din Marea Britanie

Recent, autoritățile britanice au luat decizia de suspendare a împrumuturilor pentru întreținere (*maintenance loans*), în scopul verificării legitimității acestor împrumuturi. Măsura se aplică studenților români și bulgari care studiază în toate formele de învățământ superior din Marea Britanie, atât colegii private, cât și universități de stat, precum și studenților proveniți din restul statelor membre ale Uniunii Europene care studiază doar la colegii private.

Conform publicației The Guardian, împrumuturile de întreținere a peste 7 500 de studenți români și bulgari din Marea Britaniei au fost suspendate, fără avertisment, deși aceste credite fuseseră aprobate la începutul anului universitar 2013-2014.

În acest context, Comisia este rugată să aducă clarificări în privința conformității acestei măsuri cu acquis-ul comunitar.

Răspuns dat de dna Vassiliou în numele Comisiei
(24 martie 2014)

Comisia este pe deplin conștientă de situația descrisă de distinsul membru și a monitorizat îndeaproape această situație de la adoptarea măsurilor de suspendare în cauză.

Comisia a fost inițial de părere că măsura de suspendare în cauză nu contestă substanța drepturilor cetățenilor, că este vorba despre o măsură temporară și administrativă considerată necesară pentru a aborda o preocupare imediată, având în vedere observarea unei creșteri puternice a numărului de cereri pentru împrumuturile de întreținere, cu scopul de a asigura o bună gestionare a cheltuielilor publice și de a evita posibilele fraude. În plus, faptul că autoritățile din Regatul Unit au solicitat tuturor studenților vizați să furnizeze o dovadă a dreptului lor până la începutul lunii ianuarie sugera că situația ar putea fi tratată în timp util.

Prin urmare, Comisia a concluzionat că măsura de suspendare în cauză poate fi considerată proporțională, cu condiția ca aceasta să fie abrogată rapid.

Cu toate acestea, Comisia a primit, între timp, mai multe plângeri care exprimă îndoieli cu privire la tratarea în timp util a acestei situații de către autoritățile din Regatul Unit. Prin urmare, Comisia a decis să solicite autorităților din Regatul Unit să îi furnizeze informații și observații suplimentare cu privire la această situație, înainte de a lansa, dacă este necesar, o procedură oficială de investigare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001331/14
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Rights of Romanian students in the UK

The British authorities recently decided to suspend student maintenance loans while checks were carried out on their legitimacy. The measure affects Romanian and Bulgarian students studying in all types of higher education in the UK, whether at private colleges or public universities, as well as students from the remaining EU Member States studying at private colleges (but not at public universities).

The Guardian newspaper has reported that around 7 500 Romanian and Bulgarian students in the UK found that their maintenance loans had been suspended without warning, even though these loans had been approved at the start of the 2013-2014 academic year.

Can the Commission clarify whether this measure is compatible with the *acquis communautaire*?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

The Commission is fully aware of the situation described by the Honourable Member and has been closely monitoring it since the adoption of the suspension measures in question.

The Commission has taken the initial view that the suspension measure does not challenge the substance of the citizens' rights, that it is a temporary and administrative measure deemed necessary to address an immediate concern in the light of an observed sharp increase in applications for the maintenance loan in order to ensure sound management of public expenditure and to prevent potential fraud. Furthermore, the fact that the UK authorities requested all students concerned to provide proof of their entitlement by early January suggested that the situation could be dealt with in a timely manner.

The Commission therefore concluded that the suspension measure may be regarded as proportionate, provided that it is lifted swiftly.

However, the Commission has in the meantime received several complaints which cast a doubt on whether the UK authorities have indeed dealt with this situation in a timely manner. It has therefore decided to request the UK authorities to provide it with further information and observations on this situation prior to launching, if required, a formal investigation.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001333/14
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 februarie 2014)

Subiect: Dereglementarea pieței alimentează epidemia de obezitate din lume

Un studiu publicat recent în Buletinul Organizației Mondiale a Sănătății, sugerează că, prin luarea unor măsuri mai drastice, guvernele ar putea începe să prevină ca oamenii să ajungă supraponderali sau obezi, condiții ce au consecințe grave pe termen lung, precum diabetul, bolile cardiovasculare sau cancerul.

Măsurile sugerate de Organizația Mondială a Sănătății includ stimulente economice pentru fermieri, astfel încât aceștia să vândă alimente sănătoase și proaspete, taxe crescute pentru producătorii care vând alimente ultraprocesate și băuturi carbogazoase dulci, reducerea subvențiilor pentru producătorii care folosesc cantități mari de îngrășăminte, pesticide, substanțe chimice și antibiotice, precum și reglementări mai stricte în domeniul publicității pentru produse de tip fast-food, mai ales cele destinate copiilor.

În acest context:

1. Care este poziția Comisiei cu privire la recomandările sugerate de către experții Organizației Mondiale a Sănătății?

2. Ce rol poate juca Comisia vizavi de statele membre pentru a limita impactul asupra sănătății al consumului de alimente ultraprocesate și de băuturi carbogazoase dulci?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(26 martie 2014)

Comisia colaborează strâns cu OMS în contextul implementării Strategiei pentru Europa privind problemele de sănătate legate de alimentație, excesul de greutate și obezitate ([1]), în special pentru a strânge date solide pe baza unor inițiative precum Inițiativa privind supravegherea obezității în rândul copiilor ([2]).

De asemenea OMS contribuie la colectarea de informații cu privire la progresele înregistrate în implementarea acestor politici în statele membre ale UE prin baza de date privind nutriția, obezitatea și activitatea fizică. ([3])

Grupul la nivel înalt în materie de alimentație și activitate fizică ([4]) a convenit în februarie 2011 un cadru comun la nivelul UE privind reducerea nutrienților, care a fost pus în aplicare în statele membre prin intermediul mai multor inițiative de reformulare a produselor alimentare. Reformularea produselor alimentare este, de asemenea, o prioritate de bază pentru Platforma UE privind alimentația, activitatea fizică și sănătatea ([5]) și acest lucru a fost deja transformat în angajamente concrete cum ar fi reducerea nivelurilor de sare din produsele pe bază de orez și sos.

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) Inițiativa privind supravegherea obezității în rândul copiilor http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/nutrition/activities/monitoring-and-surveillance/who-european-childhood-obesity-surveillance-initiative-cosi
([3]) Baza de date europeană privind nutriția, obezitatea și activitatea fizică (împreună cu OMS) http://data.euro.who.int/nopa/
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_ro.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_ro.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001333/14
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: World obesity epidemic fuelled by market deregulation

A study published in the bulletin of the World Health Organisation recommends stepping up government action as an initial means of preventing problems caused by excess weight and obesity with their potentially serious long-term consequences such as diabetes, heart diseases and cancer.

Suggested policies include economic incentives for farmers to sell healthy fresh foods, extra taxes on industries selling ultra-processed foods and sweet fizzy drinks, reduced subsidies for producers and companies that use large amounts of fertiliser, pesticides, chemicals and antibiotics and tighter regulation of fast food advertising, especially where targeted at children.

In view of this:

1. What view does the Commission take of the above recommendations by WHO experts?

2. What assistance is the Commission providing for Member States with a view to limiting the impact on consumer health of ultra-processed foods and sweet fizzy drinks?

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

The Commission is working closely with WHO in the context of the implementation of the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]), in particular to build strong evidence with initiatives such as the Child Obesity Surveillance Initiative ([2]).

WHO also helps gathering information on progress in policy implementation in the EU Member States through the Nutrition, Obesity and Physical Activity database ([3]).

The High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([4]) agreed in February 2011 a common EU framework on the reduction of nutrients that has been implemented through several food reformulation initiatives in the Member States. Food reformulation is also a core priority for the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([5]) and this has already been transformed into concrete commitments such as reduction of salt levels in rice and sauce products.

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/nutrition/activities/monitoring-and-surveillance/who-european-childhood-obesity-surveillance-initiative-cosi.
([3]) European Database on Nutrition, Obesity and Physical Activity (jointly with WHO) http://data.euro.who.int/nopa/
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001350/14
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(10 februarie 2014)

Subiect: Alzheimerul și pesticidele

Un studiu publicat în JAMA Neurology a arătat faptul că pacienții cu Alzheimer aveau un nivel de trei ori mai ridicat al DDT-ului decât cei care nu erau afectați de această boală.

Cercetătorii cred că această substanță chimică poate contribui la dezvoltarea plăcilor de amiloid care contribuie la distrugerea neuronilor

1. În acest sens, poate spune Comisia dacă DDT-ul intră în componența pesticidelor folosite în UE?

2. Există state ale UE în care DDT-ul este încă folosit?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(19 martie 2014)

Nu există pesticide [adică produse de protecție a plantelor, astfel cum sunt definite în Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1107/2009, sau biocide, astfel cum sunt definite în Regulamentul (UE) nr. 528/2012] autorizate în UE care pot conține substanța activă DDT [1,1,1-triclor-2,2-bis-(4-clorofenil)etan].

De asemenea, utilizarea de pesticide care conțin DDT este interzisă în UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001350/14
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Alzheimer's disease and pesticides

According to research findings published in the JAMA Neurology journal, DDT levels detected in blood drawn from Alzheimer's sufferers are three times as high as in the case of those unaffected by the disease.

Scientists believe that this chemical may contribute to the development of amyloid plaques, which are harmful to neurons.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say whether pesticides used in the EU contain DDT?

2. Is DDT still used in any of the EU Member States?

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

There are no pesticides (i.e. plant protection products as defined in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 or biocides as defined in Regulation (EU) No 528/2012) authorised in the EU which may contain the active substance DDT (1,1,1-Trichlor-2,2-bis-(4-chlorophenyl)ethan).

Also the use of any pesticide containing DDT is prohibited in the EU.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001471/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(12 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Η καλή διαβίωση των ζώων στους ζωολογικούς κήπους της ΕΕ

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα του Τύπου που συνοδεύονται από σχετική βιντεοσκόπηση, στον ζωολογικό κήπο της Κοπεγχάγης θανατώθηκε το πρωί της Κυριακής, 9 Φεβρουαρίου 2014, μία υγιής καμηλοπάρδαλη, με αναφορά στις υποχρεώσεις του ζωολογικού κήπου έναντι της κοινοτικής νομοθεσίας. Επιπλέον, η θανάτωση της καμηλοπάρδαλης έγινε με πυροβολισμό, με σκοπό τη χρησιμοποίηση του κρέατός της ως τροφής για τα λιοντάρια του ζωολογικού κήπου.

Η Οδηγία 1999/22/ΕΚ του Συμβουλίου παραθέτει κανόνες για τους ζωολογικούς κήπους, οι οποίοι αφορούν μεταξύ άλλων τη διατήρηση των ειδών. Ο εν λόγω ζωολογικός κήπος έκρινε πως η κοινοτική νομοθεσία αποδίδει απόλυτη προτεραιότητα στην αποφυγή της ενδογαμίας έναντι της ευζωίας των ζώων. Έτσι, παρότι ζωολογικοί κήποι άλλων κρατών μελών προσφέρθηκαν να φιλοξενήσουν την καμηλοπάρδαλη, κρίθηκε πως, παρόλα αυτά, έπρεπε να θανατωθεί.

Δεδομένου ότι στην πρόσφατη Στρατηγική της ΕΕ για τη καλή διαβίωση των ζώων, η Επιτροπή ισχυρίζεται πως η Οδηγία 1999/22/ΕΚ «*επικεντρώνεται στη διατήρηση των ειδών, λαμβάνοντας όμως υπόψη τη καλή διαβίωση των ζώων*»,

1. Κρίνει ότι η πράξη των υπεύθυνων του ζωολογικού κήπου της Κοπεγχάγης συνάδει με τις αρχές της Οδηγίας 1999/22/ΕΚ; Αν ναι, τότε όντως πιστεύει πως η Οδηγία επαρκεί για τη διασφάλιση της καλής διαβίωσης των ζώων και τις προτεραιότητες που εκφράζονται στη Στρατηγική;

2. Έχει στοιχεία για την κλίμακα του φαινομένου της θανάτωσης «πλεονασματικών» ζώων στους ζωολογικούς κήπους της ΕΕ;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Μαρτίου 2014)

Η οδηγία για τους ζωολογικούς κήπους ([1]) (οδηγία 1999/22/ΕΚ) εγκρίθηκε με στόχο την προώθηση της προστασίας και διατήρησης των άγριων ζώων μέσω της ενίσχυσης του ρόλου των ζωολογικών κήπων ως προς τη διατήρηση της βιοποικιλότητας και προβλέπει μια σειρά μέτρων για την επίτευξη αυτού του στόχου. Η οδηγία ορίζει μια σειρά από απαιτήσεις, όπως η συμμετοχή σε έρευνα εφόσον αποβαίνει σε όφελος της διατήρησης του είδους, η ενημέρωση του κοινού και η διατήρηση υψηλού επιπέδου ζωοτεχνίας. Τα κράτη μέλη υποχρεούνται επίσης να θεσπίσουν συστήματα χορήγησης αδειών και επιθεώρησης για να διασφαλίσουν ότι οι ζωολογικοί κήποι ανταποκρίνονται σε αυτές τις απαιτήσεις. Μολονότι η εκτροφή υπό συνθήκες αιχμαλωσίας συγκαταλέγεται μεταξύ των επιτρεπόμενων μέτρων διατήρησης βάσει της οδηγίας, δεν υπάρχουν συγκεκριμένες διατάξεις σχετικά με τις μεθόδους εκτροφής και ουδόλως τα κράτη μέλη υποχρεούνται να θανατώνουν τα ζώα βάσει της οδηγίας. Εναπόκειται στα κράτη μέλη να διασφαλίσουν ότι οι μέθοδοι εκτροφής που επιλέγονται είναι σύμφωνες με τη διατήρηση των ειδών.

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει στοιχεία σχετικά με τον αριθμό των ζώων που θανατώνονται στους ζωολογικούς κήπους σε όλη την ΕΕ, καθώς η οδηγία δεν απαιτεί την παροχή των εν λόγω πληροφοριών.

([1]) ΕΕ L 94 της 9.4.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001351/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Killing of Marius the giraffe

On Sunday 2 February 2014, a healthy 18-month-old giraffe was killed at Copenhagen Zoo.

The zoo has claimed that this was done because the animal was genetically too close to other giraffes in the zoo and that, as a result, EC laws prevented them from allowing him to breed.

Could the Commission confirm the existence of such legislation?

Copenhagen Zoo had received offers from two other zoos to rehouse the giraffe. There was also the option to castrate him or to provide contraceptive drugs to prevent him from breeding.

The natural lifespan of a giraffe is in the region of 25 years. Could the Commission explain why, despite the offers to rehouse him and with two humane and safe options available to Copenhagen Zoo, EU legislation has led to the unnecessary slaughter of a young and healthy animal of an endangered species?

Question for written answer E-001471/14
to the Commission
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Animal welfare in zoological gardens in the European Union

According to press reports accompanied by a relevant video recording, a healthy giraffe was put down on the morning of Sunday, 9 February 2014 in Copenhagen Zoo, which invoked its obligations under Community legislation. Furthermore, the giraffe was put down by shooting in order to use its meat to feed the lions kept in the zoo.

Council Directive 1999/22/EC sets out the rules applicable to zoological gardens that refer to, *inter alia*, conservation of species. The zoological garden in question considered that Community legislation absolutely prioritises prevention of inbreeding over the comfort of the animals. Thus, despite the fact that zoological gardens in other Member States volunteered to house the giraffe, the decision was taken to put the animal down.

In view of the fact that, in the EU Strategy for Protection and Welfare of Animals adopted recently, the Commission maintains that Council Directive 1999/22/EC 'focuses on species conservation but with consideration for animal welfare', will the Commission say:

1. Does it consider that the action taken by the managers of Copenhagen Zoo is in keeping with the principles of Council Directive 1999/22/EC? If so, then does it truly believe that the directive is able to safeguard the animal welfare and the priorities outlined in the strategy?

2. Does it have data on the extent to which 'redundant' animals kept in zoological gardens in the EU are being put down?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

The Zoos Directive ([1]) (Directive 1999/22/EC) was adopted with the objective to promote wild animal species protection and conservation by strengthening the role of zoos in the conservation of biodiversity and it sets out a series of measures to achieve this. The directive lists a number of requirements, such as participation in research from which conservation benefits accrue to the species, public information and the maintenance of a high standard of animal husbandry. Member States are also required to put in place licensing and inspection systems to ensure that zoos meet these requirements. Although captive breeding is listed among the conservation measures allowed under the directive, there are no specific provisions regarding breeding methods, and in no way are Member States required under the directive to put down animals. It falls to Member States to ensure that the breeding methods chosen are consistent with the conservation of the species.

The Commission does not have data on the number of animals put down in the EU zoos as the directive does not require that such information is to be provided.

([1]) OJ L 94, 9.4.1999.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001357/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(10 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Bambini soldato nella Repubblica Centrafricana

L'UNICEF ha recentemente fatto sapere che il numero dei bambini soldato nella Repubblica Centrafricana (RCA) potrebbe essere molto elevato (circa 6 000). L'Unione europea è impegnata attivamente sul piano internazionale per proteggere e preservare i bambini dalle devastazioni della guerra e deve ora dirigere il suo impegno verso la RCA.

A seguito di un rapporto dell'ufficio che segue e combatte la tratta degli esseri umani, nel 2012 il dipartimento di Stato degli Stati Uniti d'America ha situato, per il secondo anno consecutivo, la Repubblica Centrafricana al terzo livello.

Il terzo livello rappresenta la posizione più bassa della classifica del dipartimento e la RCA non fa nulla per cercare di migliorarla. La classifica in questione si basa sugli sforzi che i paesi compiono per risolvere il problema dello sfruttamento dei bambini nell'ambito lavorativo, sessuale e nei conflitti armati.

A dicembre del 2013 Christian Mukosa (esperto di Amnesty International per l'Africa Centrale) ha dichiarato, sulla base delle informazioni raccolte, che crimini di guerra e crimini contro l'umanità quali uccisioni, l'uso dello stupro come arma di guerra e altre atrocità, sono stati commessi da tutte le parti implicate nel conflitto.

Il conflitto, che ha vissuto fasi alterne dal 2004, rende impossibile per i più giovani l'accesso ai servizi educativi, infrastrutturali e sociali. Non è difficile prevedere che le conseguenze saranno nefaste per le future generazioni.

Si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante:

1. se, da un lato, è lodevole che la Commissione stia inviando truppe nella RCA, in particolare nella zona più conflittuale di Bangui, dall'altro si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante dell'Unione per gli affari esteri quali piani sono stati predisposti per recuperare i bambini soldato e ricongiungerli alle loro famiglie, quando saranno ritrovati dalle truppe dell'Unione?

2. Secondo l'UNICEF, i bambini sono più suscettibili di diventare soldati quando sono orfani ma, soprattutto, se hanno un accesso limitato ai servizi di base, quali istruzione e cultura. Esiste un piano di azione europeo o internazionale volto a prevenire che i bambini in situazioni di rischio diventino soldati? Esiste un piano di riabilitazione per i bambini soldato?

3. È l'Alto Rappresentante in possesso di maggiori informazioni sui bambini nei conflitti armati?

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

Il mandato di EUFOR consiste principalmente nel garantire urgentemente la sicurezza nella capitale, nel proteggere i civili e nel creare condizioni che permettano di fornire aiuti umanitari. Tutelare i diritti dei minori e soddisfare le loro necessità è un obiettivo di fondamentale importanza, che richiede la stabilizzazione della situazione in loco.

La promozione e il rispetto dei diritti dei minori sono aspetti prioritari della politica UE in materia di diritti umani, della politica estera e di sicurezza comune e delle politiche di cooperazione allo sviluppo e di aiuti umanitari. L'UE si adopera con impegno per ovviare all'impatto a breve, medio e lungo termine dei conflitti armati sui minori. Essa partecipa, tra l'altro, alla cooperazione multilaterale, nel cui ambito vengono finanziati progetti relativi ai minori e ai conflitti armati, e fornisce aiuti umanitari. Alla tutela dei minori è riservata particolare attenzione anche durante la fase di pianificazione.

Per ulteriori informazioni, cfr. gli orientamenti dell'Unione europea sui bambini e i conflitti armati di cui alle conclusioni del Consiglio del 16 giugno 2008 [non pubblicate nella Gazzetta ufficiale] all'indirizzo:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/10019.en08.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001357/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Child soldiers in the Central African Republic

Unicef recently reported that the number of child soldiers in the Central African Republic (CAR) could be extremely high (around 6000). The European Union plays an extremely active role at international level in protecting children against the ravages of war, and now needs to turn its attention to the CAR.

In the wake of a report from the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, in 2012 the US State Department placed the Central African Republic on the Tier 3 watch list for the second year running.

Tier 3 is the lowest level in the US State Department's ranking of countries' efforts to address the problem of child exploitation, whether for labour of sexual purposes in armed conflicts. The RCA is failing to do anything to improve the situation.

In December 2013 Christian Mukosa, Amnesty International's Central Africa expert, stated that the information gathered during a mission to the CAR showed that war crimes and crimes against humanity, including unlawful killings, the use of rape as a weapon of war and other atrocities, were being committed by all parties to the conflict.

The conflict, which has been going on intermittently since 2004, is depriving young people of access to educational, infrastructure and social services, thus surely storing up further trouble for future generations.

1. Can the High Representative say whether it is the right thing for the Commission to be sending troops into the CAR, in particular Bangui, where the fighting has been fiercest, and whether there are plans for any child soldiers located by the EU troops to be taken back to their families?

2. According to Unicef those at greatest risk of becoming child soldiers are orphans and, in particular, children with limited access to basic services, education and culture. Are any EU or international action plans in place to prevent vulnerable children from becoming child soldiers? Is there an action plan for rehabilitating child soldiers?

3. Can the High Representative provide further information on children in armed conflicts?

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

The mandate of the EUFOR is focused on the urgent securization of the capital city, protection of civilians and creating the conditions for providing humanitarian aid. Protecting the rights of the children and addressing their needs is of paramount importance and depending upon successful stabilisation of the situation on the ground.

Promotion of and respect for children's rights is a priority of the EU's human rights policy, within the context of the common foreign and security policy as well as policies on development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The EU undertakes to address the short, medium and long-term impact of armed conflict on children. Among other actions, the EU takes part in multilateral cooperation, which includes funds for projects relating to children and armed conflict, and humanitarian aid. Also particular attention is given to the issue during the planning phase to the protection of children.

For further information, the EU agreed guidelines on children and armed conflict in the Council conclusions of 16 June 2008 [Not published in the Official Journal] but available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/10019.en08.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001373/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(11 februari 2014)

Betreft: Voedselfraude bij diepvriesvis

Een onderzoek van het Nationaal Verbond van Internationale Handel (SNCE) in Frankrijk heeft vastgesteld dat diepvriesvis aanzienlijke percentages toegevoegd water bevat, op basis van een door het SNCE ontwikkelde techniek om dit te meten. Voor kipfilets bestaat een dergelijke meetmethode al langer en er zijn duidelijke regels van kracht hoeveel toegevoegd water een kipfilet mag bevatten.

Het onderzoek toonde aan dat 48% van de Pangasiusfilets, 30% van de koolvisfilets en 18% van de kabeljauwfilets toegevoegd water bevat. Bij gebrek aan regelgeving hieromtrent kunnen controleurs deze fraude niet aanpakken.

Is de Commissie op de hoogte van deze voedselfraude?

Erkent de Commissie dat in het belang van de bescherming van de consument, een einde gemaakt moet worden aan deze praktijk?

Plant de Commissie hier acties tegen? Gaat ze bijvoorbeeld een regelgeving uitwerken, analoog aan degene die voor kipfilets reeds bestaat?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(28 maart 2014)

De Commissie beseft dat deze vorm van fraude in de sector visserijproducten kan voorkomen. Zij heeft ook weet van de studie die het SNCE in Frankrijk tussen 2010 en 2013 heeft uitgevoerd met als doel een analysemethode voor de hoeveelheid toegevoegd water in diverse vissoorten te ontwikkelen.

De niet-aangegeven toevoeging van water aan bepaalde visserijproducten kan inderdaad misleiding van de consument als doel en gevolg hebben en aldus een frauduleuze praktijk vormen, die moet worden aangepakt in de context van de hernieuwde inspanningen ter verbetering van het vermogen van het EU-controlesysteem als geheel om mogelijke fraude in de voedselketen op te sporen en tegen te gaan.

Momenteel zijn er met name besprekingen aan de gang met het oog op de goedkeuring van een gestandaardiseerde methode voor de opsporing van toegevoegd water in visserijproducten, die moet garanderen dat officiële controles ter opsporing van de frauduleuze toevoeging van water op uniforme wijze plaatsvinden en tot onderling vergelijkbare resultaten leiden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001373/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Food fraud involving deep-frozen fish

A survey by the National Association of Foreign Trade for Frozen Food Products (SNCE) in France, using a technique specially developed by the SNCE itself, has revealed that deep-frozen fish contains considerable percentages of added water. A similar method has existed for testing chicken fillets for some time, and clear rules are in force concerning the quantity of added water that chicken fillets are allowed to contain.

The survey showed that 48% of pangasius fillets, 30% of coalfish fillets and 18% of cod fillets contained added water. Inspectors cannot tackle this fraud because the matter is insufficiently regulated.

Is the Commission aware of this food fraud?

Does the Commission acknowledge that this practice needs to be stopped, in the interests of consumer protection?

Is the Commission planning any action against this? Will it for example draft legislation comparable to that which already exists concerning chicken fillets?

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

The Commission is aware that this kind of fraud in the fishery products sector may occur. It is also informed about the study conducted by SNCE in France between 2010 and 2013, aiming at developing a method of analysis to quantify added water in several fish species.

Indeed the undeclared addition of water to some fishery products may have the objective and the effect of deceiving the consumers and result in a fraudulent practice, that should be addressed in the context of the renewed efforts to step up the capability of the EU control system as a whole to detect and counter potential fraud along the agri-food chain.

In particular, discussions are on-going in view of the validation of a standardised method for the detection of added water in fishery products, so as to ensure that official controls to detect fraudulent addition are performed in accordance with uniform modalities and lead to comparable outcomes.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001374/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(11 februari 2014)

Betreft: Transporteren van schalieolie

Op 6 juli 2013 is er een vrachttrein met 72 rijtuigen ontploft in de stad Lake Mégantic (Quebec, Canada). De trein vervoerde schalieolie vanuit het Bakken-schalieveld in North Dakota (VS). Er kwamen 42 mensen om, en vijf mensen zijn nog steeds vermist, maar vermoedelijk zijn zij ook reeds overleden. Door dit incident is er zes miljoen liter olie in de grondlagen en het rioleringssysteem van de stad gesijpeld.

In Alabama ontspoorden en ontploften op 8 november 2013 ook 20 van de 90 rijtuigen van een vrachttrein, die eveneens schalieolie vervoerde vanuit North Dakota. Op 30 december 2013, nog geen twee maanden later, ging alweer een vrachttrein met schalieolie vanuit het Bakken-schalieveld de lucht in, deze keer net buiten het dorp Casselton in North Dakota.

Ondanks deze feiten bevatten de communicatie en de aanbevelingen van de Commissie van 22 januari zeer weinig details aangaande veiligheid van transport van bijvoorbeeld schalieolie. En hoewel de Commissie aangeeft dat fracken in de EU zowel gericht kan zijn op het ontginnen van schaliegas als van schalieolie, gaat ze niet verder in op het beheersen van de risico's die duidelijk aanwezig zijn met betrekking tot het transporteren van schalieolie.

1. Waarom heeft de Commissie geen specifieke aanbevelingen opgenomen die een veilig transport van schalieolie beogen? Meent de Commissie niet dat dit een vereiste is, gezien het grensoverschrijdende karakter van het transport en de overduidelijke risico's die transport met zich meebrengt?

2. Is de Commissie in de toekomst van plan om deze problematiek alsnog te behandelen? Zo ja, op welke manier?

3. Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de veiligheidsvereisten voor het transporteren van olie per trein in de EU?

4. Kan de Commissie een inschatting maken van de risico's van het transporteren van schalieolie? Indien niet, of met onvoldoende zekerheid, is de Commissie dan van mening dat het vervoeren van schalieolie moet verboden worden in bevolkte en andere gevoelige gebieden (zoals steden en dorpen, gebouwen, evenementen, toeristische trekpleisters, natuurgebieden, …)?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(31 maart 2014)

1. In de genoemde aanbeveling ([1]) worden de lidstaten verzocht erop toe te zien dat de exploitanten van projecten die op grote schaal gebruikmaken van hydrofracturering, zoals in het geval van de exploratie of ontginning van schalieolie, vervoer-beheersplannen ontwikkelen om emissies in de lucht en de gevolgen voor de lokale gemeenschappen en de biodiversiteit tot een minimum te beperken. Dit initiatief vult het bestaande EU-acquis aan, dat bepalingen bevat inzake het vervoer van gevaarlijke goederen. Richtlijn 2008/68/EG ([2]) voorziet in gedetailleerde technische en administratieve eisen ter waarborging van een veilig vervoer.

2. De bepalingen met betrekking tot het veilig vervoer van gevaarlijke goederen worden om de twee jaar herzien om ze aan te passen aan de technische en wetenschappelijke vooruitgang en om gevolg te geven aan ongevallen en incidenten die een indicatie vormen dat de regels moeten worden aangepast. De laatste dergelijke aanpassing vond plaats in december 2012 ([3]) en de volgende is voorlopig gepland vóór eind 2014.

3. De veiligheidseisen met betrekking tot het vervoer van gevaarlijke goederen per spoor in de EU bevatten bijna 1030 bladzijden specificaties en worden in overeenstemming gebracht met de betrokken internationale overeenkomsten, die ook buiten de EU worden toegepast. Deze bepalingen zijn beschikbaar via http://www.otif.org/en/dangerous-goods.html.

4. De Commissie is van mening dat de genoemde verordeningen een veilige en adaptieve regeling vormen voor het vervoer van allerlei gevaarlijke goederen met inbegrip van schalieolie. De Commissie wil erop wijzen dat goederen die nog gevaarlijker zijn dan schalieolie elke dag op veilige wijze in grote hoeveelheden via het Europese spoorwegsysteem worden vervoerd. Ten slotte staan de bepalingen van hoofdstuk 1.9 van bijlage II, deel II. 1, bij Richtlijn 2008/68/EG de nationale autoriteiten toe om beperkingen, zoals de in de vraag genoemde, toe te passen wanneer deze zijn gerechtvaardigd.

([1]) Aanbeveling van de Commissie van 22 januari 2014 (2014/70/EU) betreffende de minimumbeginselen voor de exploratie en productie van koolwaterstoffen (zoals schaliegas) met gebruikmaking van grootvolumehydrofracturering.

([2]) Richtlijn 2008/68/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 24 september 2008 betreffende het vervoer van gevaarlijke goederen over land (PB L 260 van 30.9.2008, blz. 13).

([3]) Richtlijn 2012/45/EU van de Commissie van 3 december 2012 tot tweede aanpassing aan de wetenschappelijke en technische vooruitgang van de bijlagen bij Richtlijn 2008/68/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad betreffende het vervoer van gevaarlijke goederen over land (PB L 332 van 4.12.2012, blz. 18).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001374/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Transport of shale oil

On 6 July 2013 a 72-car freight train exploded in the town of Lac-Mégantic in Quebec (Canada). It was transporting shale oil from the Bakken shale fields in North Dakota (USA). Forty-two people died and five are missing presumed dead. As a result of this incident six million litres of oil seeped into the foundations of houses and the town's sewerage system.

In Alabama, on 8 November 2013, 20 of the 90 cars of a freight train also carrying shale oil from North Dakota derailed and exploded. On 30 December 2013, less than two months later, another train carrying shale oil from the Bakken fields exploded, this time just outside the village of Casselton in North Dakota.

In spite of these facts, the Commission's communication and recommendations of 22 January 2014 contain very few details about safety in the transport of goods such as shale oil. And although the Commission states that fracking in the EU can be used to prospect for both shale gas and shale oil, it does not go into detail about managing the risks which clearly exist with the transport of shale oil.

1. Why did the Commission include no specific recommendations aimed at the safe transport of shale oil? Does the Commission not consider this to be essential given the cross-border nature of the transport and the evident risks which such transport entails?

2. Does the Commission propose to tackle this problem in future? If so, how?

3. Can the Commission list the safety requirements for the transport of oil by train in the EU?

4. Can the Commission give an assessment of the risks of transporting shale oil? If it cannot do so, or not with sufficient certainty, does the Commission consider that the transport of shale oil should be banned in populated and other sensitive areas (such as towns and villages, built-up areas, in connection with public events, at tourist attractions, in nature reserves, etc.)?

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

1. The mentioned Recommendation ([1]) invites Member States to ensure that operators of projects involving the use of high volume hydraulic fracturing such as in the case of shale oil exploration or production, develop transport management plans to minimise air emissions, impacts on local communities and biodiversity. This initiative is complementary to the existing EU *acquis* which includes provisions on the transport of dangerous goods. Directive 2008/68/EC ([2]) establishes detailed technical and administrative requirements to ensure their safe transport.

2. The provisions ensuring safe transport of dangerous goods are revised every two years to keep them up-to-date with technical and scientific progress and to allow reacting to accidents and incidents that indicate a need to adapt the rules. The last such adaptation was made in December 2012 ([3]) and the next one is tentatively foreseen before the end of 2014.

3. The safety requirements relating to transport of dangerous goods by rail in the EU contain almost 1 030 pages of specifications and they are harmonised with the applicable international agreements, applied beyond the EU. The provisions are available at http://www.otif.org/en/dangerous-goods.html.

4. The Commission believes that the abovementioned regulations provide a safe and adaptive arrangement for the transport of all kinds of dangerous goods, including shale oil. The Commission wishes to point out that even more dangerous goods than shale oil are transported safely in large quantities on the EU railway system every day. Finally, the provisions of Chapter 1.9 of Annex II, Section II.1 to Directive 2008/68/EC allow the national authorities to apply restrictions such as those mentioned in the question, where they are justified.

([1]) Commission Recommendation on minimum principles for the exploration and production of hydrocarbons (such as shale gas) using high volume hydraulic fracturing of 22 January 2014 (2014/70/EU).
([2]) Directive 2008/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on the inland transport of dangerous goods, OJ L 260, 30.9.2008.
([3]) Commission Directive 2012/45/EU of 3 December 2012 adapting for the second time the annexes to Directive 2008/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the inland transport of dangerous goods to scientific and technical progress, OJ L 332 of 4.12.2012.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001375/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(11 februari 2014)

Betreft: Bestanddelen van schalieolie

Op 2 januari 2014 heeft de US Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration gemeld dat gefrackte olie vanuit het Bakken veld mogelijk ontvlambaarder is dan conventionele olie. Ze vereist dan ook dat de operatoren gevaarlijke en ontvlambare bestanddelen (zoals Tolueen, Xyleen, Hexaan en Benzeen) voorafgaand en tijdens het transport moeten verwijderen („ontgassen"). Dit gebeurt onder meer door de verontreinigende bestanddelen af te fakkelen vóór het vervoer.

In haar communicatie en aanbevelingen van 22 januari gaf de Commissie aan dat ze voorziet dat de commerciële productie van onconventionele koolwaterstoffen, zoals schaliegas en schalieolie, al zou kunnen starten vanaf 2015.

1. Kan de Commissie een volledig overzicht geven van welke bestanddelen en elementen schalieolie kan bevatten? Kan zij daarbij tevens aangeven welke bestanddelen mogelijk ontploffingsgevaar met zich meebrengen?

2. Welke methoden bestaan er om deze gevaarlijke of ontvlambare bestanddelen te verwijderen uit schalieolie alvorens de olie getransporteerd wordt?

3. Plant de Commissie (of het JRC) eigen onderzoek aangaande het ontploffingsgevaar van schalieolie?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(31 maart 2014)

De samenstelling van schalieolie is afhankelijk van het reservoir en vergelijkbaar met de samenstelling van ruwe olie van gemiddelde tot lage densiteit met een laag zwavelgehalte. De productie van schalieolie is alleen winstgevend als er aardgas aanwezig is om de olie naar het boorgat te stuwen. Daarom wordt schalieolie gemengd met ontvlambare en soms corrosieve bestanddelen van schaliegas.

De Commissie is niet van plan de explosieve eigenschappen van schalieolie te onderzoeken. De Commissie is echter voornemens de uitwisseling van informatie tussen de lidstaten, de betrokken bedrijfstakken en niet-gouvernementele milieuorganisaties te bevorderen over de beste beschikbare technieken voor activiteiten op basis van fracking.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001375/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Constituents of shale oil

On 2 January 2014, the US Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration reported that oil obtained by fracking from the Bakken field might be more inflammable than conventional oil. Accordingly, it is requiring the operators to remove hazardous and inflammable constituents (such as toluene, xylene, hexane and benzene) before and during transport ('degassing'). This is being done, inter alia, by flaring such contaminating constituents before transport.

In its communication and recommendations of 22 January, the Commission indicated that it expected it to be possible for commercial production of unconventional hydrocarbons such as shale gas and shale oil to begin as early as 2015.

1. Can the Commission give a full overview of the constituents and elements which shale oil may contain? Can it also indicate what constituents may entail a danger of explosion?

2. What methods exist for removing these hazardous or inflammable constituents from shale oil before the oil is transported?

3. Is the Commission (or the JRC) planning to carry out any research of its own into the danger of explosion presented by shale oil?

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

The composition of shale oil depends on the reservoir and is similar to low sulphur content crude oil of medium to light density. Profitable production of shale oil requires the presence of natural gas in order to drive the oil towards the borehole. Therefore, shale oil is typically mixed with flammable and sometimes corrosive components of shale gas.

The Commission does not plan to carry out research to assess the explosive properties of shale oil. However, the Commission plans to organise an exchange of information between Member States, industries concerned and non-governmental organisations promoting environmental protection on best available techniques for activities using high volume hydraulic fracturing.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001376/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(11 februari 2014)

Betreft: Omzetting Richtlijn 2011/70/Euratom

Richtlijn 2011/70/Euratom wil een raamwerk vaststellen voor het verantwoordelijk en veilig behandelen van radioactief afval en bestraalde brandstoffen. Zij heeft tot doel de lasten voor de volgende generaties te minimaliseren, ervoor te zorgen dat lidstaten de nodige maatregelen nemen die de bevolking en de werknemers tegen radioactieve straling beschermen en te voorzien in een informatiedoorstroom naar en de betrekking van de bevolking bij het beleid inzake radioactief afval en bestraalde brandstoffen.

De richtlijn, aangenomen in 2011, verplichtte de lidstaten om vóór 23 augustus 2013 te zorgen voor de nodige wetten, reguleringen en administratieve voorzieningen om aan deze richtlijn te voldoen. De Commissie moest daarvan ook op de hoogte gebracht worden.

De lidstaten moeten bovendien een rapport indienen bij de Commissie over de implementatie van de richtlijn, alsook hun nationaal programma bekendmaken dat alle voorzieningen inzake de elementen van artikel 12 omvat. Dit zo snel mogelijk, maar ten laatste tegen 23 augustus 2015.

Welke lidstaten hebben aan de deadline van 23 augustus voldaan en welke niet?

Zijn er reeds rapporten en nationale programma's ingediend door lidstaten (waarvan de deadline 23 augustus 2015 is)?

Door welke lidstaten?

Zijn deze rapporten, of delen ervan, beschikbaar voor het publiek?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(19 maart 2014)

Op 20 november 2013 stuurde de Commissie een ingebrekestelling inzake de „niet-kennisgeving van de omzettingsmaatregelen met betrekking tot Richtlijn 2011/70/Euratom tot vaststelling van een communautair kader voor een verantwoord en veilig beheer van verbruikte splijtstof en radioactief afval" naar België, Duitsland, Spanje, Frankrijk, Kroatië, Italië, Cyprus, Letland, Litouwen, Oostenrijk, Polen, Roemenië en Zweden ([1]).

Vijf lidstaten (Bulgarije, Hongarije, Ierland, Nederland en Portugal) deelden niet al hun omzettingsmaatregelen binnen de gestelde termijn mee, maar voldeden wel aan deze verplichting voordat de Commissie een ingebrekestelling stuurde.

Tot nu toe heeft geen enkele lidstaat aan de Commissie verslag uitgebracht over de tenuitvoerlegging van de richtlijn (de termijn voor dat verslag is uiterlijk 23 augustus 2015, zoals voorgeschreven in artikel 14).

Tot op heden heeft geen enkele lidstaat de Commissie in kennis gesteld van de inhoud van hun nationale programma dat alle in artikel 12 vermelde elementen omvat (de termijn voor die kennisgeving is uiterlijk 23 augustus 2015, zoals voorgeschreven in artikel 15, lid 4).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/eulaw/decisions/dec_20131120.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001376/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Transposition of Directive 2011/70/Euratom

The purpose of Directive 2011/70/Euratom is to establish a framework for the responsible and safe management of nuclear waste and spent fuel. It aims to minimise the burden on future generations and ensure that Member States take the necessary measures to protect the public and workers against radiation and to supply information to the public and involve them in policy on radioactive waste and spent fuel.

The directive, which was adopted in 2011, required Member States to adopt the necessary laws, regulations and administrative provisions to comply with it by 23 August 2013. The Commission was to be informed of the provisions adopted.

In addition, Member States are required to report to the Commission on the implementation of the directive and communicate their national programmes covering all the items provided for in Article 12. This must be done as soon as possible, but not later than 23 August 2015.

Which Member States complied with the 23 August deadline and which did not?

Have any Member States already submitted reports and national programmes (the deadline for which is 23 August 2015)?

Which Member States?

Are these reports, or parts thereof, available to the public?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2014)

On 20 November 2013, the Commission sent Letters of Formal Notice regarding the 'Non-Communication Of Final Transposing Measures Relating To Directive 2011/70/Euratom Establishing A Community Framework For The Responsible And Safe Management Of Spent Fuel And Radioactive Waste' to Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Poland, Romania and Sweden ([1]).

Five Member States (Bulgaria, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands and Portugal) did not communicate all transposing measures before the deadline, but complied before the Commission sent Letters of Formal Notice.

To date, no Member State has reported to the Commission on the implementation of the directive as required in Article 14 by 23 August 2015.

To date, no Member State has notified the Commission of the content of their national programme covering all the items provided for in Article 12, as required in Article 15(4) by 23 August 2015.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/eulaw/decisions/dec_20131120.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001382/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Incidenza e trattamento dell'autismo

L'autismo è un disordine dello sviluppo pervasivo delle funzioni cerebrali che impedisce alle persone affette di organizzare e comprendere le informazioni che ricevono, con pesanti ripercussioni sulle interazioni sociali della persona. I sintomi più evidenti di questa malattia sono deficit nelle interazioni sociali reciproche e nella comunicazione verbale e non verbale, oltre che una forte riduzione nell'attività e gli interessi della persona.

Si tratta di una disabilità fortemente invalidante che, al contrario di quanto si pensi, coinvolge un bambino su 150 secondo i più recenti studi clinici. L'esperienza clinica ha dimostrato che il trattamento migliore contro questo genere di sindrome è un'educazione specializzata in tenera età che permetta di rendere l'ambiente più accessibile alla persona affetta da autismo e che miri a ridurre specifici deficit di cui essa soffre.

Alla luce di questo, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se esistono recenti studi e sperimentazioni che permettano di capire le cause dell'autismo, al fine di affrontare il problema alla radice?

2. se dispone di dati aggiornati sulla diffusione della malattia negli Stati membri?

3. se esistono cure specifiche che hanno dimostrato un grado di efficacia rilevante nella cura della malattia?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

La Commissione è consapevole dell'importanza e dell'impatto sociale dei disturbi dello spettro autistico (ASD) e porta avanti azioni finalizzate alla migliore identificazione, alla diagnosi precoce e all'informazione su questo gruppo di disturbi.

Sulla scorta dei dati raccolti dal Sistema europeo d'informazione sull'autismo ([1]), un progetto sostenuto dal programma Salute dell'Unione europea, sono state stabilite alcune conclusioni preliminari sulla prevalenza dell'autismo nell'UE a partire dagli scarsi dati disponibili. Dalle informazioni a disposizione emerge che i tassi di prevalenza specifici per età dell'«autismo classico» nell'UE oscillerebbero tra 3,3 e 16,0 per 10 000 persone. Questi tassi possono salire ad un livello compreso tra 30 e 63 per 10 000 persone se si includono tutte le forme di ASD. La validità e l'utilità di un'ampia definizione dell'autismo sono ancora oggetto di discussione.

Con finanziamenti a valere sul Settimo programma quadro dell'UE per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2007-2013) la Commissione ha avviato il progetto *European Autism Interventions-A Multicentre Study for Developing New Medications* (*EU-AIMS* — Interventi europei per l'autismo — Studio multicentro per lo sviluppo di nuovi medicamenti) ([2]). Si tratta della più grande sovvenzione al mondo dedicata all'autismo. L'obiettivo principale del progetto è produrre terapie potenziali. Il progetto dovrebbe fornire, tra l'altro, nuove analisi cellulari validate e nuovi biomarcatori genetici e proteomici per la segmentazione dei pazienti o per la previsione della risposta individuale.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/autistic/index_en.htm#fragment3
([2]) http://www.eu-aims.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001382/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Incidence and treatment of autism

Autism is a pervasive developmental disorder of the cerebral functions which prevents the affected persons from organising and comprehending the information they receive, with serious repercussions on the social interactions of the person. The most obvious symptoms of the illness are impairment of reciprocal social interaction and verbal and non-verbal communication and a marked reduction in the activity and interests of the person.

This is a crippling disability which, contrary to popular opinion, affects 1 in every 150 children, according to the most recent clinical trials. Clinical experience has demonstrated that the best treatment against this type of syndrome is specialist education from a young age, which renders the environment more accessible to the person affected by autism and is designed to reduce the specific impairments from which that person suffers.

In the light of the above, can the Commission clarify:

1. whether any recent studies or trials have cast light on the causes of autism with a view to tackling the problem at its roots?

2. whether the Commission has up-to-date figures on the spread of the illness in Member States?

3. whether any specific treatments have demonstrated a significant degree of efficacy in the treatment of the illness?

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

The Commission is aware of the importance and social impact of the different Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and has been undertaking actions for better identification, early detection and information about this group of disorders.

According to the data collected by the European Autism Information System ([1]), a project supported by the European Union Health Programme, some preliminary conclusions about the prevalence of autism in the EU, based on the scarce data available, have been established. Existing information suggests that age-specific prevalence rates for 'classical autism' in the EU could vary between 3.3 and 16.0 per 10 000 people. These rates could increase to between 30 and 63 per 10 000 once all forms of ASD are included. The validity and usefulness of a broad definition of autism is still being debated.

With funding from the Seventh EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2007-2013) the Commission has launched the *European Autism Interventions-A Multicentre Study for Developing New Medications (EU-AIMS)* Project ([2]). This is the largest single grant for autism in the world. The main objective of the project is to produce potential treatments. The project it is expected to provide, amongst others, novel validated cellular assays, and new genetic and proteomic biomarkers for patient-segmentation or individual response prediction.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/autistic/index_en.htm#fragment3
([2]) http://www.eu-aims.eu/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001383/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Nuove tecniche di inibizione del dolore durante il parto

Un ospedale di una cittadina del nord-Italia ha introdotto da qualche mese una procedura sperimentale nell'ambito dei trattamenti sanitari peripartum che prevede la somministrazione, durante le contrazioni, di protossido di azoto, che elimina quasi totalmente il dolore. Il successo della procedura è provato dai dati: oltre l'85 % delle gestanti, più di mille parti su 1 400, ha optato per la nuova pratica.

La somministrazione richiede personale formato ad hoc e si pensa di introdurla a livello ordinario in diverse strutture ospedaliere, con possibili ricadute positive sull'impiego di personale medico specializzato.

Alla luce di quanto detto, si chiede alla Commissione se:

1. è a conoscenza della procedura in oggetto?

2. Può confermare il ricorso a questa procedura anche in altri Stati membri?

3. Dispone di dati relativi a potenziali rischi per la sicurezza e la salute della partoriente?

4. L'introduzione a livello ordinario di questa pratica è effettivamente suscettibile di avere riscontri positivi in termini di occupazione nel settore sanitario?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

La somministrazione di protossido di azoto per alleviare il dolore durante il parto è una pratica invalsa da tempo. In Europa essa risulta essere adottata per lo più nel Regno Unito e in Finlandia.

Si dispone di due rassegne scientifiche recenti sull'efficacia del protossido di azoto per l'inibizione dei dolori del parto. La prima è stata pubblicata nella base dati Cochrane da Klompt *et al.* nel 2012 e la seconda sulla rivista Anaesthesia and Analgesia (Journal of the International Anaesthesia Research Society) nel 2014 ad opera di Likis *et al*. I risultati indicano che il protossido di azoto non è un'opzione antidolorifica particolarmente valida durante il parto. Inoltre, il protossido di azoto risulta provocare un numero maggiore di effetti collaterali rispetto ad altri analgesici da inalazione e la somministrazione di protossido di azoto è un antidolorifico meno efficace dell'analgesia epidurale.

La maggior parte degli effetti negativi sulla madre segnalati sono sgradevoli effetti collaterali che pregiudicano la tollerabilità del prodotto, come ad esempio nausea, vomito, capogiri e sonnolenza.

I risultati sul piano della salute del neonato (indice di Apgar) risultano affini se si usano il protossido di azoto, altri metodi per lenire il travaglio del parto o se non si usa nessun analgesico. Le evidenze quanto al danno e all'esposizione professionali sono limitate.

Occorrono ulteriori evidenze sull'efficacia, la soddisfazione e gli effetti avversi del protossido di azoto prima di estenderne l'uso. Nel frattempo si dispone di metodi efficaci per l'inibizione del dolore durante il travaglio se le madri desiderano avvalersene.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001383/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: New methods of pain inhibition during childbirth

A few months ago, a hospital in a small town in northern Italy introduced an experimental procedure for peripartum treatment in which nitrous oxide is administered during contractions, resulting in the almost total elimination of pain. The success of this procedure is evidence-based: over 85% of pregnant women (that is more than 1 000 out of every 1 400 births) have opted for the new practice.

The administration of the gas requires specially trained staff and it is planned to introduce it routinely in a number of different hospitals, with possible positive repercussions on the employment of specialist medical staff.

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

1. Is the Commission aware of the procedure in question?

2. Can the Commission confirm that the procedure is used in other Member States?

3. Does the Commission have figures on potential risks to the health and safety of women giving birth?

4. Is the routine introduction of this practice effectively liable to have positive effects in terms of employment in the health sector?

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

Nitrous oxide to alleviate pain during delivery has been used for a long time. In Europe, it seems to have been mostly used in the United Kingdom and Finland.

There are two recent scientific reviews of the effectiveness of nitrous oxide for management of labour pain. The first one was published in the Cochrane database by Klompt et al in 2012 and the second one in Anaesthesia and Analgesia (Journal of the International Anaesthesia Research Society) in 2014 by Likis et al. The results show that nitrous oxide is not a particularly potent pain relief option during delivery. Furthermore, nitrous oxide appears to result in more side effects compared with other inhaled analgesics and inhalation of nitrous oxide provides less effective pain relief than epidural analgesia.

Most maternal adverse effects reported are unpleasant side effects that affect tolerability, such as nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and drowsiness.

Results for new-borns' health (Apgar score) seem similar when using nitrous oxide, other labour pain management methods or no analgesia. Evidence about occupational harms and exposure is limited.

More evidence is needed regarding the effectiveness, satisfaction, and adverse effects of nitrous oxide before expanding its use. In the meantime, there are effective methods to deal with pain management during childbirth, when requested by the mothers.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001384/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovo modello di finanziamento per progetto autostradale

In Italia, un tratto autostradale lungo 62 chilometri, che collega le città di Milano, Bergamo e Brescia, ha recentemente suscitato molto interesse presso le autorità pubbliche poiché i lavori, che si concluderanno entro i tempi previsti nel giugno 2014, non peseranno in alcun modo sulle casse pubbliche. L'investimento è, infatti, finanziato da privati: si tratta di circa 2,5 miliardi di EUR, il 75 % dei quali raccolti tramite prestiti bancari e il 25 % grazie a versamenti degli azionisti. Il modello di progetto prevede che i privati recupereranno le spese tramite future concessioni, sotto diretto controllo pubblico.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, si chiede alla Commissione se:

1. è a conoscenza del progetto?

2. Esistono progetti finanziati secondo lo stesso modello in altri paesi europei?

3. Questo tipo di finanziamento legato al progetto *(project financing)* può essere annoverato tra le buone prassi europee in materia di opere di interesse pubblico?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza di tre progetti autostradali concernenti le tre città menzionate, ovvero: Tangenziale Esterna Milano, Pedemontana Lombarda e la cosiddetta BreBeMi (Brescia-Bergamo-Milano) e presume che l'onorevole deputato si riferisca al progetto BreBeMi.

Al progetto BreBeMi non partecipano fondi dell'UE, anche se la Banca europea per gli investimenti partecipa con un prestito di 700 milioni EUR. Questo progetto applica il cosiddetto «modello di concessione di autostrade a pedaggio», che viene utilizzato anche in altri Stati membri, in particolare in Francia.

In generale, si può affermare che questo tipo di partenariato pubblico-privato/modello di concessione è ampiamente utilizzato per altri progetti autostradali in tutta Europa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001384/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: New funding model for motorway project

In Italy, a 62-kilometre stretch of motorway, which links the cities of Milan, Bergamo and Brescia, has recently aroused great interest in the public authorities because the work, expected to be completed on schedule in June 2014, will have no impact whatsoever on public funds. The investment is in fact financed by private individuals: the funding amounts to around EUR 2.5 billion, 75% of which has been obtained through bank loans and 25% from shareholder advances. The project model provides for private individuals to recover their costs through future concessions, under direct public control.

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

1. Is the Commission aware of the project?

2. Are there projects funded according to the same model in other European countries?

3. Can this type of project financing be defined as good European practice in terms of public interest works?

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

The Commission is aware of three motorway projects concerning the three cities mentioned: Tangenziale Esterna Milano, Pedemontana Lombarda and the so-called BreBeMi (Brescia-Bergamo-Milano). It assumes that the Honourable Member refers to the BreBeMi project.

There are no direct EU funds involved in the BreBeMi project, although the European Investment Bank is involved in its financing, with a loan of EUR 700 million. This project applies a so called 'toll road concession model', which is also used in other Member States, notably in France.

In general, it can be stated that this public-private-partnership/concession model is widely applied for other highway projects throughout Europe.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001391/14
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(11 februarie 2014)

Subiect: Risipa de alimente

Se estimează că, la nivel mondial, se risipește peste 30 % din cantitatea totală de alimente. Rezoluția Parlamentului European din 19 ianuarie 2012 a solicitat Comisiei să abordeze această chestiune și să adopte măsuri pentru a reduce cu 50 % risipa de alimente din UE până în 2025 ([1]).

În urma rezoluției, Comisia a anunțat că examinează posibilitățile de acțiune ale UE în vederea reducerii risipei de alimente și că aceste posibilități au fost dezbătute în cadrul Grupului de lucru pentru risipa de alimente în februarie 2012 și în februarie 2013 ([2]). De asemenea, Comisia și-a anunțat intenția ca, până la sfârșitul anului 2013, să adopte o comunicare privind alimentele sustenabile ([3]).

S-au identificat posibilități de acțiune ale UE?

Cum vor aborda acestea risipa alimentară din cadrul lanțului de aprovizionare la nivelul consumatorilor și al distribuitorilor?

Când se va adopta comunicarea privind alimentele sustenabile?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(19 martie 2014)

În prezent, Comisia Europeană evaluează domeniile în care acțiunile întreprinse la nivelul UE pentru a promova sustenabilitatea și a reduce risipa de alimente și pierderile sunt cele mai necesare pentru a completa și a spori eforturile întreprinse la nivel național, regional și local. Această analiză aflată în curs de desfășurare se bazează pe dialogul activ cu părțile interesate, prin intermediul unui grup de lucru dedicat, instituit de Comisie în 2012, precum și pe răspunsurile (630) la consultarea publică privind obținerea unui sistem alimentar fiabil, organizată anul trecut.

Viitoarea comunicare privind obținerea unui sistem alimentar viabil va stabili un cadru strategic de acțiune pentru instituțiile europene, statele membre, părțile interesate și alți actori interesați. Aceasta va include opțiuni de abordare a risipei de alimente pe tot parcursul lanțului de aprovizionare cu alimente, inclusiv la nivelul distribuitorilor și al consumatorilor.

Comisia Europeană preconizează publicarea comunicării privind obținerea unui sistem alimentar viabil, împreună cu un raport referitor la consultarea publică aferentă, în cel de-al doilea trimestru al anului 2014.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0014+0+DOC+XML+V0//RO
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/eu_actions_en.print.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/docs/background_08022013_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001391/14
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Food waste

It is estimated that more than 30% of food is wasted globally. Parliament's resolution of 19 January 2012 called on the Commission to address this problem and to take measures to achieve a 50% reduction in food waste in the EU by 2025 ([1]).

The Commission has since announced that it is analysing options for EU action to reduce food waste, and that these options were discussed by the Working Group on Food Waste in February 2012 and February 2013 ([2]). The Commission also announced its intention to adopt a communication on sustainable food by the end of 2013 ([3]).

Have any options for EU action been identified?

How will these options address food waste at the consumer/retail end of the supply chain?

When will the communication on sustainable food be adopted?

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

The European Commission is currently evaluating where EU action to promote sustainability and reduce food waste and losses is most needed in order to complement and augment efforts undertaken at national, regional and local levels. This ongoing analysis is informed by active stakeholder dialogue through a dedicated working group established by the Commission in 2012 as well as the responses (630) to the public consultation on sustainability of the food system held last year.

The future Communication on Sustainability of the Food System will set out a strategic framework for action by European institutions, Member States, stakeholders and other interested parties. This will include options for addressing food waste throughout the food supply chain including at retail and consumer levels.

The European Commission expects to publish the communication on Sustainability of the Food System together with a report on the related public consultation in the second quarter of 2014.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0014+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/eu_actions_en.print.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/docs/background_08022013_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001394/14
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Funding for town twinning

Can the Commission say when applications will be opened for funding under the Europe for Citizens programme 2014-2020?

In addition, can the Commission confirm that funding for European town twinning programmes will still be provided under the new programme?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the Commission proposal for a Council Regulation establishing the Europe for Citizens Programme for the period 2014-2020 of December 2011. As the Honourable Member would know, the European Parliament gave its consent to the draft Council Regulation on 18 November 2013.

The Europe for Citizens Programme has not entered into force on 1 January 2014 as planned because the approval by the national Parliament of the United Kingdom which is required by national legislation for the UK representative in Council voting in favour of the adoption of a legal act based on Article 352 TFEU, was not given before the end of 2013. As soon as the national Parliament of the United Kingdom has given its approval, the programme can be adopted by Council and will enter into force on the day of its publication in the Official Journal. The first application deadline for projects will then be published on the Commission's website.

The future Europe for Citizens Programme for the period 2014-2020 will continue providing funding for town-twinning projects and networks of towns under its strand 2: Democratic engagement and civic participation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-001397/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(11 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Muertes en Ceuta

En los sucesos acontecidos el pasado día 6 de febrero en Ceuta, cuando en el intento de varios cientos de personas de entrar en la ciudad murieron al menos 14 de ellas, la Guardia Civil española utilizó para rechazar dicha entrada material antidisturbios, como pelotas de goma y balas de fogueo. Según han denunciado las personas que intentaron entrar a nado en España, la Guardia Civil les disparó con material antidisturbios estando en el agua ([1]).

Los hechos han sido reconocidos por el Delegado en Ceuta del Gobierno español. Este hecho se suma a anteriores episodios trágicos en los enclaves de Ceuta y Melilla, así como a la reinstalación de cuchillas en las vallas fronterizas. El trágico resultado de muertes no puede ser pasado por alto sin una investigación adecuada de los hechos. La red Migreurop ha pedido la creación de una comisión parlamentaria en el Parlamento español para aclarar la actuación policial y exigir eventuales responsabilidades.

Además, parece que la Guardia Civil incumplió la propia legislación española entregando a los inmigrantes a la policía marroquí inmediatamente después de su detención ([2]).

¿Conoce la Comisión los hechos?

Teniendo en cuenta que las autoridades españolas han hecho caso omiso de la preocupación expresada por el Parlamento Europeo y la propia Comisión en cuanto a la reinstalación de cuchillas en las vallas de Ceuta y Melilla, ¿no cree la Comisión que sería adecuado impulsar también una investigación desde la misma Comisión?

¿Tomará la Comisión algún otro tipo de iniciativa en este caso?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión es conocedora de los hechos mencionados en la pregunta formulada por Su Señoría.

La Comisión considera que las autoridades españolas tienen la responsabilidad de analizar las circunstancias de estos sucesos concretos y ofrecer aclaraciones.

La Comisión ha solicitado explicaciones a las autoridades españolas a propósito de este incidente. Recibió una respuesta de dichas autoridades el 20 de febrero de 2014 y procederá a examinarla. En su calidad de guardiana de los Tratados, la Comisión se reserva el derecho de adoptar las medidas oportunas cuando haya indicios de que un Estado miembro ha violado el Derecho de la UE.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/Guardia-Civil-disparado-balas-media_0_226078058.html
([2]) http://www.eldiario.es/politica/Guardia-Civil-reconoce-expulsiones-Ceuta_0_226427991.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001397/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Deaths in Ceuta

During the events of 6 February 2014 in Ceuta in which at least 14 people died, the Spanish Civil Guard used riot control materials such as rubber balls and blank cartridges to stop several hundreds of people entering the city. People who tried to get into the city by swimming report that the Civil Guard fired on them in the water with riot control weapons ([1]).

These facts have been acknowledged by the Spanish Government's Delegate in Ceuta. This is yet another tragic episode to be added to previous ones in the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, along with the renewed use of razor wire on border fences. Its tragic outcome — people's deaths — cannot be just pushed to one side without a proper investigation of the facts. The Migreurop network has called for the Spanish Parliament to set up a parliamentary commission to clarify what action was taken by the police and call those responsible to account.

It would also seem that the Civil Guard breached Spanish law by handing the immigrants over to Moroccan police immediately after their detention ([2]).

Is the Commission aware of these facts?

The Spanish authorities have ignored the concerns expressed by Parliament and by the Commission over the renewed use of razor wire on border fences in Ceuta and Melilla.

This being so, would the Commission not agree that instigating an investigation itself would be the best thing to do?

Will the Commission take action of any other kind in this case?

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

The Commission is aware of the incident described in the Honourable Member's question.

The Commission considers that the Spanish authorities have a responsibility to look into the circumstances of this particular incident in Ceuta and provide clarification.

The Commission has requested explanations from the Spanish authorities on this incident. The Commission received a reply from the Spanish authorities on 20 February 2014 and this reply will be examined. As guardian of the Treaties, the Commission reserves the right to take appropriate steps where there is evidence that a Member State has violated EC law.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/Guardia-Civil-disparado-balas-media_0_226078058.html
([2]) http://www.eldiario.es/politica/Guardia-Civil-reconoce-expulsiones-Ceuta_0_226427991.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-001399/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ενιαία τιμή βιβλίου στην Ελλάδα

Ο ελληνικός νόμος 2557/97 ορίζει, μεταξύ άλλων, την Ενιαία Τιμή Βιβλίου ως μία ρυθμιστική παράμετρο στην ελληνική αγορά που αποσκοπεί στη λειτουργία του υγιούς ανταγωνισμού και την προστασία αυτού του μοναδικού εμπορικού και πολιτιστικού προϊόντος. Η Ενιαία Τιμή Βιβλίου, όπως ισχύει σε πολλές χώρες της ΕΕ, ενισχύει την πολυφωνία στον εκδοτικό χώρο και επιτρέπει να διακινούνται δοκίμια με μικρή αναγνωσιμότητα, απαιτητικά λογοτεχνικά έργα ή ποιητικές συλλογές που η ύπαρξή τους δεν μπορεί να υπαχθεί στον ανταγωνισμό των τιμών, όπως στα υπόλοιπα προϊόντα. Κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο η ενιαία τιμή βιβλίου επιτρέπει στον ανταγωνισμό να διεξάγεται με όρους ποιότητας και όχι ποσότητας και, συνεπώς, ενισχύει την πολυφωνία και την υγιή επιχειρηματικότητα στον εκδοτικό χώρο. Ένας από τους στόχους αυτής της ρύθμισης είναι και η θωράκιση της γλωσσικής πολυμορφίας της ΕΕ, που αποτελεί και κεντρικό πολιτικό στόχο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Ωστόσο, η Ενιαία Τιμή Βιβλίου αναγνωρίζεται από τον ΟΟΣΑ ως «δυσλειτουργία» της ελληνικής αγοράς και η τρόικα (ΕΕ-ΕΚΤ-ΔΝΤ) προωθεί την κατάργησή της.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι το βιβλίο είναι ένα εμπορικό προϊόν που θα πρέπει να διέπεται αποκλειστικά από τους νόμους της αγοράς;

2. Σε ποιες χώρες της ΕΕ ισχύει, με τη μια ή την άλλη μορφή, η Ενιαία Τιμή Βιβλίου και πώς αξιολογεί η Επιτροπή την εφαρμογή αυτού του μέτρου ως προς την προστασία της πολιτιστικής παραγωγής και την προώθηση της γλωσσικής πολυμορφίας;

3. Υποστηρίζει η Επιτροπή την απαίτηση της τρόικας για κατάργηση της Ενιαίας Τιμής Βιβλίου στην Ελλάδα; Ποιες είναι οι εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής για τις επιπτώσεις που θα έχει τυχόν κατάργηση του μέτρου; Ποιες θεωρεί ότι θα είναι οι επιπτώσεις στην κυκλοφορία πρωτότυπων ποιοτικών εκδόσεων στην ελληνική γλώσσα;

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

Η έκδοση βιβλίων αποτελεί έναν παράγοντα που προάγει την πολιτισμική πολυμορφία στην Ευρώπη και έναν από τους πλέον σημαντικούς κλάδους του πολιτισμού και της δημιουργίας της Ευρώπης.

Πολλά εθνικά ρυθμιστικά πλαίσια συμπεριλαμβανομένων εκείνων της Γαλλίας, της Ισπανίας, της Γερμανίας, της Αυστρίας, της Σλοβενίας, της Ουγγαρίας, της Πορτογαλίας, της Ολλανδίας, της Ιταλίας και της Ελλάδας απαιτούν από τους εμπόρους λιανικής πώλησης να πωλούν τα βιβλία στην τιμή που καθορίζουν οι εκδότες, είτε με νομοθετική πράξη είτε με επαγγελματικές συμφωνίες.

Σύμφωνα με τη νομολογία του Δικαστηρίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, η προστασία του βιβλίου ως πολιτιστικού αγαθού μπορεί να θεωρηθεί ως επιτακτικός λόγος δημοσίου συμφέροντος δυνάμενος να δικαιολογήσει μέτρα περιορισμού της ελεύθερης κυκλοφορίας των εμπορευμάτων, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι τα μέτρα αυτά είναι κατάλληλα προς επίτευξη του επιδιωκόμενου σκοπού και δεν βαίνουν πέραν αυτού που είναι αναγκαίο για την υλοποίησή του ([1]). Το Δικαστήριο έχει επίσης κρίνει ότι μια διάταξη εθνικού δικαίου που προβλέπει μια καθορισμένη τιμή λιανικής πώλησης μπορεί να είναι σύμφωνη με τις διατάξεις της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης σχετικά με την ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των εμπορευμάτων στον βαθμό που εφαρμόζεται σε εθνικό επίπεδο ([2]). Η Επιτροπή διατηρεί τη δέσμευσή της για τη διασφάλιση της πλήρους τήρησης του δικαίου της ΕΕ περί ανταγωνισμού και των κανόνων της εσωτερικής αγοράς στον εκδοτικό τομέα.

Ο ΟΟΣΑ έχει αξιολογήσει τον ανταγωνισμό στην Ελλάδα ([3]) και έχει εντοπίσει ένα ευρύ φάσμα ρυθμιστικών περιορισμών σε διάφορους τομείς. Μία από τις επακόλουθες συστάσεις του είναι η άρση των ισχυόντων περιορισμών όσον αφορά την τιμή του βιβλίου. Η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι η εφαρμογή των συστάσεων του ΟΟΣΑ αποτελεί μια κρίσιμη διαρθρωτική μεταρρύθμιση προκειμένου να αυξηθεί η ελληνική ανταγωνιστικότητα. Ο συγκεκριμένος τρόπος εφαρμογής των συστάσεων είναι επί του παρόντος υπό συζήτηση με τις ελληνικές αρχές.

Η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε επίσης να επιστήσει την προσοχή του αξιότιμου μέλους στις απαντήσεις της επί των ερωτήσεων E-009704/2013 και E-012531/2011 ([4]) του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου.

([1]) Απόφαση του Δικαστηρίου της 30ής Απριλίου 2009 στην υπόθεση C-531/07, παράγραφος 34.
([2]) Απόφαση του Δικαστηρίου της 11ης Ιουλίου 1985 στην υπόθεση C-299/83.
([3]) http://www.oecd.org/greece/greececompetitionassessment.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/el/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001399/14
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Fixed book prices in Greece

Greek Law 2557/97 provides, *inter alia*, for a fixed book price as a regulatory measure in the Greek market; it is intended to ensure fair competition and to protect this unique commercial and cultural product. The fixed book price, which is applied in many EU countries, enhances pluralism in publishing and allows the sale of essays with a small readership, demanding literary works or collections of poetry which cannot be treated like other products and subjected to price competition. In this way, the fixed price book allows competition to be conducted in terms of quality rather than quantity and therefore enhances pluralism and healthy entrepreneurship in publishing. One of the objectives of this measure is to protect the linguistic diversity of the EU, which is a central political objective of the European Union.

However, the fixed book price is recognised by the OECD as a 'dysfunction' of the Greek market and the Troika (EU-ECB-IMF) is pushing for it to be abolished.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it consider that the book is a commercial product that should be governed exclusively by the laws of the market?

2. In which EU countries does the fixed price book apply, in one form or another, and how does it assess the implementation of this measure in protecting cultural production and promoting linguistic diversity?

3. Does it back the Troika's demand that the fixed book price be abolished in Greece? What impact does it estimate the repeal of this measure will have? What does it believe the impact on the publication of original and quality works in Greek will be?

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

Book publishing is both a driver for cultural diversity in Europe and one of Europe's most important cultural and creative industries.

Several national regulations including those of France, Spain, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, Portugal, the Netherlands, Italy and Greece require retailers to sell books at the price set by the publishers, either by legislation or by industry-wide agreements.

According to the case law of the Court of Justice, the protection of books as cultural objects can be considered an overriding requirement in the public interest capable of justifying measures restricting the free movement of goods, on condition that those measures are appropriate for achieving the objective fixed and do not go beyond what is necessary to achieve it. ([1]) The Court of Justice has also ruled that a national law providing for a fixed retail price could be compatible with the TFEU provisions on the free movement of goods to the extent that it applied nationally ([2]).The Commission remains committed to ensuring the full respect of the EU competition law and internal market rules in the publishing sector.

The OECD has assessed competition in Greece ([3]) and has identified a wide range of regulatory constraints in various sectors. One of its subsequent recommendations is to lift current book price restrictions. The Commission believes that implementing the OECD recommendations is a crucial structural reform in order to raise Greek competitiveness. The specific way in which the recommendations will be implemented is currently under discussion with the Greek authorities.

The Commission would also like to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to its answers to EP questions E-009704/2013 and E-012531/2011 ([4]).

([1]) Judgment of the Court of Justice of 30 April 2009 in Case C531/07, paragraph 34.
([2]) Judgment of the Court of Justice 11 July 1985 in Case C-299/83.
([3]) http://www.oecd.org/greece/greececompetitionassessment.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001402/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(11 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Foro de Davos y futuro de Europa

El pasado 23 de enero, el Sr. Durão Barroso y el economista catalán Xabier Sala i Martín mantuvieron, en el marco del Foro de Davos, un intercambio dialéctico sobre las consecuencias del proceso soberanista catalán. El Sr. Sala i Martín cuenta en su blog el desarrollo del mismo y hace referencia a las preguntas que se quedaron en el aire y que no fueron contestadas públicamente.

¿Cree la Comisión, como formulaba el Sr. Sala i Martín en su debate con el Sr. Durão Barroso, que ya va siendo hora de que, como seres humanos libres y democráticos, empecemos a rechazar las fronteras trazadas con sangre y violencia y a aceptar las que se dibujan con el voto de los ciudadanos?

¿Considera la Comisión que ese proceso debería ser liderado por Europa y que podría ser una de las bases sobre las que se apoye su nuevo renacimiento?

¿Piensa la Comisión que la voluntad libre, democrática y pacíficamente expresada por la ciudadanía de los pueblos y naciones de Europa, sean o no estados en la actualidad, debe de ser la base para conformar el futuro de Europa como proyecto político?

Respuesta del Sr. Barroso en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a sus respuestas a las preguntas parlamentarias E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012 y P-009862/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001402/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Davos Forum and the future of Europe

On 23 January 2014, while attending the Davos Forum, José Manuel Durão Barroso and the Catalan economist Xabier Sala i Martín held a 'dialectical exchange' on the consequences of the Catalan independence process. Mr Sala i Martín describes the discussion in his blog, and refers to the questions which were left hanging in the air, unanswered in public..

Does the Commission believe, as Mr Sala i Martin posited in his exchange with Mr Barroso, that it is time that we began, as free, democratic human beings, to reject borders drawn with blood and violence in favour of those drawn with the votes of the citizens?

Does the Commission feel that this process should be led by Europe and that it could be a springboard for the rebirth of Europe?

Does the Commission consider that the democratically and peacefully expressed free will of the peoples and nations of Europe, whether or not they are at present states, should be the foundation on which to build the future of Europe as a political project?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its replies to parliamentary questions E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012, and P-009862/2012 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001405/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(11 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Nueva legislación afgana

Una nueva ley afgana va a permitir a los hombres agredir a sus mujeres, hijos y hermanas sin temor a ser castigados por la justicia, anulando así el lento progreso logrado a lo largo de años de lucha contra la violencia en un país lacrado por crímenes de honor, matrimonios forzados y virulenta violencia doméstica. El pequeño pero significativo cambio en el código de acción penal de Afganistán prohíbe que los familiares de un acusado testifiquen en su contra. En Afganistán, la mayoría de los casos de violencia contra las mujeres se producen dentro de la familia, por lo que esta ley (aprobada por el Parlamento, pero pendiente de ser firmada por el presidente, Hamid Karzai), en la práctica, silenciará a las víctimas, así como a los testigos más relevantes.

Teniendo en cuenta que el señor Karzai llegó al poder apoyado por la UE y con la promesa de traer la paz, la democracia y el respeto a los derechos de las mujeres y las minorías de la zona, ¿se ha consultado al Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior (SEAE) acerca de este cambio fundamental en la ley?

¿Está presionando la SEAE al Gobierno afgano y al propio señor Karzai para que no apruebe esta legislación, la cual conducirá inevitablemente a aún más violaciones de los derechos de las mujeres en Afganistán?

¿Qué pasos está dando la UE para garantizar que Afganistán está cumpliendo su compromiso de mejorar la situación de las mujeres y que los fondos que para ello ha destinado la UE están siendo utilizados para reforzar los derechos de las mujeres y su participación en la sociedad?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

A raíz de las cuestiones planteadas por los activistas de derechos humanos, los socios internacionales y la Unión Europea, en particular por la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta en su declaración de 10 de febrero de 2014, el Presidente Karzai decidió modificar el artículo del Código de enjuiciamiento penal que podría haber impedido que los familiares testificasen contra un presunto abusador.

El 23 de febrero entró en vigor el Código de enjuiciamiento penal junto con un decreto presidencial por el que se modifica la ley y se aborda esta cuestión. Los esfuerzos conjuntos de la comunidad internacional y la UE han resultado fructíferos en cuanto a la modificación de la ley, pero sigue existiendo el riesgo de que el Parlamento afgano dé marcha atrás. La UE sigue supervisando muy de cerca la situación.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta sigue muy preocupada por la situación de los derechos humanos en Afganistán y, en particular, la situación de las mujeres y las niñas. Los derechos de las mujeres seguirán estando en el centro del futuro compromiso de la UE en Afganistán. Aunque es importante garantizar la protección de los logros alcanzados, las autoridades afganas deben mejorar la aplicación de las medidas relativas a los derechos de las mujeres. Además, aún se debe progresar para aumentar la participación igualitaria de las mujeres en la sociedad afgana en su conjunto y, en particular, en las estructuras de poder. La Unión Europea continuará fomentando y apoyando los derechos humanos en todos sus programas de desarrollo y a través de una amplia gama de proyectos y actividades de sensibilización para apoyar los derechos de las mujeres afganas y a los defensores de los derechos humanos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001405/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — New Afghan law

A new Afghan law will allow men to attack their wives, children and sisters without fear of judicial punishment, undoing years of slow progress in tackling violence in a country blighted by 'honour' killings, forced marriage and vicious domestic abuse. The small but significant change to Afghanistan's criminal prosecution code bans relatives of an accused person from testifying against them. Most violence against women in Afghanistan occurs within the family, so the law — passed by parliament but awaiting the signature of the president, Hamid Karzai — will effectively silence victims and most potential witnesses to their suffering.

Considering that Mr Karzai came to power with support from the EU with the promise of bringing peace, democracy and respect for women's and minorities' rights in the area, has the European External Action Service (EEAS) been consulted over this fundamental change in the law?

Is the EEAS putting pressure on the Afghan Government and Mr Karzai personally not to pass such legislation, which will inevitably lead to even more violations of women's rights in Afghanistan?

What steps is the EU taking to ensure that Afghanistan is fulfilling its undertakings to improve the situation of women, and that the EU funds provided for that purpose are being made available to reinforce women's rights and participation in society?

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

Following the concerns raised by human rights activists, international partners and the European Union, notably by the HR/VP in her statement of 10 February 2014, President Karzai decided to amend the article in the Criminal Procedure Code which might have prevented relatives from testifying against an alleged abuser.

On 23 February, the Criminal Procedure Code came into force together with a Presidential decree amending the law and addressing this issue. The joint efforts from the international community and the EU proved successful in the law being amended. But there is still the risk that the Afghan parliament may return to the issue. The EU continues to monitor the situation very closely.

The HR/VP remains very concerned about human rights in Afghanistan, in particular the situation of women and girls. Women's rights will continue to be at the centre of the EU's future engagement in Afghanistan. While it is important to ensure that the gains already made are safeguarded, Afghan authorities must improve the implementation of the statutory measures relating to women's rights. In addition, much more needs to be done to increase women's equal participation in Afghan society as a whole and, especially, in the structures of power. The European Union will continue promoting and supporting human rights in all its development programmes and through wide range of projects and awareness raising activities to support the rights of Afghan women and human rights defenders.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001407/14
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Valproate

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) review of valproate and related substances and their use in pregnant women (EMEA/H/A-31/1387) started on 10 October 2013.

The safety of sodium valproate during pregnancy is of vital importance to Epilepsy Action, one of Europe's leading epilepsy organisations. Epilepsy Action have been discussing a possible safety review of valproate since 5 May 2009 with the UK's Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), and the need to include the views and opinions of the patients themselves.

Epilepsy Action is concerned that neither the EMA nor the Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee (PRAC) have made a public call for evidence regarding the views of patients, or taken steps to identify what women of child-bearing age taking valproate understand about the risks associated with the drug in pregnancy.

Can the Commission explain why Epilepsy Action and other patient organisations have so far not been involved in the process, and whether the Commission intends to give these organisations a chance to participate in the process as it moves forward?

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

The referral procedure for valproate and related substances ([1]) is on-going and will be discussed by the Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee (PRAC) in April 2014.

As a first step in the review, the PRAC has addressed a list of questions to all marketing authorisation holders of valproate containing medicinal products to support a thorough review of the relevant available data related to the use of valproate during pregnancy.

Regarding the consultation of patient organisations, there are four civil society members and alternates of the PRAC specifically representing patients and healthcare professionals, who present their views during the assessment process. In addition, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) regularly involves patient representatives within its work ([2]) and has an established network of patient organisations that can be called upon when needed, one of which is the International Bureau of Epilepsy (IBE). During a referral procedure the PRAC can involve patients and healthcare professionals, either via a written consultation or in an *ad hoc* expert group meeting, as appropriate.

In general, the EMA welcomes any relevant information from patient organisations which is shared with it and is committed to ensure that patients' views are captured during the referral procedure.

([1]) Further details of the review are available on the European Medicines Agency's website http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/referrals/Valproate_and_related_substances/human_referral_prac_000032.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac05805c516f.

([2]) See 'Sixth annual report on the interaction with patients' and consumers' organisations (2012)' at http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2013/12/WC500158365.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001410/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Possibile riconoscimento della qualifica professionale di «truccatore di cinema, teatro e TV»

Diverse scuole di trucco a Roma, da molti anni rilasciano, dopo aver frequentato un corso specializzato, la qualifica professionale per «truccatore di cinema, teatro e TV».

L'attestato di qualifica professionale per «truccatore di cinema, teatro e TV», istituito con la legge quadro n. 845 del 1978 e con legge regionale del Lazio n. 23 del 1992, viene così riconosciuto dalla Provincia di Roma e dalla Regione Lazio — Dipartimento sociale Direzione regionale formazione e politiche del lavoro.

Pertanto, le persone che avevano conseguito tale qualifica professionale, che copre anche i truccatori che operano nei reparti oncologici o dermatologici, hanno successivamente chiesto l'iscrizione presso la Camera di commercio con la qualifica di «truccatore di cinema, teatro e TV», al fine di poter aprire la partita IVA ed esercitare l'attività in proprio.

La Camera di commercio, però, ha respinto tale richiesta sostenendo che non esiste tra le categorie artigiane la qualifica di «truccatore di cinema, teatro e TV» come invece risultava dall'attestato, ma esistono categorie affini come quelle di «estetista» ed «acconciatore».

In considerazione di quanto detto precedentemente, coloro che avevano conseguito l'attestato, oltre ad essere impossibilitati ad iscriversi alla Camera di commercio come «truccatore di cinema, teatro e TV», non possiedono nemmeno i requisiti necessari per ottenere l'equipollenza all'unica figura professionale riconosciuta, vale a dire la figura di «estetista».

Eppure la Regione Lazio aveva assicurato che i corsi professionali da loro autorizzati erano corrispondenti a qualifiche effettivamente esistenti a livello europeo al fine di riconoscere e tutelare le nuove professioni emergenti e favorire così l'occupazione. A tutt'oggi, però, non risulta che la Regione Lazio abbia emanato provvedimenti idonei ad aggiornare, nell'ambito del sistema regionale delle qualifiche professionali, la qualifica di estetista includendo anche quella di «truccatore di cinema, teatro e TV» o, in alternativa, istituendo un'autonoma figura professionale. A tutt'oggi, infatti, manca in Italia una regolamentazione unitaria della professione, lasciando alle singole regioni la libertà di legiferare in materia.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. come tutelare e riconoscere giuridicamente la categoria professionale dei «truccatori di cinema, teatro e TV» della Regione Lazio;

2. quali strumenti sono previsti a livello europeo al fine di includere questa nuova professione tra le qualifiche professionali;

3. come viene regolamentata questa figura professionale negli altri paesi dell'UE;

4. un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2014)

Il modo in cui gli Stati membri organizzano il loro sistema di formazione professionale e il tipo e il livello di qualifiche che possono essere richieste per accedere a determinate professioni o attività sono essenzialmente questioni di competenza nazionale, purché siano rispettati i principi di non discriminazione e di proporzionalità.

Nel momento in cui uno Stato membro regolamenta una professione, la direttiva 2005/36/CE ([1]) si applica al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali ottenute in altri Stati membri. La direttiva non si applica quindi a situazioni esclusivamente nazionali.

Sulla base delle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato e di quelle contenute nella banca dati della Commissione sulle professioni regolamentate, la professione di «truccatore di cinema, teatro e TV» non sembra essere regolamentata in Italia o in nessun altro Stato membro, mentre la professione di estetista è regolamentata in 8 Stati membri dell'UE, tra cui l'Italia ([2]).

([1]) Direttiva 2005/36/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 7 settembre 2005, relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali (GU L 255 del 30.9.2005), come modificata dalla direttiva 2013/55/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 20 novembre 2013 (GU 354 del 28.12.2013).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/regprof/index.cfm?action=profession&id_profession=1270.

In considerazione di quanto precede, la Commissione non intende proporre la regolamentazione della professione di «truccatore di cinema, teatro e TV» a livello dell'UE. In termini più generali, sulla base delle conclusione del Consiglio europeo del 2 marzo 2012 e della risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 14 giugno 2012 ([3]), la Commissione ha lanciato un esercizio di trasparenza e di valutazione reciproca ([4]) allo scopo di migliorare l'accesso alle professioni, in particolare per mezzo di un ambiente normativo più adeguato e trasparente negli Stati membri.

([3]) La risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 14 giugno 2012 invita la Commissione a «individuare i settori in cui gli Stati membri bloccano in modo sproporzionato l'accesso alle professioni regolamentate».

([4]) Comunicazione della Commissione europea COM/2013/676, del 2 ottobre 2013, sulla valutazione delle norme nazionali sull'accesso alle professioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001410/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Possible recognition of the professional qualification 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television'

For many years, various make-up schools in Rome have been awarding the professional qualification 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television' to those who complete a specialist course in this field.

The 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television' professional qualification certificate, established by Framework Law No 845 of 1978 and Lazio Regional Law No 23 of 1992, is thus recognised by the Province of Rome and by the Region of Lazio-Social Department-Regional Directorate for training and employment policy.

As a result, the holders of this professional qualification, who also include make-up artists working in the fields of oncology and dermatology, have subsequently asked to be registered with the Chamber of Commerce as a qualified 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television', in order to obtain a VAT number and conduct their business in a proper and legal manner.

These requests have, however, been refused by the Chamber of Commerce, on the grounds that the qualification 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television', as stated on the certificate, does not feature in the official list of artisanal professions, even though similar categories such as 'beautician' and 'hair stylist' do exist.

In light of the above, those who have obtained this certification, as well as being unable to register with the Chamber of Commerce as a 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television', also do not hold the necessary qualifications to be registered as a 'beautician', the only recognised professional role in this field.

The Region of Lazio had previously guaranteed that all of the professional courses that it authorised were equivalent to qualifications actually available on a European level, in order to recognise and protect new emerging professions and thereby increase employment. To date, however, the Region of Lazio has not taken any appropriate measures to update the qualification of beautician, in the regional system of professional job titles, to include 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television', nor has it, as an alternative, created an independent professional role. In fact, there is currently no standard regulation of professions in Italy, which leaves the individual regions free to legislate as they please.

1. In light of the above, can the Commission indicate how the occupational category 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television' in the Region of Lazio can be legally protected and recognised?

2. What measures are in place at a European level to include this new profession amongst professional job titles?

3. How is this professional role regulated in other EU countries?

4. Can it provide a general overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The way Member States internally organise their professional education system and what type and level of certificates might be required for accessing specific professions or activities is essentially a matter of national competence, within the limits of the principles of non-discrimination and proportionality.

If a Member State regulates a profession, Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]) shall apply to the recognition of professional qualifications obtained in other Member States. This directive therefore does not apply to purely internal situations.

On the basis of the information provided by the Honourable Member as well as the Commission's database on regulated professions, the profession of 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television' does not seem to be regulated in Italy or in any other Member State, whereas the profession of beautician is regulated in 8 EU Member States, including Italy ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications (OJ L 255, 30.9.2005), as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 (OJ L354, 28.12.2013).

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/regprof/index.cfm?action=profession&id_profession=1270

In view of the above, the Commission has no plans to propose regulating the profession of 'make-up artist for film, theatre and television' at EU level. More generally, building on the European Council conclusions of 2 March 2012 and the Resolution of the European Parliament of 14 June 2012 ([3]), the Commission has launched a transparency and mutual evaluation exercise ([4]) aiming at improving access to professions, in particular through a more proportionate and transparent regulatory environment in Member States.

([3]) Resolution of the European Parliament of 14 June 2012 calling on the Commission to 'identify areas where Member States are disproportionately blocking access to regulated professions'.

([4]) The European Commission's Communication COM/2013/0676 of 2 October 2013 on evaluating national regulations on access to professions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001416/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD) e Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Normazione nel settore delle taglie dei prodotti tessili

Presso il Comitato europeo di normazione (CEN) si stanno svolgendo trattative per la definizione di standard nel sistema delle taglie dei prodotti tessili. Il dibattito in corso tra i rappresentanti dei settori produttivi sfocia in votazioni che, talvolta, vedono prevalere norme basate su un sistema di taglie già in uso presso aziende del settore, che non rappresentano una visione «super parters» del problema o la posizione della maggioranza delle parti coinvolte, ma solo gli interessi di alcuni Stati membri.

Infatti, i differenti sistemi di codificazione delle taglie esistenti non sono solo il risultato della mancanza di armonizzazione normativa, ma dipendono da scelte imprenditoriali che, soprattutto in certe realtà, sono legate alla vestibilità dei prodotti e al tipo di cliente cui essi sono destinati.

Per ragioni di stile e di tradizione, ad esempio, la moda italiana necessita di un sistema di taglie ben diverso da quello più frequentemente utilizzato da aziende i cui prodotti si rifanno a modelli commerciali più schematici. Questo vale sia per gli indumenti per bambini che per quelli per adulti.

È vero che la Commissione sta considerando di dare al CEN il mandato di standardizzare la materia, con l'obiettivo di introdurre atti legislativi obbligatori in materia di taglie dei prodotti tessili?

La Commissione è consapevole dei costi che le imprese dovrebbero sostenere per adeguarsi obbligatoriamente a un sistema di regole uniforme, privo di una flessibilità che consenta loro di scegliere, nell'ambito della normazione, la collocazione più adeguata alle proprie esigenze di mercato?

La Commissione è consapevole delle difficoltà che troverebbero le aziende del tessile d'alta e media gamma ad adeguarsi a standard non idonei, perché impostati su riferimenti normativi troppo rigidi?

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che un sistema standardizzato per la codifica delle taglie impostato su intervalli di sviluppo misure rigidi può porre un problema anche per la vendita online, nella quale diventerebbe impossibile soddisfare le esigenze dei consumatori più attenti alla vestibilità?

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che i problemi relativi alla vendita online dei prodotti tessili non sono causati solamente dalle diverse espressioni oggi esistenti per le taglie, bensì da difficoltà di ordine pratico, che non saranno certo totalmente superate con la normazione, ma che questa potrebbe contribuire a migliorare solo se correttamente impostata?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2014)

La Commissione è consapevole dell'importanza che i consumatori attribuiscono alle informazioni sulla taglia degli indumenti e sa anche che sono in uso diversi sistemi di etichettatura della taglia. La Commissione è anche a conoscenza degli sforzi compiuti dalle organizzazioni europee e internazionali di normazione (CEN e ISO) per raggiungere un consenso sul modo per fornire ai consumatori le informazioni relative alla taglia. D'altro canto i consumatori hanno familiarità con gli attuali sistemi di etichettatura della taglia e devono essere ancora determinati i vantaggi che deriverebbero da un'etichettatura obbligatoria della taglia. In proposito la Commissione rinvia gli Onorevoli deputati alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-12040/2013 e alla relazione della Commissione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio del 25 settembre 2013 ([1]).

Il regolamento Tessili ([2]) (UE) n.1007/2011 non stabilisce requisiti in relazione all'etichettatura della taglia. Tuttavia, è possibile ricorrere a norme armonizzate per determinare la composizione fibrosa dei prodotti tessili. Le norme europee in merito a un sistema di definizione delle taglie per i prodotti tessili, in corso di sviluppo presso il CEN, non sono correlate al regolamento Tessili e sono sviluppate dagli stakeholder per un uso volontario. Inoltre, il ricorso a norme può non solo rassicurare i consumatori sulla qualità e la sicurezza dei prodotti, ma può anche facilitare i flussi commerciali e lo sviluppo del mercato a vantaggio degli operatori economici.

([1]) COM(2013) 656 final del 25.9.2013 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0656:FIN:IT:PDF).

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 27 settembre 2011, relativo alle denominazioni delle fibre tessili e all'etichettatura e al contrassegno della composizione fibrosa dei prodotti tessili, GU L 272 del 18.10.2011, pag.1. (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:272:0001:0064:IT:pdf)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001416/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD) and Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Standardisation relating to the sizing of textile products

Discussions are currently taking place before the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) aimed at defining a standard sizing system for textile products. The ongoing debate between representatives from various manufacturing sectors is set to end in a vote, which could result in a set of norms being established that are based on a sizing system already in use in the textile industry. However, these norms would not constitute a *super partes* solution to the problem and nor would they represent the position taken by the majority of the parties involved, but would instead solely reflect the interests of a small number of Member States.

Indeed, the array of systems currently used for classifying sizes cannot simply be explained away by a lack of regulatory harmonisation, but is also linked to the choices made by individual businesses. In some cases more than others, these choices are dependent on the 'fit' of the products and the type of clientele targeted.

The sizing system most commonly used by companies whose products fall under more 'flexible' business plans is simply not suitable for the Italian fashion sector, due in part to the particular styles and traditions associated with it (this is equally true for both adults' and children's clothing).

Can the Commission confirm that it is considering bestowing the CEN with the power to standardise the industry, with the aim of introducing mandatory legislation on the sizing of textile products?

Is it aware of the costs which would be incurred by companies being forced to adapt to a uniform system of rules, without any flexibility to choose (within the limits of standardisation) the system best suited to their own market requirements?

Is it aware of the difficulties that would be faced by medium- and high-end textile firms if they are made to adapt to wholly unsuitable standards in order to comply with excessively stringent reference regulations?

Is it aware of the fact that a standardised system using a rigid scale of measurements to classify sizes could also pose a problem to online traders, who would find it impossible to satisfy the demands of consumers paying most attention to the 'fit' of the product?

Is it aware that the problems facing online traders of textile products are not solely down to the variety of expressions currently used for sizes, but are also due to practical difficulties which may not even be completely remedied through standardisation, and that such standardisation will only be able to improve the situation if it is properly imposed?

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

The Commission is aware of the importance that consumers attach to information on the size of clothes and that different size labelling systems are in use. The Commission is also aware of the efforts made by European and international standardisation organisations (CEN and ISO) to reach a consensus on how to convey size information to consumers. On the other hand, consumers are familiar with existing size labelling systems and the benefits of a mandatory size label have yet to be determined. In this respect, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-12040/2013 and to the Commission's report to the European Parliament and the Council of 25 September 2013 ([1]).

The Textile Regulation ([2]) (EU) 1007/2011 does not set specific size labelling requirements. However, harmonised standards can be used for the purpose of determining fibre composition of textile products. European standards on sizing system for textile products, under development in CEN, are not linked to the Textile Regulation and are developed by relevant stakeholders to a voluntary use. Moreover, the use of standards may not only reassure consumers about quality and safety aspects of products but may also facilitate trade flows and market development, for the benefit of economic operators.

([1]) COM(2013) 656 final of 25.9.2013 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0656:FIN:EN:PDF).
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 September 2011 on textile fibre names and related labelling and marking of the fibre composition of textile products; OJ L 272, 18.10.2011, p.1 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:272:0001:0064:EN:pdf).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001419/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Medidas para la inclusión de las personas sordas en la atención de víctimas de violencia de género

Según datos de la Unión Europea de Sordos (EUD), en los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea habitan aproximadamente un millón de personas sordas que son usuarias de la Lengua de Signos. Teniendo en cuenta que este elevado número de personas aún encuentra numerosos obstáculos para ser tenidos en cuenta en los procesos comunicativos de las instituciones, las instituciones europeas deberían garantizar su acceso pleno a la información y la participación política.

Sin embargo, esto no se produce en una forma adecuada, y por tanto se está violando la base de una sociedad democrática: la inclusión de todas las personas en los procesos de participación en las instituciones, así como en la inclusión en el uso de los servicios e información pública. Existen numerosos servicios que ofrecen información pública que no implementan medidas de inclusión para este colectivo. Esto se produce pese a que la Unión Europea ha ratificado diferentes compromisos internacionales relativos a la inclusión de las personas con discapacidad como la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad en 2010.

La Unión Europea pretende implementar su compromiso con las personas discapacitadas a través de la Estrategia Europea en materia de Discapacidad 2010-2020, que debería incluir acciones que permitan la plena integración de las personas sordas. Uno de los casos más problemáticos para las personas sordas es la asistencia a mujeres en casos de violencia de género; debido a su discapacidad, estas personas se encuentran en una dramática situación de abandono institucional, puesto que no pueden acceder a los servicios de atención de las instituciones públicas.

¿Dispone de una evaluación sobre las acciones necesarias para permitir el acceso de las personas sordas que sufran violencia de género a los servicios de atención a las víctimas?

¿Piensa impulsar la inclusión de servicios de asistencia telefónica adaptados con video-interpretación?

¿Está planteando que se incluyan sistemas de asistencia psicológica en la lengua natural de todas las víctimas?

¿Qué acciones piensa impulsar para adaptar los servicios de atención a las víctimas de violencia de género a las personas sordas?

Respuesta en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de marzo de 2014)

La no discriminación, la igualdad de género y la eliminación de la violencia de género constituyen los principios rectores generales de la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020 ([1]). La Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad ([2]) reconoce que las mujeres y las niñas con discapacidad suelen estar expuestas a un riesgo mayor de violencia, lesiones o abuso y exige a los Estados Partes que aseguren «que los servicios de protección tengan en cuenta la edad, el género y la discapacidad».

La Directiva 2012/29/UE establece normas mínimas sobre los derechos, el apoyo y la protección de las víctimas de delitos. Dicha Directiva, que deberá haberse incorporado al derecho interno el 16 de noviembre de 2015, a más tardar, garantizará que las víctimas de delitos tengan derecho al respeto y al reconocimiento, así como a recibir información, apoyo y protección. También pretende que se evalúen individualmente sus necesidades y que las víctimas más vulnerables, como por ejemplo las que sufren violencia de género, reciban un trato adecuado. Asimismo incluye el derecho a entender y a ser entendido: los Estados miembros deben asegurarse de que la comunicación con las víctimas se lleve a cabo en un lenguaje sencillo y accesible, oral o escrito, teniendo en cuenta sus características personales, como por ejemplo una discapacidad que pueda afectar a su capacidad de entender o ser entendidas. Asimismo requiere servicios de apoyo especializados que tengan en cuenta las necesidades de las víctimas.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/disability-strategy/index_es.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/convention/index_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001419/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Measures for the inclusion of deaf people in support for victims of gender-based violence

According to data from the European Union of the Deaf (EUD), approximately one million deaf people who use sign language live in the Member States of the European Union. Given that this large number of people still encounters difficulties when it comes to being taken into account in communication procedures at institutions, European institutions should ensure that deaf people have full access to information and political participation.

However, this is not occurring to an adequate extent and is therefore a violation of the basic principle of a democratic society: the inclusion of all people in procedures for participation in institutions and inclusion in the use of public information and services. Many public information services do not implement measures to include this group of people, in spite of the fact that the European Union has ratified a number of international commitments concerning the inclusion of people with disabilities, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010.

The European Union supposedly follows through on its commitment to disabled people by means of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, which ought to include measures enabling full integration of deaf people. One of the most difficult cases for deaf people is the support provided to women who are victims of gender-based violence; owing to their disability, these women find themselves in a desperate situation where they are abandoned by public institutions, given that they are unable to access the support services that these institutions provide.

Does the Commission have at its disposal an assessment of the measures that are required in order to provide deaf people who have suffered from gender-based violence with access to victim support services?

Does it plan to promote the inclusion of specially adapted telephone support services with video interpretation?

Are there any plans to include schemes providing psychological support in the natural language of all victims?

What measures does the Commission intend to promote in order to adapt support services for victims of gender-based violence to the needs of deaf people?

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

Non-discrimination, gender equality and eliminating gender-based violence are general guiding principles of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]). The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ([2]) recognises that women and girls with disabilities are often at greater risk of violence, injury or abuse and requires States to 'ensure that protection services are age-, gender- and disability-sensitive'.

Directive 2012/29/EU establishes minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime. It needs to be complied with by 16 November 2015 and will ensure that victims of crime have the right to respect and recognition, to receive information, to support and protection. It also aims to ensure that needs of victims are individually assessed and that the most vulnerable, including victims of gender based violence, receive appropriate treatment. It also contains 'the right to understand and be understood': Member States need to ensure that communication with victims happens in simple and accessible language, orally or in writing, taking into account the personal characteristics of the victim like a disability which may affect the ability to understand or to be understood. It also requires specialised support services taking into account the needs of the victims.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/disability-strategy/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/convention/index_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001431/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(11 ta' Frar 2014)

Suġġett: L-indirizzar tal-frodi fiskali

Il-Kummissjoni nediet il-proċess biex tibda negozjati mar-Russja u n-Norveġja dwar ftehimiet ta' kooperazzjoni amministrattiva dwar il-VAT. L-għan ġenerali ta' dawn il-ftehimiet donnu li hu li jiġi stabbilit qafas ta' assistenza reċiproka għall-ġlieda kontra l-frodi fiskali transfruntier u biex jgħin lil kull pajjiż jirkupra l-VAT dovuta lilu.

Il-Kummissjoni qed tikkunsidra li tibda negozjati ma' pajjiżi oħra mhux tal-UE dwar din il-kwistjoni? Jekk iva, fuq liema pajjiżi qed timmira l-Kummissjoni għal tali negozjati?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Šemeta f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Marzu 2014)

L-għan taż-żewġ ftehimiet hu li jiddaħħlu fis-seħħ (fejn ikun possibbli u safejn ikun meħtieġ) l-għodda ta' kooperazzjoni amministrattiva dwar it-Taxxa tal-Valur Miżjud (VAT) mal-pajjiżi kkonċernati, simili ma' dawk li jinsabu fil-leġiżlazzjoni relevanti tal-UE li tirregola l-kooperazzjoni bejn l-Istati Membri.

Il-Kummissjoni ddeċidiet li tibda negozjati mar-Russja u man-Norveġja peress li dawn iż-żewġ pajjiżi wieġbu b'mod pożittiv għall-idea matul il-konverżazzjonijiet ta' kxief tal-bidu li saru s-sena l-oħra. Il-Kummissjoni kienet ukoll f'kuntatt mal-Kanada, maċ-Ċina u mat-Turkija li kienu fost l-imsieħba kummerċjali ewlenin tal-UE. Barra minn hekk, anki peress li l-Istati Uniti ma għandhomx VAT, il-Kummissjoni tilqa' wkoll l-opportunità li tibda djalogu mal-Istati Uniti biex ittejjeb il-kooperazzjoni bejn l-UE u l-Istati Uniti permezz ta' ftehim dwar l-iskambju ta' tagħrif u l-ġlieda kontra l-frodi fil-qasam tat-taxxi tal-VAT/tal-bejgħ.

Skont ir-riżultat ta' din l-ewwel sensiela ta' negozjati l-Kummissjoni hija lesta li tiftaħ negozjati ma' pajjiżi oħrajn.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001431/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Tackling tax fraud

The Commission has launched the process to start negotiations with Russia and Norway on administrative cooperation agreements regarding VAT. The broad goal of these agreements seems to be to establish a framework of mutual assistance in combating cross-border VAT fraud and helping each country to recover the VAT it is due.

Is the Commission considering starting negotiations with other non-EU countries on this matter? If so, which countries is the Commission targeting for such negotiations?

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

The objective of the two agreements is to put in place (where possible and to the extent necessary) tools of administrative cooperation on Value Added Tax (VAT) with the countries concerned similar to those contained in the relevant EU legislation governing cooperation between Member States.

The Commission has decided to begin negotiations with Russia and Norway as these two countries responded positively to the idea during the initial exploratory conversations held last year. The Commission has also been in contact with Canada, China and Turkey which are amongst the main commercial partners of the EU. Furthermore, even though the US does not have a VAT, the Commission would also welcome the opportunity to begin a dialogue with the US to improve EU-US cooperation by means of an agreement on the exchange of information and fight against fraud in the field of VAT/sale taxes.

Depending on the result of this first round of negotiations the Commission is ready to open negotiations with other countries.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001437/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(11 ta' Frar 2014)

Suġġett: Il-miri tal-UE rigward il-kanċer

Il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat 10 fatti dwar il-ġlieda tal-UE kontra l-kanċer għall-Jum Dinji kontra l-Kanċer ta' din is-sena. Fatt Nru 4 jenfasizza l-mira tal-UE li tnaqqas l-inċidenza tal-kanċer bi 15 % sal-2020.

Il-Kummissjoni taħseb li mira daqstant ambizzjuża se tintlaħaq sal-2020? Barra minn hekk, x'qed tagħmel il-Kummissjoni biex tilħaq din il-mira?

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

Mill-1985, meta ġie miftiehem l-ewwel programm tal-"Ewropa Kontra l-Kanċer", il-kanċer sar prijorità fil-politika tas-saħħa pubblika tal-UE. Il-Kummissjoni temmen li sal-2020 jista' jitnaqqas il-piż tal-kanċer fl-UE bi 15% (510,000 każ ġdid).

Il-kooperazzjoni bejn l-UE u l-Istati Membri mrawwma mill-Kummissjoni wriet li hija ta' valur miżjud fil-ġlieda kontra l-kanċer u li tikkontribwixxi għat-tnaqqis tal-aktar forom komuni ta' kanċer. Pereżempju, matul il-perjodu 2000-2010, il-mortalità tal-kanċer tal-pulmun fl-irġiel naqset b'10.8 %. Dan it-tnaqqis seħħ fl-istess żmien taż-żieda fl-għadd ta' kampanji kontra t-tipjip immirati għall-irġiel madwar l-Ewropa.

Filwaqt li tkompli tibni fuq dawn il-kisbiet, il-Kummissjoni ġeddet l-impenn fit-tul tagħha għall-ġlieda kontra l-kanċer billi fl-2009 nediet is-Sħubija Ewropea għall-Azzjoni Kontra l-Kanċer li tiffoka fuq azzjonijiet immirati biex jgħinu lill-Istati Membri sabiex titnaqqas l-inċidenza tal-kanċer: permezz ta' pjanijiet nazzjonali tal-kanċer fl-Istati Membri kollha, prevenzjoni, skrining u ġbir ta' dejta komparabbli.

Matul l-2014 il-Kummissjoni Ewropea biħsiebha tressaq Rapport ta' Implimentazzjoni dwar il-Komunikazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni tal-2009 dwar is-Sħubija għall-Azzjoni Kontra l-Kanċer ([1]) u dwar ir-riżultati tar-Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kunsill tal-2003 dwar l-iskrining tal-kanċer ([2]). Il-Kummissjoni Ewropea qiegħda tikkofinanzja wkoll l-Azzjoni Konġunta l-ġdida "Gwida Ewropea dwar it-Titjib tal-Kwalità fil-Kontroll Komprensiv tal-Kanċer", li se tibda taħdem f'April 2014.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_information/dissemination/diseases/docs/com_2009_291_mt.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:327:0034:0038:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001437/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: EU cancer targets

The Commission has published 10 facts on the EU's fight against cancer for this year's World Cancer Day. Fact 4 highlighted the EU's aim of reducing the incidence of cancer by 15% by 2020.

Does the Commission envisage that such an ambitious target will be reached by 2020? Moreover, what is the Commission doing to achieve this target?

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

Since 1985, when the first 'Europe Against Cancer' programme was agreed upon, cancer has been a priority of EU public health policy. The Commission believes that reducing the burden of cancer in the EU by 15% by 2020 (510 000 new cases) is achievable.

EU cooperation with Member States fostered by the Commission has proven to be of added value in the fight against cancer and to contribute to reducing the most frequently occurring forms of cancers. For example, over the period 2000-2010, lung cancer mortality in men decreased by 10.8%. This decrease coincided with the rising number of anti-smoking campaigns targeting men across Europe.

Building on these achievements, the Commission renewed its long-standing commitment to fighting cancer, by launching the European Partnership for Action against Cancer in 2009 with a focus on actions aiming to help Member States to reduce cancer incidence: national cancer plans in all the Member States, prevention, screening, and comparable data collection.

During 2014 the European Commission intends to put forward an Implementation Report on the 2009 Commission Communication on the Partnership for Action against Cancer ([1]) and on results on the 2003 Council Recommendation on cancer screening ([2]). The European Commission is also co-funding the new Joint Action 'European Guide on Quality Improvement in Comprehensive Cancer Control', which will start its work in April 2014.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_information/dissemination/diseases/docs/com_2009_291_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:327:0034:0038:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001439/14
to the Commission
Arlene McCarthy (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Zero taxation for household energy products

Energy prices continue to rise for households across the EU. In the UK, prices have risen by 37% since 2010, up to eight times the rate of average earnings. At a time when citizens' incomes and public expenditure is being cut across the EU, families are having to choose whether to heat their households or put food on the table.

Given these high prices, can the Commission confirm that there is the possibility for Member States to introduce zero VAT rates for energy products (gas and electricity) used by households?

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

Introducing zero VAT rates for energy products such as gas and electricity used by households would not be in line with the current EU VAT law ([1]). However, after consultation of the VAT Committee, each Member State may apply a reduced VAT rate to the supply of natural gas, electricity or district heating. Based on the information available to the Commission, the UK currently applies a reduced VAT rate of 5% to natural gas and electricity.

There are no plans to extend zero rates to any new supply, as zero rates conflict with VAT being a general consumption tax levied on all taxable supplies of goods and services and reduce the economic efficiency of the VAT system and its purpose to generate revenue. Generally, other means, outside the VAT system, such as well targeted direct compensation paid to households are more efficient than using a general tax such as VAT for social policies.

For additional information concerning the rules on VAT rates and the possibility of applying a zero rate, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions P-5847/2010 by Mr George Lyon ([2]) and E-011212/2013 by Ms Nicole Sinclaire ([3]).

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of VAT — OJ 347, 11.12.06, p. 1 (in particular Art. 96).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2010-5847&language=EN
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-011212&language=EN

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001443/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Calo della produzione industriale

Il progresso della produzione industriale italiana registrato nel mese di novembre 2013 ha già subito una battuta d'arresto. Il mese di dicembre ha registrato un calo dello 0,9 %, per un totale del 3 % per l'intero 2013.

Alla luce di questi dati, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. dispone di dati analoghi per gli altri Stati membri dell'UE?

2. ritiene che, a livello europeo, si possa dire che la ripresa industriale sia ormai del tutto avviata?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2014)

1. Nell'UE28 la produzione industriale è aumentata dell'1,3 % nel novembre 2013 (dicembre 2013: -0,7 %) rispetto al mese precedente. Rispetto allo stesso mese nell'anno precedente la produzione industriale dell'UE28 è aumentata del 2,8 % nel novembre 2013 (dicembre 2013: +0,9 %). Per l'intero 2013 la produzione industriale è calata dello 0,5 % nell'UE28.

Nel dicembre 2013, rispetto al dicembre 2012, la produzione industriale ha registrato le maggiori contrazioni a Cipro (-7,8 %), a Malta (-7,3 %), in Irlanda (-6,7 %) e in Estonia (-6,4 %); gli aumenti maggiori sono stati registrati in Slovacchia (+12,1 %), nel Lussemburgo (+8,7 %), in Portogallo (+7,1 %) e in Romania (+7,0 %).

Secondo il calendario di pubblicazione degli indicatori in euro di Eurostat, le cifre per il gennaio 2014 saranno pubblicate il 12 marzo 2014.

Dati più particolareggiati possono essere scaricati dal seguente sito web:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database (nome di variabile: sts_int_prod).

La Commissione invita inoltre l'Onorevole deputato a consultare l'allegato.

2. Come previsto dalla Commissione, nell'UE la ripresa è iniziata, ma rimane lenta e parziale con differenze significative tra gli Stati membri e tra i diversi settori. Nonostante il calo della produzione dell'UE nel dicembre 2013 (-0,7 %), sempre nel dicembre 2013 la produzione industriale era ancora superiore dello 0,9 % a quella del dicembre 2012 e quasi la metà degli Stati membri si trovava in fase di crescita.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001443/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Downturn in industrial output

The upturn in industrial output that was recorded in Italy in November 2013 has already stalled. The figures for the month of December were down by 0.9%, and those for 2013 as a whole by 3%.

1. Can the Commission say what the figures for the other Member States were?

2. In its view, can we really say that an industrial recovery has started across the EU?

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

1. Industrial production in the EU28 increased by 1.3% in November 2013 (December 2013: -0.7%) compared to the previous month. Compared to the same month in the previous year, EU28 industrial production increased by 2.8% in November 2013 (December 2013: +0.9%). For 2013 as a whole, industrial production in the EU28 decreased by 0.5%.

In December 2013, compared to December 2012, industrial production decreased most in Cyprus (-7.8%), Malta (-7.3%), Ireland (-6.7%) and Estonia (-6.4%); the increases were strongest in Slovakia (+12.1%), Luxembourg (+8.7%), Portugal (+7.1%) and Romania (+7.0%).

According to Eurostat's euro indicators release calendar, figures for January 2014 will be released on 12 March 2014.

More detailed data can be downloaded from the following website:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database (variable name: sts_int_prod).

The Commission also invites the Honourable Member to consult the annex.

2. As forecasted by the Commission, the recovery has begun but remains slow and partial in the EU, with significant differences across Member States and across sectors. Despite the drop in the EU production in December 2013 (-0.7%), industrial production in December 2013 was still 0.9% higher than in December 2012, with almost half of the Member States experiencing growth.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001444/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Campi di internamento negli Stati Uniti

Di recente un giudice della Corte suprema degli Stati Uniti ha criticato alcune leggi statunitensi in materia di detenzione e arresto senza accuse precise o un processo. Nel contesto di un evento pubblico, il giudice, interrogato sui campi di internamento americani destinati, durante la Seconda guerra mondiale, agli immigrati giapponesi, ha affermato che tali pratiche fossero sicuramente sbagliate, ma di non illudersi sul fatto che queste non possano ripetersi in caso di necessità.

Il presidente americano aveva già cercato di placare gli animi sostenendo che non ci sarà alcun abuso di questa legislazione, firmando, inoltre, una dichiarazione in cui promette di non utilizzarla in alcun caso contro cittadini americani. La dichiarazione è tuttavia un documento non vincolante e lascia impregiudicata un'interpretazione estensiva del testo legislativo, motivo per cui, in caso di emergenza nazionale o di guerra, il presidente potrà implementare qualsiasi misura necessaria al fine di mantenere l'ordine e il controllo tra la popolazione.

Tra queste misure figurano anche i campi di rifugiati della *Federal Emergency Management Agency*, che fa capo al Dipartimento di sicurezza nazionale. Questi campi, già in parte utilizzati durante alcune emergenze meteo, come l'uragano Sandy, ricordano dei campi di concentramento, almeno a detta dei profughi che vi sono stati temporaneamente ospitati.

Alla luce di quanto detto, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza di quanto esposto sopra?

2. ritiene che sia opportuno approfondire la questione interpellando le autorità americane competenti?

3. intende avviare delle attività esplorative per valutare se la situazione sopra descritta possa in potenza portare alla violazione dei diritti fondamentali di cittadini americani o stranieri che dovessero essere arrestati a norma di tale legislazione?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(1º aprile 2014)

L'onorevole deputato fa sicuramente riferimento all'ordinanza esecutiva 9066 del 1942, che autorizzava l'esclusione di qualsiasi persona dalle zone designate per garantire la sicurezza contro i sabotaggi, lo spionaggio e le attività della quinta colonna, e che ha portato successivamente alla detenzione di circa 120 000 persone in «relocation center» militari. L'ordinanza non è più in vigore dalla fine della seconda guerra mondiale. La legge sulle libertà civili del 1988 ha definito l'incarcerazione «una grave ingiustizia», presentando scuse e offrendo mezzi di ricorso ai superstiti.

Dopo gli attentati dell'11 settembre, gli Stati Uniti hanno adottato una legislazione che autorizzava implicitamente il presidente a disporre la detenzione militare, ivi compreso nel carcere di Guantanamo, delle persone catturate nel corso del conflitto con Al Qaeda e le entità collegate. Questo potere è stato successivamente codificato nella legge di autorizzazione in materia di difesa nazionale (National Defence Authorisation Act — NDAA) del 2012. Nella dichiarazione a cui si riferisce l'onorevole deputato, il presidente Obama ha specificato che la sua amministrazione avrebbe interpretato e applicato in modo flessibile le disposizioni di tale legge conformemente alla costituzione degli Stati Uniti, alle leggi di guerra e a tutti gli altri atti legislativi applicabili.

L'UE ha espresso alle autorità statunitensi le sue preoccupazioni in merito alla compatibilità dell'NDAA con il diritto internazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001444/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Internment camps in the United States

A United States Supreme Court Justice recently criticised US legislation on detention and arrest without specific charges or a trial. When questioned, at a public event, on American internment camps set up to accommodate Japanese immigrants during the Second World War, the Justice stated that, although such practices were certainly wrong, we should not fool ourselves by thinking the same thing will not happen again if the need arises.

The American President had already sought to calm the waters by maintaining that there will be no abuse of this legislation and also signed a declaration promising not to use it against American citizens under any circumstances. However, the declaration is a non-binding document and leaves the way open to a liberal interpretation of the legislative text, which means that, in case of war or national emergency, the President will be able to implement any measures necessary to maintain law and order among the population.

Such measures include the refugee camps set up by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, part of the Department of Homeland Security. These camps, some of which are already used in weather emergencies such as Hurricane Sandy, are reminiscent of concentration camps, at least according to the displaced persons temporarily accommodated therein.

In the light of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following questions:

1. Is she aware of the above situation?

2. Does she think it expedient to clarify this matter by approaching the competent American authorities?

3. Does she intend to take exploratory action to assess whether the situation described above could potentially lead to breaches of the fundamental rights of American or foreign citizens arrested under this legislation?

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

The Honourable Member must be referring to Executive Order 9066 of 1942 which gave the power to exclude any person from designated areas in order to provide security against sabotage, espionage and fifth column activity, later leading to the detention of around 120 000 persons in military 'relocation centers'. The Order ceased to be effective with the cessation of World War II hostilities. The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 judged the incarceration 'a grave injustice' and offered apology and redress to survivors.

In the wake of the 9-11 terrorist attacks, the US passed legislation which implicitly provided for the President's authority to militarily detain persons captured in the conflict with Al Qaeda and affiliated entities, and *inter alia*, to detain individuals at Guantanamo Bay. This authority was subsequently codified in the National Defence Authorisation Act 2012. In the statement referred to by the Hon. Member, US President Obama declared that his Administration would interpret and implement the provisions of that Act in a flexible manner complying with the US Constitution, the laws of war, and all other applicable law.

The EU raised with the US authorities its concerns as regards the compatibility of the NDAA with International Law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001445/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Cittadino italiano imprigionato in Guinea Equatoriale

Un imprenditore italiano di 49 anni è rinchiuso in galera da più di un anno in Guinea equatoriale con l'accusa di frode fiscale sulla base della quale è stato condannato a due anni e quattro mesi di carcere e al pagamento di 1,2 milioni di euro.

L'imprenditore, che nel 2011 aveva costituito la propria società di costruzioni edili, si è reso conto di alcune irregolarità nei conti dell'azienda e, nel momento in cui ha chiesto spiegazioni, è stato arrestato. Il problema è che a un certo punto l'imprenditore si accorge che i conti non tornavano: nelle casse della società mancano molti soldi. Chiede spiegazioni. E per tutta risposta viene arrestato, di notte nella propria casa. Da due mesi l'imprenditore italiano è in isolamento e non può ricevere visite.

L'Italia non dispone di una rappresentanza in Guinea Equatoriale e pertanto è l'ambasciata italiana in Camerun a occuparsi della questione, ma questa situazione indebolisce l'azione del governo italiano.

Alla luce di quanto detto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza della situazione sopra descritta?

2. ha già compiuto delle azioni in merito per garantire i diritti fondamentali del cittadino italiano;

3. è conoscenza di contatti del cittadino italiano con una o più ambasciate di altri Stati membri dell'Unione, in base al principio di riconoscimento della tutela consolare?

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

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza di questo caso, che segue con la massima attenzione.

L'AR/VP è in contatto con le rappresentanze degli Stati membri in Guinea Equatoriale. Durante una recente visita a Malabo, il capo della delegazione UE accreditato in Guinea Equatoriale ha sollevato con le autorità diversi casi riguardanti i diritti umani, ivi compreso quello oggetto dell'interrogazione.

Stando alle informazioni ricevute, il cittadino italiano in questione ha beneficiato di assistenza consolare e il 7 febbraio ha ricevuto la visita del console spagnolo a Bata. È stato ricordato alle autorità della Guinea Equatoriale che questo caso è oggetto di grande attenzione da parte dell'UE. Il miglioramento dei diritti umani in Guinea Equatoriale è una priorità assoluta nell'ambito delle relazioni dell'UE con questo paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001445/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Italian citizen imprisoned in Equatorial Guinea

A 49-year-old Italian businessman has been imprisoned for more than a year in Equatorial Guinea on a charge of tax fraud, on the basis of which he was sentenced to two years and four months in prison and a fine of EUR 1.2 million.

The businessman, who had set up his own construction company in 2011, noticed a number of irregularities in the company accounts. When he asked for explanations, he was arrested. The problem was that the businessman had at some point become aware that the company accounts did not add up and a substantial amount of company money was missing. When he sought explanations, the only response he received was to be arrested, by night and at his own home. For two months now, the Italian businessman has been held in isolation and is not permitted to receive visitors.

Given that Italy has no representation in Equatorial Guinea, the Italian Embassy in Cameroon is having to deal with this matter, a situation which weakens the action of the Italian Government.

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

1. Is it aware of the situation described above?

2. Has it taken action to protect the fundamental rights of this Italian citizen?

3. Is it aware of contacts between the Italian citizen and one or more Embassies in other EU Member States in accordance with the principle of recognition of consular protection?

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

The HR/VP is aware and following this case closely.

The HR/VP is liaising with EU Member States represented in Equatorial Guinea. During a recent visit to Malabo, the EU Head of Delegation accredited to Equatorial Guinea raised with the authorities several human rights cases, including the case raised in the question.

We have been informed that the Italian citizen in question has received consular assistance and was last visited on 7 February by the Spanish Consul in Bata. The authorities of Equatorial Guinea have been reminded of the EU's strong attention on this case. The improvement of human rights in Equatorial Guinea is a top priority for the EU in its relations with Equatorial Guinea.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001446/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Diffusione ed efficacia della pet therapy

La pet therapy consiste in interventi pianificati di tipo pedagogico, psicologico e di integrazione sociale tra animali e pazienti bambini, giovani, adulti e anziani con disabilità cognitive, socio-emotive e motorie e con problemi comportamentali. Può essere sia di tipo riabilitativo che preventivo.

In merito a quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. dispone di dati relativi alla diffusione della pet therapy negli Stati membri dell'UE;

2. dispone di dati consolidati relativi ai margini di successo della pet therapy?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2014)

La Commissione europea non possiede informazioni sulla disponibilità o sull'efficacia della pet therapy negli Stati membri dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001446/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Availability and effectiveness of animal-assisted therapy

Animal-assisted therapy involves scheduled sessions between animals and patients of a variety of ages (children, teenagers, adults and the elderly) with cognitive, socio-emotional and motor disabilities, as well as for those with behavioural issues. These sessions can focus on education, psychology and social integration in either a preventative or rehabilitative context.

1. In light of the above, does the Commission have any information available relating to the availability of animal-assisted therapy in Member States of the EU?

2. Does it have any consolidated information available on the success rates of animal-assisted therapy?

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

The European Commission has no information about the availability or effectiveness of animal-assisted therapy in the EU Member States.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001447/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Incremento nei consumi di droghe

Nel 2012 in Puglia sono raddoppiati i consumi di cocaina e di cannabis: tra i ragazzi pugliesi (15-19 anni) si registra una percentuale di consumi di sostanze psicoattive maggiore rispetto alla media nazionale, con riferimento sia agli ultimi 12 mesi (23,5 % per la regione Puglia contro il 22,5 % a livello nazionale) che agli ultimi 30 giorni (17,1 % per la regione Puglia contro il 15,9 % a livello nazionale). I consumi di cocaina hanno raggiunto le 4,23 dosi/giorno/1000 abitanti.

Lo studio analizza anche le abitudini dei detenuti che presentano problematiche legate alla droga, che sono il 58,6 %, per oltre il 65 % dei quali è stata formulata una diagnosi di dipendenza. Il numero di soggetti con problemi correlati alla droga (sia dipendenti che consumatori) rilevato in Puglia risulta nettamente superiore al dato nazionale (+24,4 %).

Alla luce di questi dati, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se disponga di dati analoghi per gli altri Stati membri dell'Unione;

2. se abbia avviato o intenda avviare campagne di sensibilizzazione mirate a ridurre i consumi di queste droghe.

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

L'OEDT ([1]) fornisce informazioni sull'uso di droghe e sui problemi legati agli stupefacenti negli Stati membri dell'UE. Esso presenta ogni anno una relazione sulle tendenze e gli sviluppi relativi alle questioni inerenti alla droga.

Dalla Relazione europea sulla droga 2013 ([2]) dell'OEDT emerge che negli ultimi anni la situazione in materia di droga è rimasta relativamente invariata in Europa. Secondo tale relazione, mentre il consumo di stupefacenti nell'UE rimane elevato, si possono osservare alcuni cambiamenti positivi come, in particolare, la riduzione del consumo di eroina, cocaina e cannabis. Allo stesso tempo, però, vengono utilizzate nell'UE molte nuove sostanze psicoattive potenzialmente dannose che si diffondono rapidamente nel mercato interno.

La relazione evidenzia inoltre che la popolazione carceraria registra i tassi più elevati di consumo di droga e le modalità di consumo più nocive. Ad esempio, tra il 5 % e il 31 % dei detenuti ha assunto stupefacenti per via endovenosa, mentre nei 13 paesi per i quali sono disponibili stime recenti, il consumo di droghe iniettabili varia da meno di uno a circa sei casi su 1 000 abitanti nella fascia di età tra i 15 e i 64 anni.

La riduzione della domanda di droga è principalmente di competenza degli Stati membri che elaborano le politiche concernenti la prevenzione e la cura della tossicodipendenza nonché la riduzione dei danni che ne derivano, al fine di sensibilizzare sui rischi connessi al consumo di droga nonché ridurre l'uso di stupefacenti e i danni che questi provocano ai singoli e alla società.

La Commissione integra l'azione degli Stati membri in materia di riduzione della domanda di droga, promuovendo per esempio lo sviluppo di approcci innovativi o incoraggiando la condivisione delle migliori prassi mediante programmi realizzati col sostegno dell'UE. Il programma Prevenzione e informazione in materia di droga ([3]) ha finanziato vari progetti incentrati sulla sensibilizzazione e su nuovi metodi di prevenzione mirati ai giovani.

([1]) Osservatorio europeo delle droghe e delle tossicodipendenze.
([2]) Relazione europea sulla droga 2013: tendenze e sviluppi. http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_213154_EN_TDAT13001ENN1.pdf
([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, pagg. 23-29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001447/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Increase in drug use

Cocaine and cannabis use in Apulia doubled in 2012. In teenagers (aged 15-19) in Apulia the percentage use of psychoactive substances is higher than the national average, based both on figures for the last 12 months (23.5% in the Apulia region compared with 22.5% nationwide) and figures for the last 30 days (17.1% in the Apulia region compared with 15.9% nationwide). Cocaine use currently amounts to 4.23 snorts per day per 1 000 inhabitants.

The study in question also analyses the habits of prisoners presenting with drug-related problems (58.6%), over 65% of whom have received a diagnosis of addiction. The number of persons with drug-related problems (addicts or users) recorded in Apulia considerably exceeds the national figure (+ 24.4%).

In the light of the above, the Commission is asked the following questions:

1. Does the Commission have comparable data for other EU Member States?

2. Has the Commission launched public awareness campaigns designed to reduce use of the above drugs or does it intend to do so?

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

The EMCDDA ([1]) provides information on drug use and drug-related problems in the EU Member States. It reports annually on trends and developments relating to drug issues.

The 2013 European Drug Report ([2]) from the EMCDDA shows that the drugs situation has remained relatively stable in Europe in recent years. According to this report, while drug use remains high by historical standards in the EU, positive changes can be seen, notably a reduction in heroin injection, cocaine consumption and cannabis smoking. However, at the same time a large number of potentially harmful new psychoactive substances is emerging in the EU and is spreading fast in the internal market.

The report also notes that prisoners present higher overall rates of drug use and more harmful patterns of use, than the general population does. For instance, between 5% and 31% of prisoners have injected drugs. In the 13 countries that have recent estimates, the prevalence of injecting drug use ranges from less than one to approximately six cases per 1 000 population aged 15-64.

Drug-demand reduction is primarily a competence of the Member States, which develop policies on drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction, to raise awareness about the risks of drug use, to reduce use and the harms that drugs cause to the individuals and society.

The Commission complements Member States' action on drug-demand reduction by supporting the development of innovative approaches, for instance, or the sharing of best practices, through EU financial programmes. The Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([3]) has funded several projects on awareness raising and on innovative prevention methods aimed at young people.

([1]) European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction.
([2]) European Drugs report 2013: Trends and Developments. http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_213154_EN_TDAT13001ENN1.pdf
([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 Drug Prevention And Information as part of the General Programme Fundamental Rights and Justice . OJ L 257, 3.10.2007, p. 23-29.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001448/14
adresată Comisiei
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(11 februarie 2014)

Subiect: Strategia UE cu privire la sănătatea reproductivă

Având în vedere dreptul la libera circulație a lucrătorilor europeni care este folosit de un număr important de femei;

Având în vedere faptul că femeile sunt ființe umane cu nevoi și drepturi specifice în ceea ce privește sănătatea reproductivă, că femeile își asumă mult mai mult decât bărbații sarcina creșterii copiilor și că există chiar numeroase familii monoparentale susținute de femei;

Având în vedere faptul că femeile sunt singurele ființe umane care pot da naștere și că, în consecință, este firesc să aibă dreptul de a decide cu privire la aceasta;

Având în vedere faptul că formularea și implementarea politicilor în domeniul sănătății, inclusiv a celei reproductive, este de competența statelor membre, ceea ce presupune diferențe de tratament al femeilor care muncesc sau locuiesc pe întreg cuprinsul UE;

Ar putea Comisia Europeană preciza dacă are o strategie unitară prin care toate femeile europene să aibă garanția că își pot exercita dreptul la sănătatea reproductivă și drepturile aferente în mod uniform, pentru a se bucura de tratament egal, nediscriminatoriu, oriunde s-ar afla în spațiul UE?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(25 martie 2014)

În ceea ce privește sănătatea și asistența medicală, Tratatele au acordat competențe limitate Uniunii Europene. Tratatele garantează fiecărei persoane dreptul de a avea acces la asistența medicală preventivă și de a beneficia de îngrijiri medicale, în condițiile stabilite de legislațiile naționale.

În același timp, organizarea și prestarea de servicii de sănătate și de îngrijire medicală, precum și modul de gestionare a resurselor și alocarea acestora sunt de competența fiecărui stat membru.

Comisia Europeană colaborează cu statele membre pentru a încuraja schimbul de bune practici și pentru a utiliza resursele în modul cel mai avantajos și eficace.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001448/14
to the Commission
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: EU strategy on reproductive health

Many women avail themselves of the right to freedom of movement.

Women are human beings with specific needs and specific rights in terms of reproductive health, and they play a greater role than men in the raising of children, in addition to which many single-parent families are supported by women.

Women alone are capable of giving birth and, consequently, it is only natural for them to have the right to make decisions in this respect.

The formulation and implementation of policies relating to health, including reproductive health, are the responsibility of the national authorities, leading to disparities regarding the treatment of women working or living in any of the EU Member States.

Does the European Commission have a strategy to guarantee uniform enjoyment of the right to reproductive health and hence equal and non-discriminatory treatment for all European women throughout the EU?

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

In relation to health and healthcare, the Treaties have granted limited competence to the European Union. They guarantee everyone the right to access preventive healthcare and to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws.

At the same time, the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care, and the management and allocation of resources are the competence of the individual Member States.

The European Commission works with Member States in order to foster the sharing of good practices, and to deploy resources in the most beneficial and effective way.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001449/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Χαρτογράφηση και εκτίμηση των οικοσυστημάτων και των υπηρεσιών τους και ο ρόλος της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής

Στη Στρατηγική της ΕΕ για τη βιοποικιλότητα με ορίζοντα το 2020, η οποία υιοθετήθηκε από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή το 2011, και στα πλαίσια του στόχου 2 για τη «διατήρηση και βελτίωση των οικοσυστημάτων και των υπηρεσιών που παρέχουν», περιλαμβάνεται η Δράση 5 για τη «Βελτίωση των γνώσεων σχετικά με τα οικοσυστήματα και τις οικοσυστημικές υπηρεσίες στην ΕΕ». Αυτή προβλέπει ότι «Τα κράτη μέλη, επικουρούμενα από την Επιτροπή, θα χαρτογραφήσουν και θα εκτιμήσουν την κατάσταση των οικοσυστημάτων και των οικοσυστημικών υπηρεσιών στην επικράτειά τους μέχρι το 2014 και, μέχρι το 2020, θα εκτιμήσουν την οικονομική αξία των υπηρεσιών αυτών και θα προωθήσουν την ενσωμάτωσή της στα συστήματα λογιστικής απεικόνισης και υποβολής στοιχείων σε ενωσιακό και εθνικό επίπεδο.»

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή,

1. Ποια κράτη μέλη έχουν χαρτογραφήσει και εκτιμήσει μέχρι σήμερα την κατάσταση των οικοσυστημάτων και των υπηρεσιών που αυτά προσφέρουν (παροχή νερού, καθαρισμός αέρα, φυσική ανακύκλωση αποβλήτων, εδαφογένεση, επικονίαση, ρυθμιστικοί μηχανισμοί της φύσης που ελέγχουν τις κλιματικές συνθήκες και τους πληθυσμούς των ζώων, των εντόμων και άλλων οργανισμών);

2. Πού εντοπίζονται οι δυσκολίες στην ικανοποίηση του στόχου στα κράτη μέλη που δεν έχουν ανταποκριθεί ακόμα στο στόχο της χαρτογράφησης και εκτίμησης των οικοσυστημάτων και των υπηρεσιών τους;

3. Ποια ήταν η βοήθεια που η Επιτροπή παρέσχε μέχρι σήμερα στα κράτη μέλη για το σκοπό αυτό; Υπήρξε διαφοροποίηση της βοήθειας σε κράτη μέλη που υστερούν λόγω αδύναμων θεσμών ή λόγω οικονομικής κρίσης;

4. Ποια επιπρόσθετη βοήθεια σκέφτεται η Επιτροπή να παράσχει στα κράτη μέλη που δεν έχουν εκπληρώσει ακόμη την υποχρέωσή τους αυτή;

5. Πώς η Επιτροπή προτίθεται να βοηθήσει τα κράτη μέλη ώστε αυτά να ανταποκριθούν εγκαίρως και με επιτυχία στην υποχρέωση να εκτιμήσουν μέχρι το 2020 την οικονομική αξία των υπηρεσιών αυτών, που συχνά δεν αποτιμώνται στην αγορά (π.χ. η πραγματική αξία της παροχής νερού);

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Μαρτίου 2014)

1. Το Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο και η Ισπανία ολοκλήρωσαν την αξιολόγηση της κατάστασης των οικοσυστημάτων και των υπηρεσιών τους ([1]).

2. Τα αποτελέσματα της χαρτογράφησης και αξιολόγησης της κατάστασης των οικοσυστημάτων και των υπηρεσιών τους (MAES) θα ολοκληρωθούν στο τέλος του 2014. Είναι πρόωρο να προσδιοριστούν τυχόν δυσκολίες.

3. Η Επιτροπή και ο ευρωπαϊκός οργανισμός περιβάλλοντος (ΕΕΑ) στηρίζουν τα κράτη μέλη μέσω της αποκλειστικής ομάδας εργασίας MAES και παρέχουν εργαλεία και εμπειρογνωμοσύνη, ιδίως για τη μοντελοποίηση και τη χαρτογράφηση. Μία σύμβαση υπηρεσιών υποστηρίζει την παροχή κατάλληλων περιπτωσιολογικών μελετών και εργασιών που έχουν ήδη πραγματοποιηθεί στα κράτη μέλη. Στις 10-13 Φεβρουαρίου 2014 διοργανώθηκε ένα πρακτικό εργαστήριο με εθελοντική συμμετοχή των κρατών μελών. Το 2013 δημοσιεύθηκε μια πρόσκληση για δράση συντονισμού η οποία θα οδηγήσει σε συμφωνία επιχορήγησης στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος «Ορίζοντας 2020», το 2014.

4. Η Επιτροπή και ο ΕΕΑ προσφέρουν κατάρτιση για τους εμπειρογνώμονες των κρατών μελών. Ευρωπαϊκά ερευνητικά έργα τα οποία χρηματοδοτούνται στο πλαίσιο του 7ου προγράμματος πλαισίου (FP7), όπως το OpenNESS (Λειτουργικότητα του φυσικού κεφαλαίου και των οικοσυστημικών υπηρεσιών), το OPERAs (Επιχειρησιακό δυναμικό των ερευνητικών εφαρμογών του οικοσυστήματος), και το EU BON (Δημιουργία του ευρωπαϊκού δικτύου παρακολούθησης της βιοποικιλότητας), θα συμβάλουν στην MAES.

5. Η Επιτροπή και ο ΕΕΑ έχουν ήδη αρχίσει να συνεργάζονται με τα κράτη μέλη για την αποτίμηση των οικοσυστημικών υπηρεσιών και την ένταξη στα λογιστικά συστήματα. Η ταξιμόμηση των οικοσυστημικών υπηρεσιών ([2]) προτάθηκε στο Αναλυτικό πλαίσιο της MAES. Μια δοκιμαστική επιχείρηση λογιστικής απεικόνισης του φυσικού κεφαλαίου (NCA) δρομολογήθηκε το 2013 με τη συμμετοχή των κρατών μελών. Μια μελέτη με αντικείμενο τη σύνθεση των προσεγγίσεων για την αξιολόγηση και την αποτίμηση των οικοσυστημικών υπηρεσιών στην ΕΕ, υποστηρίχθηκε από την Επιτροπή στο πλαίσιο του «The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity — TEEB».

([1]) Η αξιολόγηση του εθνικού οικοσυστήματος του Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου — NEA — και η αξιολόγηση των οικοσυστημάτων της χιλιετίας, της Ισπανίας — EME.
([2]) Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services — CICES.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001449/14
to the Commission
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: The mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services and the role of the Commission

Target 2 of the EU's Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, adopted by the Commission in 2011, entitled 'Maintain and Restore Ecosystems and their Services', includes Action 5: 'Improve knowledge of ecosystems and their services in the EU'. This provides that 'Member States, with the assistance of the Commission, will map and assess the state of ecosystems and their services in their national territory by 2014, assess the economic value of such services, and promote the integration of these values into accounting and reporting systems at EU and national level by 2020.'

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Which Member States have so far mapped and assessed the state of ecosystems and the services they provide (water supply, air purification, natural waste recycling, soil formation , pollination, the regulatory mechanisms of nature that control climatic conditions and populations of animals, insects and other organisms)?

2. What are the difficulties encountered by those Member States that have not yet met the target of mapping and assessing ecosystems and their services?

3. What assistance has so far been provided by the Commission to Member States for this purpose? Has there been any difference in the assistance granted to Member States lagging behind because of weak institutions or the economic crisis?

4. What additional help is the Commission thinking of providing to those Member States that have not yet met this obligation?

5. How does the Commission intend to assist Member States so that they successfully meet their obligation on time to assess by 2020 the economic value of these services, which often are not taken into account by the market (e.g. the real value of the water supply)?

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

1. The UK and Spain have completed national assessments of the state of ecosystems and their services ([1]).

2. The results of mapping and assessing the state of ecosystems and their services (MAES) will be finalised at the end of 2014. It is premature to identify any difficulties.

3. The Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA) support Member States via the dedicated MAES working group and provide tools and expertise, in particular on modelling and mapping. A service contract supports the provision of relevant case studies and work already undertaken in Member States. A hands-on workshop was organised with volunteering Member States on 10-13 February 2014. A call for coordination action, published in 2013 should lead to a grant agreement under Horizon 2020 in 2014.

4. The Commission and the EEA are offering training for experts from Member States. European research projects funded under the 7th Framework Programme (FP7), such as OpenNESS (Operationalization of Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services), OPERAs (Operational Potential of Ecosystem Research Applications), and EU BON (Building the European Biodiversity Observation Network), will contribute to MAES.

5. The Commission and the EEA have already started working with the Member States on the valuation of ecosystem services and integration into accounting systems. A classification of ecosystem services ([2]) has been proposed in the MAES Analytical Framework. A pilot exercise on Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) was launched in 2013 with the involvement of Member States. A study synthesising the approaches to assess and value ecosystem services in the EU has been supported by the Commission in the context of 'The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity — TEEB'.

([1]) UK National Ecosystem Assessment — NEA — and the Spanish Evaluación de los Ecosistemas del Milenio de España — EME.
([2]) Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services — CICES.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001450/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Συμβουλευτικές υπηρεσίες σε γεωργικές εκμεταλλεύσεις

Ήδη από το «Διαγνωστικό Έλεγχο» («Health Check») της Κοινής Γεωργικής Πολιτικής προβλέπονταν πρόσθετες δυνατότητες για τη χρησιμοποίηση συμβουλευτικών υπηρεσιών σε γεωργικές εκμεταλλεύσεις, μέσω προγραμμάτων διάδοσης γνώσης και κατάρτισης του Πυλώνα ΙΙ (αγροτική ανάπτυξη).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή,

Έχει γίνει αποτίμηση της αποτελεσματικότητας των συμβουλευτικών υπηρεσιών σε γεωργικές εκμεταλλεύσεις; Εάν ναι, υπάρχουν ενιαία κριτήρια αποτίμησης σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη;

Ποια είναι τα κράτη μέλη με τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές στην παροχή συμβουλευτικών υπηρεσιών μέσω αυτών των προγραμμάτων;

Πώς προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να εξασφαλίσει αναβάθμιση των υπηρεσιών αυτών σε κράτη μέλη που φαίνεται να μην εξασφαλίζουν αποτελεσματική χρήση αυτού του μέτρου;

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Μαρτίου 2014)

Κατά την άποψη της Επιτροπής, η υποστήριξη δραστηριοτήτων μεταφοράς γνώσεων και κατάρτισης για τους γεωργούς στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής αγροτικής ανάπτυξης, αποτελεί σημαντικό εργαλείο πολιτικής για τη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας και της βιωσιμότητας των γεωργικών τους εκμεταλλεύσεων. Μεταξύ των δραστηριοτήτων αυτών, η παροχή συμβουλών είναι ιδιαίτερα σημαντική, διότι προσφέρει εξατομικευμένη υπηρεσία στους γεωργούς, ικανής να ανταποκριθεί στις ιδιαίτερες ανάγκες τους.

Το 2009 πραγματοποιήθηκε μία ανεξάρτητη αξιολόγηση των συμβουλευτικών υπηρεσιών, η «αξιολόγηση της εφαρμογής του συστήματος παροχής συμβουλών σε γεωργικές εκμεταλλεύσεις». Η αξιολόγηση αυτή, για την οποία χρησιμοποιήθηκε κοινή μεθοδολογία, κάλυψε την ΕΕ των 27.

Αντικείμενο της αξιολόγησης δεν ήταν η καταγραφή των βέλτιστων πρακτικών σε υπηρεσίες παροχής συμβουλών, ως έχουν, αλλά η εξέταση των διαφορών κατά την εφαρμογή του ΣΠΓΣΕ στα κράτη μέλη. Καταλήγει στο συμπέρασμα ότι η επιτυχία του συστήματος παροχής συμβουλών σε γεωργικές εκμεταλλεύσεις (ΣΠΓΣΕ) όσον αφορά την ευαισθητοποίηση των γεωργών εξαρτάται κατά κύριο λόγο από το περιεχόμενο των συμβουλών και τους τρόπους με τους οποίους αυτές παρέχονται, οι οποίοι διαφέρουν μεταξύ των κρατών μελών. Η παροχή εξατομικευμένων συμβουλών έχει το πλεονέκτημα της πληρότητας, ενώ η παροχή συμβουλών σε μικρή ομάδα γεωργών καθώς και η θεματικά προσδιορισμένη παροχή συμβουλών μπορεί να συντελέσει στην αύξηση του αριθμού των γεωργών που υποστηρίζεται από την παροχή συμβουλών.

Η Επιτροπή θα προωθήσει τη χρήση συμβουλευτικών υπηρεσιών κατά την περίοδο 2014-2020 με τη διεύρυνση τόσο του πεδίου εφαρμογής όσο και της ποιότητας των παρεχόμενων συμβουλών. Αυτό θα εξασφαλιστεί χάρη στις κατάλληλες ικανότητες των επαγγελματιών που παρέχουν συμβουλές, οι οποίοι πρέπει να επιμορφώνονται τακτικά. Για τον σκοπό αυτό, η επιμόρφωση των συμβούλων θα ενισχυθεί ομοίως από την πολιτική αγροτικής ανάπτυξης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001450/14
to the Commission
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Advisory services for farmers

The Common Agricultural Policy Health Check already provided for additional opportunities for farmers to use advisory services through the knowledge dissemination and training programmes under the Second Pillar (Rural Development).

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Has there been any evaluation of the effectiveness of the advisory services for farmers? If so, do uniform evaluation criteria exist in all Member States?

Which Member States have the best practices in providing advisory services through these programmes?

How will it ensure that such services are upgraded in those Member States that appear not to be using this measure effectively?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2014)

The Commission considers the support of knowledge transfer and training activities for farmers under the Rural Development Policy as an important policy instrument to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of their farms. Among these activities, advice is especially relevant because it provides a tailor made service for farmers to fit their specific needs.

An independent evaluation of the advisory services, 'Evaluation of the Implementation of the Farm Advisory System', was realised in 2009. This evaluation covered the EU-27 using a common methodology.

The evaluation does not report on best practices in advisory services as such, but analyses differences between the FAS implementation in the Member States. It comes to the conclusion that the success of the FAS in awareness raising among farmers is primarily determined by the content of the advice and the ways through which the advice is delivered, which differ between Member States. One-to-one advice has the advantage of comprehensiveness, while small group advice and thematic advice allow expanding the number of farmers supported by advice.

The Commission will promote the use of advisory services in the period 2014-2020 by enlarging both the scope and the quality of the advice. This will be ensured by the appropriate capacities of the professionals providing advice who have to be regularly trained. To this end, the training of advisor will also be supported by the rural development policy.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001452/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Erasmus en España

El número de becas Erasmus en España continuará siendo de 40 000 plazas para el curso 2014-2015, pero su duración se limitará a un semestre. Así se adecua el programa a la reducción del presupuesto destinado por el Gobierno español a estas becas, que pasa de 34 a 18 millones de euros, a pesar de la decisión de la UE de aumentar los fondos de esta partida ([1]) en el marco financiero plurianual.

Según los datos del Organismo Autónomo de Programas Educativos Europeos (OAPEE), «casi todos los alumnos están fuera el año completo, son minoría los que se van un semestre (…) ya que nuestros alumnos no tienen un buen nivel de idiomas y cuando empiecen a soltarse es cuando van a tener que volver».

Los estudiantes van a recibir, de media, unos 250 euros —frente a los 215 actuales, al sumar la beca ministerial y comunitaria— y los beneficiarios de una beca general, de media, 350 euros.

España, con 40 000 beneficiarios de la beca Erasmus, sigue siendo el país que más alumnos recibe y envía, frente a los 30 000 alumnos que envían Alemania o Francia, o los apenas 13 000 alumnos británicos.

— ¿Conoce la Comisión estas cifras?

— ¿Considera que la beca Erasmus media otorgada por el Gobierno español es ínfima y no cubre las necesidades básicas del alumnado que decide estudiar en el extranjero?

— ¿Considera que el Gobierno español no debería reducir esta partida de su presupuesto?

— ¿Hará las recomendaciones específicas necesarias en el marco del Semestre Europeo para que el Gobierno español se retracte y, cuando sea necesario, garantice el acceso a la beca Erasmus durante un curso escolar completo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de marzo de 2014)

En años anteriores, España apoyó al mayor número de estudiantes Erasmus, unos 40 000 al año, combinando fondos europeos con un elevado nivel de financiación nacional. Sin embargo, en la actual situación presupuestaria nacional, las autoridades españolas han optado por otro modelo de financiación para el curso académico 2014-2015.

Los estudiantes españoles pueden obtener una beca Erasmus+ de la UE por una cuantía de entre 200 EUR y 300 EUR en función del país de destino. Esta beca puede incrementarse 100 EUR en caso de aprendices o estudiantes que procedan de medios socioeconómicos desfavorecidos. Con dicho importe total, más elevado que en años anteriores y plenamente conforme con las normas del programa Erasmus+, no se pretende cubrir la totalidad de los gastos realizados durante el período de movilidad en el extranjero, sino únicamente contribuir a los costes suplementarios.

La duración media de un período de movilidad Erasmus en Europa es de unos seis meses: algunos estudiantes permanecen durante un semestre (generalmente entre cuatro y cinco meses naturales) y un número menos elevado permanece un curso académico completo. El período de movilidad medio de los estudiantes españoles ha sido superior, situándose en alrededor de ocho meses, por lo que reducir este período hasta la media de la UE permitirá que más estudiantes reciban una beca. No obstante, la Comisión reconoce que habrá flexibilidad para que los estudiantes permanezcan más tiempo en caso de que resulte necesario para sus estudios. Además, Erasmus+ prevé el refuerzo del apoyo lingüístico para garantizar que los estudiantes obtienen el máximo partido de la movilidad.

La importancia de invertir efectivamente en la educación, la formación y la juventud sigue siendo un elemento esencial del Semestre Europeo.

([1]) http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2014/01/21/actualidad/1390315553_741486.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001452/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Erasmus in Spain

The number of Erasmus grants in Spain will continue to be 40 000 places for the 2014-2015 academic year, but the grants will only cover one semester. This is how the programme is adapting to the reduction in the budget allocated by the Spanish Government for these grants, which will go from EUR 34 million to EUR 18 million, despite the EU's decision to increase the funds available for this item ([1]) in the multiannual financial framework.

According to data from the Independent Body for European Educational Programmes (OAPEE), 'almost all students are away for the entire year; students who go away for a semester are in the minority (…) as our students do not have a good grasp of languages and just when they are starting to become fluent, they are going to have to come back'.

On average, students will receive around EUR 250 — in comparison with EUR 215 at the moment, when the ministerial grant and the Community grant are added together — and the recipients of a general grant will receive an average of EUR 350.

With 40 000 recipients of the Erasmus grant, Spain continues to be the country that sends and receives the most students, compared to the 30 000 students sent by Germany or France, or scarcely 13 000 British students.

— Is the Commission aware of these figures?

— Does the Commission think that the average Erasmus grant awarded by the Spanish Government is tiny and does not cover the basic necessities required by a student who decides to study abroad?

— Does the Commission think that the Spanish Government should not cut this item in its budget?

— Will the Commission make the specific recommendations necessary under the framework of the European Semester so that the Spanish Government rethinks its decision and, if necessary, guarantees access to the Erasmus grant for a full academic year?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

In previous years, Spain supported the highest number of Erasmus students, around 40 000 per year, by combining European funds with a high level of national financing. However, in the current national budgetary situation, the Spanish authorities have opted for another financing model for the academic year 2014-2015:

Spanish students may be awarded an Erasmus+ EU grant which ranges from EUR 200 to EUR 300 per month depending on the country of destination. This grant can be increased by EUR 100 in the case of trainees or students coming from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds. This total amount is not intended to cover all costs incurred during the mobility period abroad, but only to contribute to the additional costs. It is higher than in previous years and fully in line with the rules of the Erasmus+ programme.

The average duration of an Erasmus mobility period in Europe is around 6 months, reflecting students who stay for one semester — generally between 4 and 5 calendar months — and the smaller number that stays for a full academic year. The average mobility period of Spanish students has been higher, at around 8 months; reducing this period to the EU average will allow more students to receive a grant. The Commission understands that there will nevertheless be flexibility for students to stay longer if this is necessary for their studies. In addition, linguistic support will be reinforced in Erasmus+ to ensure that students get the most out of their mobility.

The importance of investing effectively in education, training and youth remains a key element of the European Semester.

([1]) http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2014/01/21/actualidad/1390315553_741486.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001453/14
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(11 februari 2014)

Betreft: Britten te dom voor referendum EU-lidmaatschap

De vicepresident van de Europese Commissie Viviane Reding heeft tijdens het „Citizen's Dialogue event" in Londen gezegd dat de Britse bevolking niet in staat is om een geïnformeerde beslissing te nemen over het Britse EU-lidmaatschap ([1]).

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven op basis van welke informatie of welk onderzoek vicepresident Reding haar bewering kan staven dat de Britten niet in staat zouden zijn om een geïnformeerde beslissing over het Britse EU-lidmaatschap te nemen?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven sinds wanneer een eurocommissaris gekwalificeerd is om te bepalen of burgers in een van de lidstaten in staat zijn om een geïnformeerde stem in een referendum uit te brengen?

3. Moet de PVV volgens de Commissie uit de woorden van vicepresident Reding opmaken dat de Commissie Groot-Brittannië afraadt om burgers in een referendum te laten beslissen over Brits EU-lidmaatschap?

4. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat alleen tot EU-lidmaatschap of voortgang daarvan kan worden besloten op basis van expliciete instemming hiermee van de bevolking? Zo neen, waarom niet?

5. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat de uitspraken van vicepresident Reding treffend weergeven waar het in de EU-instellingen helaas aan ontbreekt, namelijk aan respect voor de kiezer en vertrouwen in de democratie? Zo neen, waarom niet?

6. Is de Commissie bereid de uitspraken van vicepresident Reding te veroordelen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(28 maart 2014)

Uit onderzoek blijkt dat veel burgers in de Europese Unie het gevoel hebben niet genoeg te weten over de EU en hun rechten als EU-burger. Volgens de recente Eurobarometer EB80 ([2]) zegt 65% van de Britten niet te weten wat hun EU-rechten inhouden; dat is 10 procentpunt meer dan het EU-gemiddelde. Uit de enquête blijkt voorts dat er zowel in de EU in haar geheel (59%) als in het VK (48%) grote vraag is naar meer informatie over de rechten van de EU-burgers. Ook gevallen van onjuiste berichtgeving over de EU en haar beleid vereisen vaak rechtzettingen. Voorbeelden hiervan uit de Britse pers kan het geachte Parlementslid vinden op de website van de vertegenwoordiging van de Europese Commissie in het Verenigd Koninkrijk: http://ec.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/blog/index_en.htm. De citaten uit het artikel waarnaar in de vraag wordt verwezen, mogen niet uit hun context worden gehaald. De webcast van de burgerdialoog is online beschikbaar ([3]).

Zoals in de burgerdialoog duidelijk wordt gemaakt, is het aan elke kiezer om zelfstandig een eigen keuze te maken. De Commissie ondersteunt dit democratische recht door onder meer informatie aan te bieden, bijvoorbeeld door deel te nemen aan evenementen als dat in Londen, dat deel uitmaakte van een reeks burgerdialogen in alle lidstaten. De Commissie probeert op veel manieren om de kiezers en de Europese democratie sterker te maken. Wij verwijzen in dit verband naar de aanbeveling van de Commissie van 12 maart 2013 om de verkiezingen voor het Europees Parlement democratische en efficiënter te laten verlopen *(PB L 079 van 21.3.2013, blz. 29)*.

([1]) http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2556397/Britons-ignorant-EU-referendum-Top-official-says-debate-Europe-distorted-people-not-make-informed-decision.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb80/eb80_first_en.pdf
([3]) http://webcast.ec.europa.eu/eutv/portal/archive.html?viewConference=22037&catId=21864.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001453/14
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: People of Britain too stupid for a referendum on membership of the EU

During the Citizens' Dialogue event in London, Commission Vice-President Viviane Reding said that the people of Britain were incapable of taking an informed decision on the country's EU membership ([1]).

1. Can the Commission indicate what information or research supports Mrs Reding's assertion that the British people are not capable of taking an informed decision on the UK's membership of the EU?

2. Can the Commission indicate since when a European Commissioner has been qualified to determine whether citizens in one of the Member States are capable of casting an informed vote in a referendum?

3. Should the PVV party conclude from Mrs Reding's statement that the Commission advises the UK against asking its citizens to decide on the UK's membership of the EU in a referendum?

4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that decisions on EU membership or its continuation can only be taken on the basis of the explicit consent of the people? If not, why not?

5. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that Mrs Reding's statements aptly demonstrate what is, regrettably, lacking at the EU institutions, namely respect for the electorate and confidence in democracy? If not, why not?

6. Will the Commission condemn Mrs Reding's statement? If not, why not?

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

Research shows that many citizens in the European Union say that they do not feel informed enough about the EU and their rights as EU citizens. The recent Eurobarometer EB80 ([2]) shows for example that 65% of UK citizens say they do not know about their EU rights, 10 pp more than the EU average. The poll also shows that there is high demand both in the EU as a whole (59%) and in the UK (48%) for more information on the rights of EU citizens. It is also often necessary to provide information in cases of inaccurate reporting about the EU and its policies. For examples in the UK press the Honourable Member is invited to consult a selection on the website of the Commission's Representation in the UK: http://ec.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/blog/index_en.htm.The quotes in the article referred to in the question must be see in the context they were delivered. The webcast of the Citizens' Dialogue is available online ([3]).

As made clear in the Citizens' Dialogue it is entirely up to the individual voter to make his or her personal choice and the Commission stands ready to support this democratic right i.e. by offering information, including through participation in events like the one in London, which was part of a series of Citizens' Dialogues in all Member States. The Commission seeks to strengthen the electorate and European democracy through many means. The Honourable Member is referred to the Commission Recommendation on enhancing the democratic and efficient conduct of the elections to the European Parliament of 12 March 2013 *(OJ L 79, 21.3.2013, p. 29-32).*

([1]) http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2556397/Britons-ignorant-EU-referendum-Top-official-says-debate-Europe-distorted-people-not-make-informed-decision.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb80/eb80_first_en.pdf
([3]) http://webcast.ec.europa.eu/eutv/portal/archive.html?viewConference=22037&catId=21864

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001466/14
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(12. februar 2014)

Om: Pesticider i frugt og grønt

Organisationen PAN Europe har netop udgivet en rapport om EFSA's — på niende år — manglende offentliggørelse af metoder til at beskytte mennesker mod pesticider i frugt og grønt ([1]).

Rapporten hævder, at forsinkelsen blandt andet skyldes industriens tilstedeværelse i EFSA's ekspertpaneler. Desuden kommer rapporten med forslag til, hvordan agenturet kan sikre en bedre uafhængighed i dets arbejde.

På den baggrund vil jeg gerne spørge Kommissionen:

EFSA har igennem flere år berettet over for Europa-Parlamentet, at der er blevet taget hånd om problemerne med interessekonflikter i agenturet. PAN Europe's rapport viser imidlertid, at der stadig er noget at komme efter. Hvad har Kommissionen tænkt sig at gøre ved det? Og har Kommissionen overvejet at udpege en »science integrity officer« for i fremtiden at sikre flere uafhængige eksperter?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(26. marts 2014)

Det ærede medlem henvises til Kommissionens svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-014197/2013 ([2]) om Den Europæiske Fødevaresikkerhedsautoritets (EFSA) forpligtelser med hensyn til uafhængighed og interessekonflikter.

Kommissionen afviser de påstande, der fremsættes i Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europes rapport om EFSA's politik for uafhængighed, og finder dem fejlagtige.

EFSA's ordninger skaber et omfattende system til afdækning og håndtering af interessekonflikter, hvilket anerkendes i PAN's rapporter. Dette system gennemføres effektivt.

([1]) http://www.pan-europe.info/News/PR/140204.html
([2]) Skriftlig forespørgsel — EFSA — interessekonflikter — E-014197/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001466/14
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Pesticides in fruit and vegetables

Pesticides Action Network (PAN) Europe has recently published a report on EFSA's failure — for the ninth year running — to publish methods for protecting people from pesticides in fruit and vegetables ([1]).

The report maintains that the delay is due partly to the presence of industry representatives on EFSA's expert panels. It also makes suggestions for how the agency could ensure greater independence in its work.

With that in mind, I should like to ask the Commission:

EFSA has for several years been reporting to Parliament that measures have been taken do deal with the problems of conflicts of interest in the agency. However, the PAN Europe report shows that there is still some way to go. What does the Commission propose to do about this? Has it considered appointing a Science Integrity Officer to guarantee a greater number of independent experts in future?

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

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the Commission's reply to Written Question E-014197/2013 ([2]) dealing with the obligations of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) with respect to independence and conflicts of interest.

The Commission rejects the allegations made in the Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe report against EFSA's independence policy as flawed.

The arrangements in place in EFSA provide for a comprehensive system for detecting and managing conflicts of interest, as the PAN reports acknowledges; this system is implemented effectively.

([1]) http://www.pan-europe.info/News/PR/140204.html
([2]) Written question — EFSA — conflicts of interest — E-014197/2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001468/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(12. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Gerinnungshemmer Xarelto: In den USA verboten — in Europa ohne Risiken

Im Januar 2014 hat sich ein Beratergremium der US-Gesundheitsbehörde Food and Drug Administration (FDA) mit 10:0 Stimmen gegen eine Zulassung des Gerinnungshemmers Xarelto zur Behandlung des Akuten Koronarsyndroms (ACS) ausgesprochen (die FDA folgt den Empfehlungen in aller Regel). Die FDA hatte schon 2012 schwerwiegende Mängel in den von BAYER vorgelegten Studien festgestellt und bereits zweimal eine Zulassung verweigert. Dagegen hat die Europäische Aufsichtsbehörde (EMA) Xarelto bereits im vergangenen Mai zur Behandlung von ACS zugelassen.

1. Aus welchem Grund wurde die Zulassung von Xarelto in Europa auf Basis einer einzigen Studie erteilt, während üblicherweise derartige Zulassungen auf mehreren, anerkannten Studien basieren?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission die von der FDA geäußerten zahlreichen Kritikpunkte an der von BAYER finanzierten Studie namens ATLAS ACS: Unvollständigkeit und mangelnde Qualität der Primärdaten; fehlende Bestätigung der Ergebnisse durch andere Studiendaten; divergente Effekte verschiedener Dosierungen auf Herzinfarktrate und Gesamtmortalität; zu geringes Signifikanzniveau?

3. Wie bewertet die Kommission, dass Bayer die Studie u. a. in Indien durchgeführt hat, wobei es zu einer Reihe von Todesfällen kam und die Hinterbliebenen von Bayer mit Entschädigungen von gerade einmal 4 000 EUR abgespeist wurden?

4. Wie bewertet die Kommission, dass für die Studie die Daten von drei indischen Zentren — mit ungünstigen Ergebnissen für Xarelto — ohne Begründung von der Analyse ausgeschlossen wurden?

5. Welche Konsequenzen zieht die Kommission daraus?

6. Kann die Kommission die Verordnung des Gerinnungshemmers Xarelto (Wirkstoff Rivaroxaban) bei akutem Koronarsyndrom (ACS) empfehlen, obwohl nach Auswertung der vorliegenden Studien das Präparat „allenfalls einen marginalen Nutzen“ hat, während sich jedoch gleichzeitig das Blutungsrisiko mehr als verdoppelt?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(28. März 2014)

Die wissenschaftliche Beurteilung der in der EU zentralisierten Anträge auf Genehmigung für das Inverkehrbringen von Arzneimitteln wird vom Ausschuss für Humanarzneimittel (CHMP) der Europäischen Arzneimittel-Agentur ([1]) vorgenommen.

Entsprechend den von der EU anerkannten internationalen Leitlinien ([2]) können die Ergebnisse einer einzigen Studie für eine Genehmigung ausreichen. Der betreffende Antrag bestand aus einer groß angelegten Studie ([3]), an der 15 526 Patienten in 766 Zentren in 44 Ländern teilgenommen hatten, und einer ergänzenden Studie. Der CHMP war von der Stichhaltigkeit der Daten zur Wirksamkeit und Sicherheit überzeugt und schlussfolgerte, dass bei der Behandlung einer begrenzten Patientengruppe mit ACS ein positives Nutzen-Risiko-Verhältnis vorliegt ([4]).

Der CHMP hat die Stärken und Schwächen der ATLAS-Studie gründlich geprüft und zusätzliche Analysen angefordert. Der CHMP hielt es für sehr unwahrscheinlich, dass fehlende Daten die Ergebnisse des primären Wirksamkeitsendpunktes in erheblichem Maße verändert hätten.

Die im Antrag enthaltenen klinischen Prüfungen müssen der guten klinischen Praxis und den ethischen Grundsätzen entsprechend der Richtlinie 2001/20/EG genügen. Die Kommission ist nicht in der Position, Aussagen über die Höhe der Entschädigung für Teilnehmer an klinischen Prüfungen in Indien zu treffen.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 726/2004 zur Festlegung von Gemeinschaftsverfahren für die Genehmigung und Überwachung von Human- und Tierarzneimitteln und zur Errichtung einer Europäischen Arzneimittel-Agentur (ABl. L 136 vom 30.4.2004 in der geänderten Fassung)
([2]) ICH Topic E 9 Statistical Principles for Clinical Trials
([3]) ATLAS ACS2-TIMI 51
([4]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/EPAR_-_Assessment_Report_-_Variation/human/000944/WC500144718.pdf

Die Daten der drei indischen Prüfstellen betrafen lediglich einen geringen Prozentsatz der gesamten Erhebungspopulation (1,2 %). Der CHMP begutachtete die Daten zur Gesamtwirksamkeit einmal mit und einmal ohne die Daten der drei Prüfstellen. Er schlussfolgerte, dass sich der Ausschluss der drei Prüfstellen nur unwesentlich auf das Gesamtergebnis der Studie auswirkte.

Die Genehmigung der Kommission für das Inverkehrbringen beinhaltet die Verpflichtung für das Unternehmen, zusätzliche Maßnahmen zur Risikominimierung zu ergreifen und im Anschluss an die Genehmigung eine Studie durchzuführen ([5]).

([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/2013/20130805126532/anx_126532_de.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001468/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: The anticoagulant Xarelto — banned in the USA — risk-free in Europe

In January 2014, an advisory panel of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the USA voted (by 10 votes to zero) against the approval of the anticoagulant Xarelto for the treatment of Acute Coronary Syndrome (ACS) (the FDA normally follows such recommendations). As long ago as 2012, the FDA had identified severe shortcomings in the studies submitted by Bayer and had already refused to approve the drug on two occasions. The EMA, which is the supervisory authority in Europe, however approved Xarelto for the treatment of ACS in May 2013.

1. For what reason was Xarelto granted approval in Europe, based upon a single study, whilst approvals of that type generally require several recognised studies?

2. What is the Commission's view regarding the many items relating to the ATLAS ACS study financed by Bayer that were criticised by the FDA, namely missing and poor quality of the primary data, a lack of confirmation of the results in the form of data from other studies, divergent effects upon the rate of heart attack and overall mortality when administered at different doses and a level of significance that was too low?

3. What is the Commission's view of the fact that Bayer carried out the study in India, amongst other locations, that a number of deaths occurred and the families of the deceased received pay-offs of only EUR 4 000?

4. What is the Commission's view of the fact that in the case of this study, the data from three centres located in India — the results of which were not in Xarelto's favour — were omitted from the analysis without specifying a reason?

5. What consequences does the Commission believe should apply in the light of the above?

6. Is the Commission able to recommend the prescription of the anticoagulant Xarelto (the active ingredient of which is Rivaroxaban) in cases of Acute Coronary Syndrome (ACS), even though an evaluation of the studies available states that the product 'provides, at the most, only a marginal benefit', whilst at the same time more than doubling the risk of bleeding?

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

The scientific assessment of the EU centralised applications for marketing authorisation of medicinal products is performed by the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) of the European Medicines Agency ([1]).

According to the international guidelines ([2]) recognised by the EU, results from one study can be sufficient for an approval. The application in question consisted of a large trial ([3]) including 15 526 patients at 766 centres in 44 countries, and one supportive study. The CHMP was re-assured by the robustness of the efficacy and safety data and concluded on the positive benefit/risk ratio when used in a restricted population with ACS. ([4])

The CHMP has assessed extensively strengths and weaknesses of the ATLAS trial and has requested additional analyses. The CHMP considered that it was highly unlikely that missing data would have affected the results of the primary efficacy end-point to any substantial degree.

Clinical trials (CTs) included in the application have to respect the Good Clinical Practice and the ethical principles equivalent to those provided for by Directive 2001/20/EC. The Commission is not in a position to comment on the amount of indemnification of CT participants in India.

Data generated by 3 sites in India concerned only a minor percentage of the total study population (1.2%). The CHMP compared the overall efficacy data with and without data from the 3 sites and concluded that the impact of the exclusion of the 3 sites on the overall study outcome was negligible.

The marketing authorisation granted by the Commission provides for obligations for the company: additional risk minimisation measures and a post-authorisation study ([5]).

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, as amended.
([2]) ICH Topic E 9 Statistical Principles for Clinical Trials
([3]) ATLAS ACS2-TIMI 51.
([4]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/EPAR_-_Assessment_Report_-_Variation/human/000944/WC500144718.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/2013/20130805126532/anx_126532_en.pdf

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001472/14
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(12. februar 2014)

Om: Lovgivning om planteformeringsmateriale

Parlamentet drøfter Kommissionens forslag til ny lovgivning om planteformeringsmateriale. Kommissionen samler i sit forslag 12 forskellige direktiver, der bliver til en enkelt forordning. Kommissionen fremfører, at forordningen er i overensstemmelse med EU's politik for bæredygtigt landbrug og beskyttelse af den biologiske mangfoldighed og sikrer, at forbrugerne får brede og velfunderede valgmuligheder med hensyn til sundheden og kvaliteten af dette materiale.

Ikke desto mindre har små organiske planteavlere givet udtryk for, at de frygter, at lovgivningen ikke fremmer den genetiske mangfoldighed, og at den er motiveret af frøindustriens ønske om at lette patentproceduren og få kontrol over markedet for såsæd. Der næres også frygt for, at forslaget vil indføre sorter, der er afhængige af gødning, pesticider og andre kemikalier, for at øge produktiviteten i landbruget. Det hævdes, at den nye forordning er kontraproduktiv for organisk avl.

Kan Kommissionen bekræfte, at den foreslåede forordning ikke vil hindre landbrugsmetoder såsom organisk landbrug?

Kan Kommissionen garantere, at små landbrugere ikke udsættes for forskelsbehandling gennem de produktions- og markedsføringsstandarder for såsæd, som fastsættes i forslaget til forordning?

Vil Kommissionen overveje at udstede den nye lovgivning i form af et direktiv, der giver medlemsstaterne mulighed for at tage mere hensyn til biodiversiteten og landbrugeres og forbrugeres rettigheder?

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001622/14
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2014)

Om: Lovgivning om planteformeringsmateriale

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Kan Kommissionen garantere, at små landbrugere ikke udsættes for forskelsbehandling gennem de produktions- og markedsføringsstandarder for såsæd, som fastsættes i forslaget til forordning?

Vil Kommissionen overveje at udstede den nye lovgivning i form af et direktiv, der giver medlemsstaterne mulighed for at tage mere hensyn til biodiversiteten og landbrugeres og forbrugeres rettigheder?

Samlet svar afgivet på af Tonio Borg
(28. marts 2014)

Kommissionens forslag hindrer ikke økologisk produktion, og det udsætter heller ikke små landbrugere for forskelsbehandling. I forslagets artikel 58, stk. 2, fastsættes det, at medlemsstaterne skal vedtage regler for undersøgelse af dyrknings- og brugsværdi, hvor egnethed for dyrkning i mere modstandsdygtige produktionssystemer og produktionssystemer med lavt input, herunder økologisk landbrugsproduktion, tages i betragtning. I artikel 59 fastsættes der på EU-plan krav til bæredygtig dyrknings- og brugsværdi, og i artikel 14, stk. 3, skabes der mulighed for at markedsføre heterogent materiale.

Kommissionens forslag indeholder desuden bestemmelser, der støtter små landbrugere. Mikrovirksomheder er fritaget for betaling af sortsregistreringsgebyrer (artikel 89, stk. 2). Ikke-professionelle operatører og mikrovirksomheder kan markedsføre materiale uden registrering i overensstemmelse med undtagelsen for nichemarkeder (artikel 36).

Disse bestemmelser vil give incitamenter til at udvikle sorter, der er særligt tilpassede til økologisk landbrugsproduktion, og lette markedsføringen af sorter med officielt anerkendt beskrivelse og nichemarkedssorter. Kommissionen understreger endvidere, at intellektuelle ejendomsrettigheder ikke er omfattet af forslagets anvendelsesområde.

Kommissionen overvejer ikke at udstede et direktiv i stedet for en forordning, som giver mulighed for en mere harmoniseret gennemførelse af reglerne og skaber lige vilkår for alle operatører. Forslaget bidrager stærkt til bevarelse af biodiversitet.

Kommissionen forstår imidlertid udmærket, at Parlamentet er bekymret over forslagets meget tekniske karakter, og overvejer nu, hvad der videre skal ske, efter at forslaget blev forkastet ved afstemningen på plenarmødet den 11. marts.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001472/14
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Plant reproductive material law

Parliament is discussing the Commission's proposal for a new plant reproductive material law. In its proposal the Commission combines 12 different directives in a single regulation. The Commission argues that the regulation would be consistent with EU policies on sustainable agriculture and biodiversity protection, and would ensure that consumers have a broad choice and can make an informed decision regarding the health and quality of the material.

Nevertheless, small organic breeders have raised concerns that the law would not be beneficial to genetic diversity and that the seed industry has demanded the law in order to facilitate the patent process and to control the seed market. There is also concern that the proposal would introduce varieties dependent on fertilisers, pesticides and other chemicals in order to increase agricultural productivity. It is argued that the new regulation would be counterproductive to organic breeding.

Can the Commission confirm that the proposed regulation will not hamper agricultural methods such as organic farming?

Can the Commission ensure that small agro-operators will not be put at a disadvantage by the production and seed marketing standards set out in the proposed regulation?

Would the Commission consider issuing the new law as a directive allowing Member States to be more sensitive to biodiversity and to farmers' and consumers' rights?

Question for written answer E-001622/14
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Plant reproductive material law

Parliament is discussing the Commission's proposal for a new plant reproductive material law. In its proposal the Commission combines 12 different directives in a single regulation. The Commission argues that the regulation would be consistent with the EU policies on sustainable agriculture and biodiversity protection, and would ensure that consumers can make an informed decision from a variety of options with regard to the health and quality of the material.

Nevertheless, small organic breeders have raised concerns that the law would not be beneficial in terms of genetic diversity and that it has been demanded by the seed industry in order to facilitate the patent process and to control the seed market. There are also concerns that the proposal would introduce varieties dependent on fertilisers, pesticides and other chemicals in order to increase agricultural productivity. It is argued that the new regulation would be counterproductive to organic breeding.

Can the Commission confirm that the proposed regulation will not hamper agricultural methods such as organic farming?

Can the Commission ensure that small agro-operators will not be disadvantaged by the production and seed marketing standards set out in the proposed regulation?

Would the Commission consider issuing the new law as a directive which would allow Member States to be more sensitive to biodiversity and to the rights of farmers and consumers?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The Commission proposal does not hamper organic production nor does it put small producers at a disadvantage. Article 58(2) of the proposal provides for the adoption of rules for examinations of value for cultivation and use which take suitability for cultivation in resilience and low-input production systems, including organic agricultural production, into account. Article 59 establishes at Union level requirements for sustainable value for cultivation and use and Article 14(3) creates the possibility to market heterogeneous material.

The Commission proposal also includes provisions supporting small operators. Micro-enterprises are exempted from variety registration fees (Article 89(2)). Non-professional operators and micro-enterprises can market any material without registration under the niche market derogation (Article 36).

These provisions will give incentives to develop varieties specifically adapted to organic agricultural production and facilitate the marketing of varieties with officially recognised description and niche market varieties. The Commission also emphasises that intellectual property rights are outside the scope of this proposal.

The Commission does not consider a directive as an alternative to a regulation which allows a more harmonised implementation of the rules and establishes a level playing field for all operators. The draft proposal offers strong support to the preservation of biodiversity.

However, the Commission fully understands the Parliament's concerns regarding the highly technical nature of the proposal and is, after the vote of rejection in plenary on 11 March, considering the next steps to be taken.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001474/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(12 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Rischio di crisi valutarie

Da alcuni mesi le valute e i bollettini di borsa dei Paesi emergenti segnalano tempesta. La lira turca ha perso oltre il 10 % in poco più di un mese, mentre il costo dei derivati cds di garanzia contro un eventuale default è al massimo. L'Argentina è nuovamente sotto stress ed ha già usato più del 30 % delle proprie riserve in difesa del peso, che continua la sua caduta libera. I vari Paesi del Bric sono pure in difficoltà: la Russia ha dovuto ritoccare il cambio, il real brasiliano ha perso valore e la banca centrale aumenta il tasso d'interesse. Lo stesso avviene in Sud Africa, Taiwan, Venezuela e Malesia. In Cina si sono create una bolla immobiliare e una legata ai crediti privati, le cui evoluzioni potrebbero avere effetti destabilizzanti per l'intera economia mondiale. Anche l'India è costretta ad affrontare gli stessi effetti turbativi delle politiche della Fed. Lamentando la mancanza di un coordinamento internazionale delle politiche monetarie e finanziarie, il presidente della banca centrale indiana ha posto il problema politico: «Gli Stati Uniti devono prendere in considerazione gli effetti che le sue politiche hanno sul resto del mondo.» Gli risponde indirettamente il governatore Bernanke che nei suoi ultimi interventi aveva sottolineato che la Fed porta avanti una politica esclusivamente finalizzata agli interessi nazionali americani e che il resto del mondo dovrebbe prenderne atto e adeguarvisi. Arroganza o semplice realpolitik? Di fronte a questa situazione il Fondo Monetario Internazionale ha sollecitato le banche centrali ad operare per scongiurare un pericoloso «funding crunch», vale a dire una grave carenza di risorse finanziarie che penalizzerebbe anzitutto quei mercati cresciuti troppo e troppo in fretta.

Si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Non ritiene che la tesi di Bernanke sia in contrasto con l'urgenza di una riforma finanziaria?

2. Non teme il rischio concreto di crisi valutarie simili ai crac del 1998, che si allargarono a macchia d'olio dall'Asia coinvolgendo anche grandi hedge fund e banche internazionali?

3. Perché l'UE non approfitta di questa occasione per accentuare il suo ruolo di alleato e di partner dei Paesi del Bric e di quelli emergenti, differenziandosi dalle scelte della Fed e considerando invece che le difficoltà di quei Paesi non sono soltanto «affari loro»?

4. Non considera grave la mancanza di una governance globale, visti i fallimenti dei vari incontri internazionali dedicati allo scopo?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2014)

1. Le riforme della regolamentazione finanziaria sono una priorità per la Commissione europea, che intende promuovere un sistema finanziario stabile per appoggiare una crescita economica sostenibile ed equilibrata.

2. Gli effetti di ricaduta delle crisi finanziarie sono difficili da prevedere ed è importante che l'economia mondiale diventi più resiliente. Come sottolineato dai ministri delle finanze del G20 al vertice di Sydney del 22-23 febbraio 2014, la prima e principale risposta alle tensioni dei mercati finanziari dovrebbe essere un ulteriore rafforzamento e miglioramento dei quadri nazionali per le politiche macroeconomiche, strutturali e finanziarie. A partire dal 1998 la maggior parte delle economie di mercato emergenti ha compiuto progressi nel rafforzamento della stabilità macroeconomica e nella creazione di reti di sicurezza.

3. La volatilità eccessiva dei flussi finanziari e i movimenti irregolari dei tassi di cambio producono effetti avversi sulla stabilità finanziaria ed economica, come osservato di recente in alcuni mercati emergenti. Quadri più rigorosi per le politiche nazionali consentiranno a questi paesi di far fronte a tali sfide. A livello internazionale siamo impegnati insieme ai partner del G20 in una cooperazione volta a garantire che le politiche attuate a sostegno della crescita interna sostengano anche la crescita mondiale e la stabilità finanziaria.

4. Il G20, di cui l'Unione europea fa parte, è il principale forum per la cooperazione economica internazionale dei suoi membri. Nel tempo ha conseguito importanti risultati che hanno contribuito a rafforzare la ripresa e a garantire la stabilità finanziaria e sta continuando ad operare in questo senso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001474/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Risk of foreign exchange crises

For some months now, the currencies and stock exchange bulletins of emerging countries have warned of a storm. The Turkish lira has lost more than 10% in just over a month, while the cost of derivative credit default swaps as security against default is at a maximum. Argentina is again under pressure and has already used more than 30% of its reserves to bolster the peso, which remains in free fall. The various BRIC countries are also in difficulty: Russia has been forced to adjust its exchange rate, the Brazilian real has lost value and the central bank has raised the rate of interest. The same is happening in South Africa, Taiwan, Venezuela and Malaysia. In China, a property bubble and one linked to private loans have been created; their movements may have destabilising effects on the entire world economy. India is also forced to deal with the same disruptive effects of the policies of the Federal Reserve System. Bemoaning the lack of any international coordination of monetary and financial policy, the chairman of India's central bank raised a political issue: 'The United States should take into consideration the effect that their policies have on the rest of the world'. He receives an indirect answer from Governor Bernanke who, in recent remarks, had emphasised that the Federal Reserve System pursues a policy aimed solely at American national interests and that the rest of the world should take note of it and adapt to it. Arrogance or simple realpolitik? Faced with this situation, the International Monetary Fund has asked central banks to act to prevent a dangerous 'funding crunch', that is to say a serious lack of financial resources which would first of all penalise those markets which have grown too much too soon.

1. Does the Commission consider Bernanke's argument to be in contrast to the urgency for financial reform?

2. Is it not concerned about the specific risk of exchange rate crises similar to the 1998 crashes, which spread like wildfire from Asia, affecting both large hedge funds and international banks?

3. Why does the EU not take advantage of this opportunity to emphasise its role as ally and partner of the BRIC and emerging countries, distancing itself from the choices made by the Federal Reserve System and taking the view that the difficulties faced by those countries are not just 'their own affair'?

4. Does the Commission view the lack of global governance as serious, in view of the failure of the various international meetings set up for this purpose?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

1. The European Commission considers financial regulatory reforms a priority. It aims at fostering a stable financial system that supports sustainable and balanced economic growth.

2. Financial crises spill-over effects are difficult to predict and it is important that the world economy becomes more resilient. As highlighted by the G20 Finance Ministers in Sydney on 22-23 February 2014, the primary response to financial market tensions should be to further strengthen and refine domestic macroeconomic, structural and financial policy frameworks. Progress in reinforcing macroeconomic stability and in building up safety nets has been made in most emerging market economies since 1998.

3. Excess volatility of financial flows and disorderly movements in exchange rates can have adverse implications for economic and financial stability, as observed recently in some emerging markets. Stronger policy frameworks in these countries allow them to better deal with these challenges. At international level, we are committed together with G20 partners to cooperate to ensure that policies implemented to support domestic growth also support global growth and financial stability.

4. The G20, of which the European Union is a member, is the premier forum for its members' international economic cooperation. Over time it has delivered (and continues to deliver) important results that have helped strengthen the recovery and ensure financial stability.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001475/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: OGM — Preoccupazione e contrarietà verso la possibile autorizzazione alla coltivazione del mais geneticamente modificato da parte della Commissione europea

Il Consiglio UE non ha raggiunto la maggioranza qualificata sull'autorizzazione alla coltivazione del mais OGM 1507 in Europa. L'esito di questa votazione potrebbe dare il via libera, da parte della Commissione europea, alla coltivazione del mais transgenico.

Il Parlamento europeo ha più volte sollecitato la Commissione a non proporre, o rinnovare le autorizzazioni, di qualsiasi varietà OGM fino a quando non siano stati migliorati i metodi di valutazione del rischio. Inoltre, questo mais transgenico, come più volte affermato, è resistente all'erbicida glufosinato ammonio, che comporta rischi per la biodiversità non esaminati a fondo nella valutazione scientifica dall'Autorità alimentare UE di Parma.

Sarebbe auspicabile che la direttiva 2001/18/CE in materia di OGM, che mira a proteggere la salute, sia modificata in modo da consentire agli Stati membri il diritto di vietare sul proprio territorio la coltivazione di OGM.

Premesso tutto ciò, può la Commissione:

1. chiarire se e come intende intervenire al fine di consentire agli Stati membri di decidere autonomamente circa le autorizzazioni alla coltivazione e alla commercializzazione degli alimenti OGM?

2. precisare come intende garantire la salute dei cittadini dell'Unione, la sicurezza degli alimenti commercializzati all'interno del mercato unico e il rispetto del principio di precauzione, secondo il quale nessuna autorizzazione dovrebbe essere concessa finché non sia stato scientificamente dimostrata l'innocuità di tali prodotti?

3. fornire un parere circa la possibile modifica della direttiva 2001/18/CE?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2014)

Rispondendo a una richiesta proveniente da diversi Stati membri la Commissione ha pubblicato nel luglio 2010 una proposta di revisione della direttiva 2001/18/CE ([1]) per offrire agli Stati membri una base giuridica che consentisse di prendere decisioni in materia di colture OGM in base a considerazioni diverse da quelle fondate su una valutazione scientifica dei rischio sanitario e ambientale eseguita a livello europeo. Tale modifica consentirebbe agli Stati membri di limitare o vietare le colture OGM su parte del loro territorio o nella sua integralità.

Il Parlamento europeo ha adottato nel luglio 2011 una posizione in prima lettura sulla proposta; il Consiglio però non è stato sinora in grado di raggiungere un accordo sulla proposta a motivo di una minoranza di blocco tra gli Stati membri. La Presidenza greca ha presentato di recente una nuova proposta di compromesso che è stata ritenuta una base valida per riprendere le discussioni in seno al Consiglio Ambiente del 3 marzo 2014 con la speranza di raggiungere un accordo politico nell'ambito della Presidenza greca.

La legislazione in materia di OGM prevede una valutazione del rischio obbligatoria caso per caso per ciascuna domanda. Pertanto, un OGM può essere autorizzato alla coltivazione nell'UE dopo essere stato sottoposto a una valutazione del rischio per quanto concerne la salute umana e animale e l'ambiente sulla base dei requisiti rigorosi previsti dalla direttiva 2001/18/CE che fa esplicito riferimento al principio di precauzione. Degli eventuali aspetti aleatori nonché degli effetti potenziali di lungo periodo si tiene conto nella fase di valutazione del rischio che precede la presentazione di una decisione agli Stati membri per approvazione.

([1]) GU L 106 del 17.4.2001, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001475/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: GMOs — Concerns and opposition to the possible authorisation by the European Commission of the cultivation of genetically modified maize

The Council of the EU failed to reach a qualified majority in relation to the authorisation of the cultivation of genetically modified maize 1507 in Europe. The outcome of this vote may mean that the European Commission is leaving the way open to the cultivation of transgenic maize.

The European Parliament has repeatedly asked the Commission not to propose or renew the authorisation of any genetically modified variety until such time as risk assessment methods have been improved. Furthermore, this transgenic maize, as has been stated time and time again, is resistant to the herbicide glufosinate ammonium, which leads to risks for biodiversity which have not been examined in detail in the scientific assessment by the European Food Safety Authority in Parma.

It would be desirable for Directive 2001/18/EC on GMOs, which seeks to protect health, to be amended so as to allow Member States the right to veto the cultivation of GMOs within their territory.

In view of all the above, can the Commission:

1. clarify whether and how it intends to intervene in order to enable Member States to decide autonomously on the authorisation for the cultivation and marketing of genetically modified foods?

2. specify how it intends to guarantee the health of the citizens of the Union, the safety of foods marketed within the single market and the observance of the precautionary principle, under which no authorisation should be granted until such time as the harmlessness of such goods has been scientifically proven?

3. give its opinion as to the possible amendment of Directive 2001/18/EC?

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

In response to a request from several Member States, the Commission published in July 2010 a proposal revising Directive 2001/18/EC ([1]) to provide a legal basis to Member States in order to decide on GMO cultivation on grounds other than those based on a scientific assessment of health and environmental risks performed at European level. This amendment would allow Member States to restrict or prohibit GMO cultivation in part or all of their territory.

The European Parliament adopted a first reading position on the proposal in July 2011; however so far the Council had been unable to reach an agreement on this proposal due to a blocking minority of Member States. The Greek Presidency recently presented a new compromise proposal which was considered as a good basis to resume the discussions by most of the Ministers in the Environmental Council on the 3 March 2014, with the hope of reaching a political agreement under the Greek Presidency.

The GMO legislation foresees an obligatory case-by-case risk assessment for each application. Therefore, a GMO can only be authorised for cultivation in the EU after having being risk assessed as regards human and animal health and the environment following the strict requirements provided by Directive 2001/18/EC which explicitly refers to the precautionary principle. Uncertainties as well as potential long term effects are taken into account during the risk assessment phase which takes place before any decision is submitted to the Member States.

([1]) OJ L 106, 17.4.2001, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001476/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: SGL Carbon di Narni

La società SGL Carbon è una delle più grandi produttrici mondiali di prodotti derivati dal carbone. Ha 38 siti di produzione nel mondo, di cui 20 in Europa. In Italia, nel 2007, la SGL Carbon decideva di chiudere lo stabilimento di Ascoli, rassicurando sulla continuità dello stabilimento di Narni.

Ciononostante, c'è stato un fermo totale del sito per quasi tutto il 2009, e nei primi mesi del 2010 è stato sottoscritto un piano di mobilità del personale che ha ridotto l'organico di 40 unità.

Il recente incontro istituzionale riguardante la possibile chiusura del sito non ha condotto agli esiti sperati. Le richieste all'azienda di fornire il piano dei costi dello stabilimento di Narni e di accettare la richiesta di partecipazione ad un gruppo di lavoro per verificare le condizioni di permanenza nel sito, sono state eluse, confermando l'atteggiamento di totale mancanza di collaborazione da parte del board dell'azienda. Le organizzazioni sindacali e gli enti territoriali coinvolti sostengono che gli investimenti necessari per il rilancio del sito di Narni sarebbero abbastanza contenuti rispetto agli utili che, nel corso degli anni, sono pervenuti da questo stabilimento. Inoltre, vale la pena ricordare che lo stabilimento di Narni è l'unico produttore presente in Italia di elettrodi di grafite per i forni elettrici delle acciaierie, e qualora le attività cessassero, la filiera diventerebbe dipendente al 100 % dall'estero, senza considerare le ricadute occupazionali con circa 200 posti di lavoro collegati, tra diretti ed indiretti. Premesso tutto ciò, può la Commissione:

1. far sapere se è al corrente della vicenda;

2. indicare se la SGL Carbon sta rispettando le disposizioni della direttiva 98/59/CE in materia di licenziamenti collettivi, e in particolare l'articolo 2;

3. indicare se la SGL Carbon sta rispettando le disposizioni della direttiva 94/45/CE, modificata dalla direttiva 2009/38/CE, della direttiva 2002/14/CE relativa alla procedura di informazione e di consultazione dei lavoratori, della direttiva 2001/23/CE sul mantenimento dei diritti dei lavoratori e della direttiva 2008/94/CE;

4. riferire se intende intervenire in questa vicenda e con quali strumenti a tutela dell'eccellenza della produzione e dei relativi livelli occupazionali;

5. riferire se e in che modo possano essere valutate soluzioni alternative all'attuale proprietà, tese a garantire la continuità produttiva, valutando opzioni sia tra i competitor sia tra gli utilizzatori?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

1. La Commissione non conosce i particolari degli attuali sviluppi nell'impianto SGL Carbon di Narni.

2.-3. In caso di chiusura d'impianti, esuberi collettivi o cambi sostanziali nei rapporti contrattuali, i datori di lavoro devono rispettare gli obblighi che incombono loro in materia di informazione e consultazione dei lavoratori in conformità con il diritto UE ([1]). La Commissione non è in grado di valutare i fatti o determinare se una società privata si sia messa o no in conformità con le disposizioni nazionali di recepimento delle direttive UE. Rientra nell'ambito di competenza delle autorità nazionali, compresi i tribunali, garantire che la legislazione nazionale che recepisce le direttive UE, alla quale l'on. parlamentare fa riferimento, sia applicata in modo corretto ed efficace dai datori di lavoro interessati, considerando le specifiche circostanze del caso.

4. In linea di principio la Commissione non ha il potere di interferire sulle decisioni delle società. Essa le invita tuttavia a seguire le buone prassi nell'anticipare e gestire le ristrutturazioni in modo socialmente responsabile, come sottolineato nella comunicazione «Un quadro di qualità per l'anticipazione dei processi di cambiamento e ristrutturazione» ([2]).

5. La Commissione non può interferire sulle decisioni di questa natura delle società. La Commissione può unicamente elaborare un approccio globale al fine di garantire che le società producano in Europa nelle migliori condizioni possibili.

([1]) In particolare, le direttive 2009/38/CE, 2002/14/CE e 98/59/CE.
([2]) COM(2013) 882 final del 13 dicembre 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001476/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: SGL Carbon at Narni

The company SGL Carbon is one of the world's leading manufacturers of carbon-based products. It has 38 production sites around the world, including 20 in Europe. In Italy, in 2007, SGL Carbon decided to shut down its plant at Ascoli, but gave assurances about the continuing operation of the Narni plant.

Despite this, there was a total shutdown of the site for almost the whole of 2009, and at the beginning of 2010 a staff redundancy scheme was agreed which reduced the number of staff to 40.

The recent institutional meeting regarding the possible closure of the site did not lead to the anticipated results. Requests to the company to supply the cost schedule of the Narni plant and to agree to the request to participate in a working group to evaluate the conditions for remaining on the site were evaded, confirming the attitude of total non-cooperation by the company's board. The trade union organisations and regional authorities involved consider that the investment required for a relaunch of the Narni site would be quite limited in comparison with the profits made by the site over the years. Also, it is worth remembering that the Narni plant is the only producer in Italy of graphite electrodes for the electric furnaces of the steelworks, and if it were to shut down, the supply chain would become 100% dependent on foreign supplies, even without considering the loss of employment, with around 200 jobs being directly or indirectly affected. In view of all this, can the Commission:

1. advise whether it is aware of these events;

2. state whether SGL Carbon is observing the provisions of Directive 98/59/EC relating to collective redundancies, and in particular Article 2;

3. state whether SGL Carbon is observing the provisions of Directive 94/45/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/38/EC, Directive 2002/14/EC in relation to the procedure for informing and consulting employees, Directive 2001/23/EC relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights and Directive 2008/94/EC;

4. state whether it intends to intervene in these events and with what instruments, to protect the excellence of production and the associated levels of employment;

5. state whether and how alternative solutions to the current ownership may be evaluated, with a view to ensuring continuity of production, assessing options among both competitors and users?

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

1. The Commission is not aware of the details of the current developments at SGL Carbon's Narni plant.

2 and 3. In cases of closure of undertakings, collective redundancies or substantial changes in contractual relations, employers must respect their obligations relating to worker information and consultation in accordance with EC law ([1]). The Commission is not in a position to assess the facts or state whether a private company has or has not complied with any national provisions which serve to implement the EU directives. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the EU Directives to which the Honourable Member refers is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of the case.

4. As a matter of principle, the Commission has no power to interfere in companies' decisions. It urges them, however, to follow good practice in anticipating and managing restructuring in a socially responsible way, as outlined in its communication 'EU Quality Framework for anticipation of change and restructuring' ([2]).

5. The Commission cannot interfere in companies' decision of that nature. The Commission can only put forward a comprehensive approach to make sure that companies produce in Europe in the best conditions.

([1]) In particular, Directives 2009/38/EC, 2002/14/EC and 98/59/EC.
([2]) COM(2013) 882 final of 13 December 2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001478/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Duración de las becas Erasmus+

El pasado 21 de enero el Ministro de Educación, Cultura y Deporte anunció la decisión de su ministerio de recortar la duración de las becas procedentes del programa Erasmus+. Las becas acortarán su duración a partir del siguiente ejercicio y cubrirán a un máximo de un semestre académico, periodo de aproximadamente cuatro meses.

En su respuesta a mi pregunta parlamentaria E-012513/2013, la Comisaria Vassiliou afirmaba su fuerte compromiso en la defensa del citado programa para «mantener los niveles de movilidad existentes». De igual manera, la Comisaria acogía con satisfacción el acuerdo entre el Parlamento y el Consejo sobre el programa Erasmus+, que incrementaba los fondos destinados a esta partida disponibles para España y garantizaba su crecimiento hasta 2020.

El recorte de la duración de la beca tendrá unos efectos desastrosos en los Erasmus españoles, que verán limitada la oportunidad de aprender la lengua y la cultura del país de destino, puesto que cuatro meses lectivos no es un periodo suficiente para aprender ningún idioma. Teniendo en cuenta las tasas de desempleo juvenil en España, el poder mantenerse un curso completo en el país de destino será un privilegio de las familias más pudientes, lo que perpetúa la brecha lingüística entre las familias más pudientes y las de menos recursos que tienen hijos en la universidad.

¿Conoce la Comisión la citada decisión del Ministro español José Ignacio Wert?

¿Considera que limitar la duración del programa a un semestre académico permitirá mantener los niveles de aprendizaje lingüístico que adquieren los beneficiarios?

¿Considera que la decisión del Ministro permitirá que se alcancen de una manera efectiva los objetivos del programa, pese al incremento de su dotación presupuestaria por parte de la UE?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de marzo de 2014)

En años anteriores, España apoyó al mayor número de estudiantes Erasmus, unos 40 000 al año, combinando fondos europeos con un elevado nivel de financiación nacional. Sin embargo, en la actual situación presupuestaria nacional, las autoridades españolas han optado por otro modelo de financiación para el curso académico 2014-2015.

La duración media de un período de movilidad Erasmus en la EU es de unos seis meses: una mayoría de estudiantes permanecen durante un semestre (generalmente entre cuatro y cinco meses naturales) mientras que un número menos elevado permanece un curso académico completo. El período de movilidad medio de los estudiantes españoles ha sido superior, situándose en alrededor de ocho meses, por lo que reducir este período hasta la media de la UE permitirá que más estudiantes españoles reciban una beca. Además, la Comisión reconoce que habrá flexibilidad para que los estudiantes permanezcan más tiempo en caso de que resulte necesario para sus estudios.

Este nuevo modelo no reducirá las oportunidades de los estudiantes españoles con menos recursos. En primer lugar, porque estos estudiantes obtendrán de la UE una beca de mayor cuantía, que contribuirá a que puedan hacer frente a los gastos de viaje y mantenimiento en un país extranjero, y, en segundo lugar, porque Erasmus+ refuerza el apoyo a la preparación lingüística para garantizar que los estudiantes seleccionados poseen un nivel suficiente en la lengua de enseñanza o de trabajo para poder obtener el máximo partido de la movilidad. Este apoyo consistirá en cursos en línea con tutorías en las cinco lenguas principales, además de ayudas financieras más elevadas a las instituciones de educación superior para garantizar una preparación lingüista adecuada de los estudiantes en todas las lenguas oficiales de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001478/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Duration of Erasmus Plus grants

On 21 January 2014, the Spanish Minister of Education, Culture and Sport announced his decision to cut the duration of the grants awarded under the Erasmus Plus programme. The duration of the grants will be reduced from the next financial year, lasting for a maximum of one academic semester — approximately four months.

In its answer to my parliamentary Question E-012513/2013, Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou reiterated her firm commitment to defending this programme in order to 'maintain existing levels of mobility'. Likewise, the Commissioner stated her satisfaction with the agreement between the Parliament and the Council on the Erasmus+ programme to increase the budget available to Spain under this programme, guaranteeing this increase until 2020.

Cutting the duration of the grant will have disastrous effects on Spanish Erasmus students, who will see their opportunities to learn the language and culture of their destination countries limited, given that four months of education is not sufficient to learn any language. Taking into account the rate of youth unemployment in Spain, the ability to take up a full course in the destination country will be a privilege restricted to only the most affluent families, thereby widening the linguistic gap between wealthier families and those that are less well-off and have children at university.

Is the Commission aware of the aforementioned decision by the Spanish minister José Ignacio Wert?

Does it believe that cutting the duration of the programme to one academic semester will allow the recipients to maintain their level of language learning?

Does the Commission believe that the Minister's decision will allow the objectives of the programme to be fulfilled effectively, despite the increase in budget allocated by the EU?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

In previous years, Spain supported the highest number of Erasmus students, around 40 000 per year, by combining European funds and a high level of national financing. However, in the current national budgetary situation, the Spanish authorities have opted for another financing model for the academic year 2014-2015.

The average duration of Erasmus mobility across the EU is around 6 months, reflecting a majority of students who stay for one semester — generally between 4 and 5 calendar months — and a smaller number that stays for a full academic year. The average mobility period of Spanish students has been higher, at around 8 months. Reducing this period to the EU average will maximise the opportunities for the highest possible number of Spanish students. Moreover, the Commission understands that there will be flexibility for students to stay longer if this is necessary for their studies.

This new arrangement should not reduce the opportunities for Spanish students that are less well-off. First, because these students will get a higher EU grant to contribute to their travel and subsistence costs abroad. Second, because Erasmus+ reinforces the support for linguistic preparation to ensure that selected students have a sufficient level in the language of instruction or work to make the most of their mobility. This support will consist of tutored online courses in the five main languages plus increased financial support to higher education institutions to ensure the most appropriate linguistic preparation of students in all official EU languages.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001481/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Imposibilidad de escapar de la trampa de la pobreza en España

Según la información publicada en un diario digital español, la Dirección General de Empleo, Asuntos Sociales e Inclusión de la Comisión Europea asegura que el hecho de encontrar un trabajo en España, o en otros países de la Unión Europea como Rumanía, Bulgaria o Grecia, no es garantía suficiente para salir de la pobreza.

Según la Comisión, en España existe una elevada proporción de contratos temporales o a tiempo parcial que mantienen a los trabajadores en una situación de precariedad que les impide salir del umbral de la pobreza. El porcentaje de personas por debajo de este umbral ha crecido en casi 5 puntos porcentuales entre 2007 y 2012, situándose en el 28,2 % del total de la población española. Según los datos presentados por la Comisión, solo el 35 % de los españoles en riesgo de pobreza que encuentran un trabajo logra salir de la pobreza, porcentaje similar al de Grecia y solo superado en Rumanía y Bulgaria.

Estos terribles datos estadísticos presentados por la citada Dirección General muestran la realidad del impacto de las medidas que el Gobierno de Mariano Rajoy está implementando. Estas medidas obedecen al pie de la letra las diferentes recomendaciones dirigidas al Gobierno de España por la propia Comisión, esta vez con la participación de la Dirección General de Asuntos Económicos y Financieros. En dichas recomendaciones se ha solicitado insistentemente la flexibilización de los contratos de trabajo y de las instituciones del mercado laboral, que, según los datos presentados ahora, son precisamente la causa de que los españoles no puedan salir de la pobreza pese a encontrar un puesto de trabajo.

¿Está teniendo en cuenta la Comisión, en concreto la Dirección General de Asuntos Económicos y Financieros, los datos ofrecidos referentes a cómo el trabajo precario no permite salir de la pobreza?

La OIT afirma que no fue consultada sobre los efectos que las recomendaciones a los Estados miembros tendrían en ámbitos laborales y sociales. ¿Piensan comenzar a consultar a la OIT a la vista de los perniciosos efectos que han desencadenado?

¿De qué forma pretende la Dirección General de Asuntos Económicos y Financieros luchar contra los desastrosos efectos que ha tenido la flexibilización laboral que ha propuesto a España en repetidas ocasiones?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión comparte la opinión de que generar empleo es crucial para amortiguar los costes sociales del actual proceso de ajuste macroeconómico, que ha supuesto una gran carga en los hogares y en determinados sectores de la población (jóvenes y personas poco cualificadas). Dichos costes han sido especialmente elevados en España debido a la conocida rigidez de su mercado laboral.

La Comisión es asimismo consciente de que el índice de pobreza de las personas con empleo es también alto, lo que refleja el deterioro de la situación de algunos grupos de la población ocupada (especialmente los jóvenes, los trabajadores poco cualificados y los trabajadores temporales) en términos de disminución de ingresos y, lo que es más importante, de disminución del número de trabajadores por unidad familiar.

A este respecto y en el marco del Semestre Europeo, el Consejo, a propuesta de la Comisión ([1]), recomendó a España mejorar la capacidad de inserción profesional de los grupos vulnerables y crear un sistema eficaz de servicios de apoyo a los menores y a las familias con el fin de mejorar la situación de las personas en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión social. Además, la Comisión ha mencionado en repetidas ocasiones la necesidad de que España intensifique la eficacia de sus políticas activas de empleo, desarrolle competencias que son o serán necesarias en dicho mercado, fomente el espíritu empresarial y el empleo de los jóvenes, incremente la capacidad de los servicios públicos de empleo y fomente una formación profesional más amplia y de mejor calidad. España ha dado un paso al frente para abordar estos objetivos, pero es necesario continuar esforzándose a este respecto para ayudar a los desempleados a encontrar trabajo y reducir así el riesgo de exclusión y pobreza a largo plazo que, en caso contrario, puede persistir aun cuando la recuperación se consolide.

La respuesta dada a estas recomendaciones se supervisa en el marco del Semestre Europeo.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/country-specific-recommendations/index_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001481/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Impossibility of escaping from the poverty trap in Spain

According to a report in a Spanish digital news medium, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities has stated that finding a job in Spain, or in other EU countries such as Romania, Bulgaria or Greece, is not enough to guarantee a way out from poverty.

According to the Commission, in Spain a high proportion of employment contracts are temporary or part-time, which tend to keep workers stuck in a situation of job insecurity and prevent them from crossing the poverty threshold. The percentage of people below this threshold has increased by almost 5 points between 2007 and 2012 and now stands at 28.2% of the Spanish population as a whole. According to the data provided by the Commission, only 35% of Spaniards at risk of poverty who find work manage to escape from poverty. This percentage is similar in Greece and is only higher in Romania and Bulgaria.

These terrible statistics presented by the aforementioned Directorate-General reveal the harsh reality of the impact produced by the measures being implemented by the government of Mariano Rajoy. These measures strictly obey the various recommendations made to the Spanish Government by the Commission itself, in this case with the participation of the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs. These recommendations have included insistent requests for the flexibilisation of employment contracts and labour market institutions, which, according to the data now presented, are precisely the cause of the impossibility for Spanish people of escaping from the poverty trap even when they find a job.

Is the Commission, and in particular the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, taking into account the statistics presented in relation to how precarious jobs prevent people from escaping from poverty?

According to the ILO, it was not consulted about the effects that would be produced in the ambits of employment and social affairs by the recommendations to Member States. In view of the pernicious effects they have caused, does the Commission now intend to start consulting with the ILO?

In what manner does the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs intend to counter the disastrous effects caused by the labour market flexibilisation that it has repeatedly recommended to Spain?

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

The Commission's shares the view that increasing employment is crucial to buffer the social cost of the ongoing macroeconomic adjustment process, which has weighted heavily on the household sector and on certain population segments (young and low skilled). The costs have been particularly high in Spain due to the well-known rigidities of its labour market.

The Commission is also aware that in-work poverty rates are also high, reflecting the deterioration of the situation for some clusters of the employed population (notably young people, the low skilled and temporary workers) in terms of falling earnings, but also and most importantly decreasing household job intensity.

In this respect, under the European Semester, the Council, on a proposal of the Commission ([1]), already invited Spain to improve the employability of vulnerable groups, combined with effective child and family support services in order to improve the situation of people at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion. Furthermore, the Commission has repeatedly referred to the need for Spain to step up the effectiveness of its active labour-market policies, develop skills that are or will be needed on the labour market, encourage youth entrepreneurship and employment, increase the capacity of public employment services, and promote more and better vocational training. Spain has made headway in addressing these challenges. However, further efforts on these issues will be needed to help the unemployed find jobs and thereby reduce the risk of long-term exclusion and poverty, which could otherwise persist even when the recovery takes hold.

The response given to these recommendations is monitored in the framework of the European Semester.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001489/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(12 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Εθνική στρατηγική για την προσαρμογή στην κλιματική αλλαγή

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή,

1. Ποια είναι τα κράτη μέλη που έχουν υποβάλει εθνική στρατηγική για την προσαρμογή στην κλιματική αλλαγή;

2. Πώς προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να βοηθήσει τη χάραξη εθνικής στρατηγικής ιδιαίτερα από κράτη μέλη του Νότου, τα οποία αναμένεται να πληγούν περισσότερο βραχυ-μεσοπρόθεσμα από το φαινόμενο της κλιματικής αλλαγής;

Απάντηση της κ. Hedegaard εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Μαρτίου 2014)

1. Τα ακόλουθα 16 κράτη μέλη έχουν μέχρι σήμερα θεσπίσει μία εθνική στρατηγική προσαρμογής: Αυστρία, Βέλγιο, Δανία, Φινλανδία, Γαλλία, Γερμανία, Ουγγαρία, Ιρλανδία, Λιθουανία, Μάλτα, Ολλανδία, Πολωνία, Πορτογαλία, Ισπανία, Σουηδία, Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο.

2. Μολονότι η Επιτροπή συμμερίζεται την άποψη ότι η νότια Ευρώπη αναμένεται να συγκαταλέγεται μεταξύ των περιφερειών που θα πληγούν περισσότερο, όλα τα κράτη μέλη είναι εκτεθειμένα στις επιπτώσεις της κλιματικής αλλαγής.

Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει δραστήρια τα κράτη μέλη μέσω μιας σειράς μηχανισμών που μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν για την ανάπτυξη και την εφαρμογή των στρατηγικών προσαρμογής. Για την περίοδο 2014-2020, η Επιτροπή προσφέρει οικονομική υποστήριξη για την ανάπτυξη στρατηγικών προσαρμογής στην κλιματική αλλαγή και σχεδίων δράσης μέσω του προγράμματος LIFE και μέσω του ΕΤΠΑ/Ταμείου Συνοχής (το δεύτερο προσφέρει στήριξη για την ανάπτυξη στρατηγικών προσαρμογής και σχεδίων δράσης σε περιφερειακό και δημοτικό επίπεδο). Τόσο το πρόγραμμα LIFE όσο και η πολιτική συνοχής μπορούν επίσης να χρηματοδοτήσουν την εφαρμογή τέτοιων στρατηγικών, καθώς το ίδιο μπορούν και άλλα ευρωπαϊκά ταμεία (συμπεριλαμβανομένων και άλλων ευρωπαϊκών διαρθρωτικών και επενδυτικών ταμείων).

Ως μέρος της στρατηγικής της ΕΕ για την προσαρμογή στην κλιματική αλλαγή που θεσπίστηκε τον Απρίλιο του 2013, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή εξέδωσε λεπτομερείς κατευθυντήριες γραμμές όσον αφορά την ανάπτυξη στρατηγικών προσαρμογής. Οι εν λόγω κατευθυντήριες γραμμές βασίζονται στο εργαλείο στήριξης της προσαρμογής που διατίθεται στην πλατφόρμα Climate-ADAPT, το οποίο είναι χρήσιμο για την ανάπτυξη στρατηγικών προσαρμογής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001489/14
to the Commission
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: National strategy for adapting to climate change

Will the Commission say:

1. Which Member States have submitted a national strategy for adapting to climate change?

2. How does the Commission intend to assist Member States mainly in the south, which are expected to suffer the most from climate change in the short-to-medium term, in preparing their national strategy?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

1. The following 16 Member States have adopted a national adaptation strategy to date: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

2. While the Commission shares the view that southern Europe is expected to be among the worst affected regions, all Member States are exposed to impacts of climate change.

The Commission actively supports Member States through a range of mechanisms that can be used for the development and implementation of adaptation strategies. For the 2014-2020 period, the Commission offers financial assistance for the development of climate change adaptation strategies and action plans through the LIFE Programme and through ERDF/Cohesion Fund (the latter for the development of adaptation strategies and action plans at the regional and city levels). Both LIFE and Cohesion policy may also finance implementation of such strategies, as well as other EU funds (including other European Structural and Investment Funds).

As part of the EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change adopted in April 2013, the European Commission issued comprehensive guidelines on developing adaptation strategies. These guidelines build upon the Adaptation Support tool available on Climate-ADAPT, which is helpful for developing adaptation strategies.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001491/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(12 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Συντονισμός κρατών μελών για τις επιπτώσεις της κλιματικής αλλαγής και την προσαρμογή σ' αυτήν

Στη Λευκή Βίβλο για την Προσαρμογή στην Κλιματική Αλλαγή αναφέρεται ότι απαιτείται καλή συνεργασία μεταξύ της ΕΕ και των εθνικών, περιφερειακών και τοπικών αρχών για να επιτευχθεί — μεταξύ άλλων — μια στιβαρή γνωστική βάση στην ΕΕ σχετικά με τις επιπτώσεις και τον αντίκτυπο της κλιματικής αλλαγής και η διασφάλιση της προσαρμογής μέσω συνδυασμένης χρήσης μέτρων πολιτικής (μέτρα αγοράς, συμπράξεις ιδιωτικού και δημόσιου τομέα κ.λπ.). Για το σκοπό αυτό προβλεπόταν η δημιουργία Μηχανισμού Διαλογής Πληροφοριών (Clearing House Mechanism), με στόχο την αποτελεσματική βελτίωση της διαχείρισης γνώσεων σχετικά με την αλλαγή του κλίματος, την ευπάθεια, και τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές όσον αφορά την προσαρμογή στην κλιματική αλλαγή. Επίσης προβλεπόταν η ίδρυση από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή Συντονιστικής Ομάδας για τις Επιπτώσεις της Κλιματικής Αλλαγής και την Προσαρμογή σε αυτήν (Impacts and Adaptation Steering Group).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή,

1. κατά πόσο λειτούργησε και λειτουργεί ο Μηχανισμός αυτός ως σύστημα ολοκληρωμένης και ενιαίας ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ σχετικά με το περιβάλλον;

2. αναφέρονται βέλτιστες πρακτικές για την προσαρμογή σε επίπεδο κράτους μέλους και εάν ναι, ποιες είναι οι βέλτιστες πρακτικές που αναφέρονται για την προσαρμογή στην κλιματική αλλαγή;

3. κατά πόσο χρησίμευσε η Συντονιστική Ομάδα για τις Επιπτώσεις της Κλιματικής Αλλαγής και την Προσαρμογή σε αυτήν στο να εμπλέξει τα κράτη μέλη σε ουσιαστική συμβολή στην προσαρμογή και την προώθηση της έρευνας σε αυτόν τον τομέα; Τι αποτελέσματα έχει να επιδείξει η λειτουργία της;

4. πώς προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να ενδυναμώσει περαιτέρω τη διάδοση γνώσης και τεχνολογιών για την προσαρμογή και την ανάπτυξη ανθεκτικότητας στην κλιματική αλλαγή;

Απάντηση της κ. Hedegaard εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Μαρτίου 2014)

1. Η Climate-ADAPT είναι η διαδικτυακή πλατφόρμα ([1]) που δρομολογήθηκε τον Μάρτιο 2012 από την Επιτροπή για την ανάπτυξη μηχανισμού διαλογής πληροφοριών προσαρμογής στην Ευρώπη. Με χιλιάδες επισκέψεις κάθε μήνα, περιέχει την εγκυρότερη πηγή πληροφοριών και εργαλεία υποστήριξης της πολιτικής για τις επιπτώσεις, την ευπάθεια και την προσαρμογή στην ΕΕ, τα οποία επικαιροποιούνται και βελτιώνονται συνεχώς. Μετά την έγκριση της στρατηγικής προσαρμογής της ΕΕ τον Απρίλιο 2013, η Climate-ADAPT θα ενισχυθεί περαιτέρω, μεταξύ άλλων μέσω μιας πιο δυναμικής αλληλεπίδρασης με εθνικές πρωτοβουλίες.

2. Η Climate-ADAPT περιέχει ένα τμήμα σχετικά με τις επιλογές προσαρμογής (δηλαδή πιθανά μέτρα και δράσεις) με βάση την βιβλιογραφία και ένα τμήμα περιπτωσιολογικών μελετών όπου περιγράφονται τα βέλτιστα πρακτικά παραδείγματα εφαρμοσμένων πρακτικών προσαρμογής που είναι διαθέσιμα στην ΕΕ και η αξιολόγηση τους (π.χ. επίτευξη στόχων, επιτυχία και περιοριστικοί παράγοντες, κόστος και οφέλη). Η Climate-ADAPT παρουσιάζει επίσης βασική βιβλιογραφία για τον εντοπισμό βέλτιστων πρακτικών.

3. Η συντονιστική ομάδα συναντήθηκε αρκετές φορές έως ότου εγκριθεί η στρατηγική προσαρμογής της ΕΕ. Δημιούργησε μια ομάδα εργασίας γνωστικής βάσης, η οποία συνεισέφερε ως προς τον προσδιορισμό της δομής και των περιεχομένων της Climate-ADAPT, καθώς και ως προς άλλα θέματα, όπως ο ορισμός των δεικτών προσαρμογής.

4. Η Climate-ADAPT είναι το κύριο εργαλείο της Επιτροπής για τη διάδοση των απαιτούμενων γνώσεων ως προς την ανάπτυξη ολοκληρωμένων και ενημερωμένων πολιτικών προσαρμογής. Συμπληρωματικά, η Επιτροπή βοηθά τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ με την προώθηση διεπαφών επιστήμης/πολιτικής στις χώρες, ώστε να λειτουργήσει καταλυτικά για την ανάληψη δράσης με βάση τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές.

([1]) http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001491/14
to the Commission
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Coordination of EU Member States regarding the impact of and adaptation to climate change

The White Paper — Adapting to Climate Change states that the EU and other national, regional and local authorities must cooperate in order, *inter alia,* to build a solid knowledge base on the impact and consequences of climate change for the EU and employ a combination of policy instruments (market-based instruments, public private partnerships) to ensure effective delivery of adaption. As part of this initiative, provision has been made for a Clearing House Mechanism to be created to efficiently manage information on climate change impact, vulnerability and best practices on adaptation. Provision has also been made for the European Commission to establish an Impacts and Adaptation Steering Group.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. To what extent has this mechanism operated or to what extent is it currently operating as a single, integrated system for EU Member States to exchange information on the environment?

2. Have best practices for adapting to climate change been reported at Member State level and, if so, what are the reported best practices for adapting to climate change?

3. How useful was the Impacts and Adaptation Steering Group in involving Member States in terms of making an essential contribution to adaptation and promoting research in this field? What results has it achieved to date?

4. How does the Commission intend to strengthen the dissemination of know-how and technology for the adaptation and resistance to climate change?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2014)

1. Climate-ADAPT is the web platform ([1]) launched in March 2012 by the Commission, developing an adaptation Clearing House Mechanism for Europe. With thousands of visits each month, it contains the most authoritative source of information and policy support tools on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation in the EU, which are constantly updated and improved. After the adoption of an EU Adaptation Strategy in April 2013, Climate-ADAPT will be further reinforced, including through a more robust interaction with national initiatives.

2. Climate-ADAPT contains a section on adaptation options (i.e. possible measures and actions) based on literature, and a section of 'Case Studies', which describe the best practical examples available in the EU of implemented adaptation practice and their assessment (e.g. achieving objectives, success and limiting factors, costs and benefits). Climate-ADAPT also presents key literature identifying best practice.

3. The Steering Group met several times until breaking-up with the adoption of the EU Adaptation Strategy. It set up a 'working group on knowledge base' that contributed to define the structure and contents of Climate-ADAPT, as well as other issues such as the definition of adaptation indicators.

4. Climate-ADAPT is the main Commission tool to disseminate knowledge needed for developing comprehensive and informed adaptation policies. Complementarily, the Commission is assisting EU Member States by fostering Science/Policy interfaces in countries, to catalyse action based on best practice.

([1]) http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001492/14
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(12. februar 2014)

Om: Sygesikringskort i EU

Danmark har netop ændret reglerne for dækning af sygdom under rejse i EU. Tidligere ville man være dækket af den danske sygesikring, men nu skal man enten dækkes af reglerne i henhold til EU's blå sygesikringskort eller tegne en ekstra forsikring.

I forbindelse med disse ændringer er der opstået en debat om, hvad borgerne skal gøre, hvis hospitaler og klinikker i andre EU-lande nægter at acceptere EU's blå sygesikringskort. Det har der nemlig været flere eksempler på.

Mit spørgsmål til Kommissionen er derfor:

Hvordan vil Kommissionen garantere, at alle EU-borgere, der har et gyldigt EU-sygesikringskort, problemfrit kan få den dækning, der tilbydes lokale borgere?

Er der et telefonnummer, som EU-borgere kan ringe på i nødstilfælde, hvis et hospital eller en klinik nægter at acceptere EU's sygesikringskort?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af László Andor
(25. marts 2014)

Det europæiske sygesikringskort (EU-sygesikringskortet) udstedes af den nationale sygesikringsinstitution i den stat (EU- eller EØS-medlemsstat eller Schweiz), hvor en person er forsikret. Det giver adgang til nødvendig offentlig lægehjælp under et midlertidigt ophold i en anden medlemsstat på samme betingelser og til samme pris (gratis i visse lande) som det, der gælder for personer, der er forsikret i den pågældende medlemsstat. Borgere i EU, EØS eller Schweiz, som er forsikret i Danmark og anvender deres EU-sygesikringskort, når de rejser til andre medlemsstater, er fortsat dækket af den danske sygesikring.

Hospitaler, der leverer offentlige sundhedsydelser, er forpligtede til at anerkende EU-sygesikringskortet ([1]). I langt de fleste tilfælde modtager patienter med EU-sygesikringskort den nødvendige behandling og får refunderet deres udgifter uden problemer. Når Kommissionen bliver opmærksom på en sag, hvor EU-sygesikringskortet ikke er blevet accepteret, undersøger den sagen ved at henvende sig til myndighederne i den pågældende medlemsstat. En sådan undersøgelse kan føre til en traktatbrudssag mod en medlemsstat, der undlader at anvende EU-lovgivningen om brugen af EU-sygesikringskortet eller anvender den ukorrekt ([2]).

Hvis patienters EU-sygesikringskort ikke accepteres, bør patienterne sikre sig, at de bliver behandlet af offentlige (ikke private) sundhedstjenesteyderne, og de bør gemme alle kvitteringer for betaling af den modtagne behandling. Efterfølgende kan de anmode om refusion fra den kompetente sundhedsinstitution i enten opholdsmedlemsstaten eller den medlemsstat, der har udstedt EU-sygesikringskortet. EU-sygesikringskort-appen til smartphone og Kommissionens websted for EU-sygesikringskortet giver oplysninger om, hvordan disse organer kan kontaktes ([3]).

([1]) Artikel 19 i forordning (EF) nr. 883/2004 (EUT L 166 af 30.4.2004, s. 1) og artikel 25 i forordning (EF) nr. 987/2009 (EUT L 284 af 30.10.2009).
([2]) Se pressemeddelelse IP/13/683 på: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-683_da.htm
([3]) Se http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=509&langId=da.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001492/14
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: EU Health Insurance Card

Denmark has recently amended the rules for health insurance cover when travelling within the EU. In the past one would have been covered by Danish health insurance, but now one either has to be covered by the rules of the blue EU Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or to take out separate insurance.

In connection with these changes there has been a debate on what people should do if hospitals and clinics in other EU countries refuse to accept the blue EU Health Insurance Card. This has happened on a number of occasions.

I should therefore like to ask the following questions:

How will the Commission ensure that all EU citizens who have a valid EHIC can receive without any problems the same care which is offered to local citizens?

Is there a phone number that EU citizens can ring in an emergency if a hospital or clinic refuses to accept the EHIC?

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

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is issued by the national health-insurance institution in the State (EU or EEA Member State or Switzerland) where the person is insured. It gives access to medically necessary, State-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in another Member State, under the same conditions and at the same cost (free in some countries) as people insured in that Member State. Citizens of the EU, EEA or Switzerland who are insured in Denmark and use their EHIC when travelling to other Member States continue to be covered by Danish health insurance.

Hospitals that provide public health services are obliged to recognise the EHIC ([1]). In the vast majority of cases, patients presenting the EHIC receive the necessary healthcare and are reimbursed without any problem. Where the Commission's attention is drawn to a case in which the EHIC has not been accepted, the Commission investigates the issue with the authorities of the Member State concerned. Such investigation may lead to an infringement procedure against any Member State not applying or incorrectly applying EC law on the use of the EHIC ([2]).

Should their EHICs not be accepted, patients should ensure they are treated by public (not private) healthcare providers and should keep all receipts for payment of treatment received. They can then apply for reimbursement to the competent health institution in either the Member State of stay or that which issued the EHIC. The EHIC smartphone application and the Commission's EHIC website give contact details for those bodies ([3]).

([1]) Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 (OJ L 166, 30.4.2004, p. 1) and Article 25 of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 (OJ L 284, 30.10.2009).
([2]) See Press Release IP/13/683 at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-683_en.htm
([3]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=509&langId=en

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001493/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Internet e rapporti sessuali con minori

Un recente studio ha stabilito che l'incontro sessuale tra un minore e un adulto è ritenuto «accettabile» da oltre un italiano su tre (38 %). Sempre secondo questo studio, il 28 % degli adulti ha tra i propri contatti adolescenti che non conosce personalmente e l'81 % pensa che le interazioni sessuali tra adulti e adolescenti siano diffuse e trovino il loro input su Internet. Un italiano su dieci attribuisce la responsabilità dell'iniziativa di contatto agli adolescenti.

Il 49 % degli intervistati attribuisce agli adulti la responsabilità dell'iniziativa di contatto nell'interazione con un adolescente, ma secondo il 41 % anche gli adolescenti hanno una parte attiva nell'iniziativa del contatto. I ragazzi di oggi sono considerati dagli italiani più disinvolti nell'approccio con gli adulti (48 %) e sessualmente più precoci (61 %), ma comunque impreparati nel gestire una relazione sessuale con una persona matura (36 %). Per contro, per un intervistato su 100, la relazione sessuale con un adulto potrebbe addirittura essere formativa per il minore.

L'indagine ha anche rivelato che il 37 % degli italiani infatti afferma di utilizzare il web — soprattutto i social network — per conoscere persone disponibili a fare amicizia o a intrattenere un rapporto di affetto o amore.

Alla luce di questi dati, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se esistono dati simili relativi alle realtà di altri paesi europei o alla totalità dell'Unione europea;

2. se intende, di concerto con organizzazioni non governative e governi nazionali, avviare campagne di sensibilizzazione in materia di educazione sessuale per gli adolescenti e in materia dei rischi collegati a un uso scorretto della rete?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(1º aprile 2014)

Dallo studio *EU Kids online*, che si basa sulla rilevazione su vasta scala di dati quantitativi riguardo alle esperienze maturate in 25 paesi europei da giovani di età compresa tra 9 e 16 anni nell'uso di internet e nei relativi rischi e aspetti di sicurezza ([1]), emerge che il 15 % dei giovani di età compresa tra 11 e 16 anni ha ricevuto, in modalità da pari a pari, messaggi o immagini a sfondo sessuale o che evocavano rapporti sessuali, e che il 3 % ha inviato o affisso in bacheca in prima persona messaggi di questo tipo. Il 9 % dei giovani di età compresa tra 9 e 16 anni ha incontrato nella vita reale persone con cui aveva avuto contatti via internet, ma non è noto quanti di questi contatti coinvolgessero adulti.

La relazione europea sulla gioventù 2012 ([2]) presenta dati sulla situazione dei giovani in Europa, in particolare dati da cui emerge che, più elevato è il grado di istruzione, migliore è la formazione e maggiore la consapevolezza dei potenziali pericoli dell'ambiente in linea.

La strategia dell'UE per la gioventù invita Stati membri e Commissione, nel totale rispetto del principio di sussidiarietà, a promuovere la tutela dei bambini e dei giovani da determinati pericoli insiti nell'uso dei nuovi media.

Nell'ambito del programma *Safer internet* la Commissione ha istituito e sostiene una rete paneuropea ([3]) di centri per un uso più sicuro di internet, che si rivolgono a ragazzi, genitori e insegnanti sensibilizzandoli sulla gestione dei rischi della rete, quali l'adescamento in linea o il «sexting» ([4]), e su un uso responsabile delle tecnologie online. I centri offrono inoltre consulenza tramite linee di soccorso. La coalizione CEO ([5]), volta a fare di internet un posto migliore per i bambini, rappresenta un consesso in cui operatori del settore e ONG possono collaborare in campagne di sensibilizzazione, anche in tema di uso sicuro dei servizi.

([1]) http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20II%20(2009-11)/EUKidsOnlineIIReports/D4FullFindings.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.saferinternet.org/
([4]) http://www.saferinternet.org/online-issues/teachers-and-educators/sexting
([5]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/61973

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001493/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: The Internet and sexual relations with minors

A recent study indicates that sexual encounters between minors and adults are considered 'acceptable' by more than one in three Italians (38%). According to the same study, 28% of adults have adolescents whom they do not know personally among their contacts, and 81% think that sexual interactions between adults and adolescents are widespread and originate over the Internet. One Italian in ten thinks that adolescents are responsible for initiating contact.

Although 49% of respondents said that adults were responsible for initiating contact in interactions with adolescents, 41% also said that adolescents played an active role in initiating contact. Italians think that the young people of today are more self-confident in approaching adults (48%) and more sexually precocious (61%), but still unskilled in managing a sexual relationship with an older person (36%). However, one respondent in 100 thinks that a sexual relationship with an adult could actually be educational for the minor concerned.

The survey also revealed that 37% of Italians say they use the web — particularly social networks — to get to know people who are looking for friendship or for an intimate or romantic relationship.

In the light of these figures, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Are there are any similar figures concerning the situation in other European countries or in the European Union as a whole?

2. Does it intend to collaborate with NGOs and national governments to launch awareness campaigns concerning sex education for adolescents and the risks associated with improper use of social networks?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

The EU Kids Online Survey conducted a major quantitative survey of 9-16 year olds and their experiences of online use, risk and safety in 25 European countries ([1]). It reports that 15% of 11-16 year olds have received peer to peer sexual messages or images or talk about having sex and 3% have sent or posted such messages themselves. 9% of 9-16 year olds have met an online contact offline. There is no information as to how many of those contacts were with adults.

The EU Youth Report of 2012 ([2]) presents data on the situation of young people in Europe and in particular data which underlines that a higher educational level means better training and greater awareness regarding the potential online dangers.

In full respect of subsidiarity, the EU Youth Strategy invites the Member States and the Commission to promote the protection of children and young people against certain dangers arising from the use of new media.

Under the Safer Internet Programme the Commission set up and supports a pan-European network ([3]) of Safer Internet Centres, which promote awareness to minors, parents and teachers of how to manage risks online, such as online grooming and sexting ([4]), and how to use online technologies responsibly. These centres also provide helplines for advice. The CEO Coalition ([5]) to make the Internet a better place for children is a forum where industry and NGOs can work together on awareness campaigns, including on safe use of services.

([1]) http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20II%20(2009-11)/EUKidsOnlineIIReports/D4FullFindings.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.saferInternet.org/
([4]) http://www.saferInternet.org/online-issues/teachers-and-educators/sexting
([5]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/61973

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001494/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Ispettori della Commissione in merito all'emergenza xylella fastidiosa

Lunedì 10 febbraio 2014 tre ispettori della Commissione europea sono arrivati in Puglia per controllare se l'Italia stia dando seguito alle direttive dell'Unione sull'emergenza xylella fastidiosa, il batterio che ha colpito centinaia di migliaia di alberi di ulivo nel sud del Salento. A Bari i tre ispettori incontreranno i componenti del comitato fitosanitario regionale e del comitato nazionale istituito presso il ministero dell'agricoltura. Gli ispettori effettueranno poi un sopralluogo negli uliveti colpiti dalla xylella, oltre ad incontrare i ricercatori impegnati nello studio di un rimedio efficace contro il batterio-killer, agricoltori e vivaisti. Dal giudizio di questi ispettori dipenderanno le prossime decisioni della Commissione europea.

L'attività dei vivai, bloccata in tutto o in parte dalla determina della regione Puglia del 20 novembre scorso, rimane fortemente limitata, in quanto non possono assolutamente essere movimentate le piante a rischio di xylella, come ulivi, mandorli, oleandri e querce, mentre su tutte le altre sono necessarie analisi preventive, tanto che nei giorni scorsi un'ottantina di vivaisti si è costituita nel distretto florovivaistico pugliese per chiedere un risarcimento dei danni all'assessorato regionale all'agricoltura.

Alla luce di questi fatti, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se sono previste risorse a sostegno dei vivaisti e di altri lavoratori la cui attività è sensibilmente limitata dall'attuale situazione;

2. entro quanto tempo gli ispettori della Commissione esprimeranno il proprio giudizio in merito alla condotta dell'Italia nel dare seguito alle direttive sull'emergenza?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

In forza del regime fitosanitario unionale, stabilito dalla direttiva 2000/29/CE del Consiglio ([1]), l'UE non può sostenere direttamente i produttori.

Nel periodo di programmazione 2007-2013 il regolamento sullo sviluppo rurale consente investimenti nel quadro della misura 121 (Ammodernamento delle aziende agricole) per il reimpianto di nuovi alberi d'olivo. Nel nuovo periodo di programmazione 2014-2020, se sono soddisfatte le condizioni specifiche di cui al regolamento (UE) n. 1305/2013, dovrebbe essere possibile non solo investire in beni materiali, ma anche ripristinare il potenziale produttivo agricolo danneggiato da eventi fitosanitari e gestire i rischi tramite: a) contributi finanziari per i premi assicurativi relativi a colture, animali e piante a protezione dal rischio di perdite economiche per gli agricoltori a motivo di malattie delle piante o infestazioni di parassiti; b) contributi finanziari a fondi mutualistici per indennizzare gli agricoltori delle perdite economiche causate dall'insorgere di fitopatologie o da infestazioni parassitarie; c) uno strumento di stabilizzazione dei redditi in forma di contributi finanziari a fondi comuni che eroghi compensazioni agli agricoltori in caso di grave contrazione delle loro entrate.

Il 28 febbraio 2014 la Commissione ha presentato oralmente al comitato fitosanitario permanente le risultanze della sua missione di audit effettuata in Italia dal 10 al 14 febbraio 2014 sul focolaio di *Xyllela fastidiosa*. La relazione finale di detto audit sarà pronta per la pubblicazione verso metà giugno 2014, in seguito ad una consultazione *ad hoc* con le autorità italiane.

([1]) Direttiva 2000/29/CE del Consiglio, dell'8 maggio 2000, concernente le misure di protezione contro l'introduzione nella Comunità di organismi nocivi ai vegetali o ai prodotti vegetali e contro la loro diffusione nella Comunità (GU L 169 del 10.7.2000, pag. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001494/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Commission inspectors regarding the xylella fastidiosa outbreak

On Monday 10 February 2014, three European Commission inspectors arrived in Apulia to check that Italy was following the EU's directives concerning the outbreak of *xylella fastidiosa*, the bacterium that has infected hundreds of thousands of olive trees in southern Salento. The three inspectors are to have a meeting in Bari with members of the Regional Committee on Plant Health and the national committee set up within the Ministry of Agriculture. The inspectors will then be going on to make on-site inspections at olive groves hit by *xylella*, and to meet farmers, nurserymen and researchers involved in seeking an effective remedy for the killer bacterium. Further decisions to be made by the European Commission will be based on the inspectors' opinion.

Nurseries' activities, which were totally or partially halted by decision of the Region of Apulia on 20 November last year, are still heavily restricted. There is a total ban on the movement of trees and plants at risk of being infected by *xylella*, including olives, almonds, oleanders and oaks, and all others have to be analysed prior to movement. In response, the past few days have seen around eighty nurserymen joining forces in Apulia's nursery-gardening district to call for compensation from the Regional Agricultural Department.

In the light of these facts, could the Commission clarify the following:

1. Does it intend to make resources available to support the nurserymen and other workers whose activities are being significantly restricted by the current situation?

2. How long will it be before the Commission's inspectors issue their opinion regarding Italy's conduct in following the directives concerning the outbreak?

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

Under the EU plant-health regime, established by Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([1]), the EU cannot directly support producers.

In the programming period 2007-2013, the regulation on Rural Development allows investments in the framework of measure 121 (Modernization of agricultural holdings) for re-planting new olive trees. In the new programming period 2014-2020, where specific conditions are satisfied under Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, it should be possible not only to invest in physical assets but also to restore agricultural production potential damaged by plant health events and to manage risks via: a) financial contributions to premiums for crop, animal and plant insurance against economic losses to farmers caused by plant diseases or pest infestation; b) financial contributions to mutual funds to pay financial compensations to farmers for economic losses caused by the outbreak of a plant disease or pest infestation; c) an income stabilisation tool, in the form of financial contributions to mutual funds, providing compensation to farmers for a severe drop in their income.

On 28 February 2014, the Commission made an oral presentation to the Standing Committee on Plant Health concerning the findings of its audit mission in Italy from 10 to 14 February 2014 on the outbreak of *Xyllela fastidiosa*. The final report of that audit will be available for publication around mid-June 2014, following *ad hoc* consultation with the Italian authorities.

([1]) Council Directive 2000/29/EC of 8 May 2000 on protective measures against the introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community (OJ L 169, 10.7.2000, p 1).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001497/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Sensibilizzazione verso l'educazione stradale

La notte del 10 febbraio scorso ha registrato l'ennesimo tragico incidente stradale. A Milano un furgone bianco ha travolto un bambino di soli 10 anni, ora in coma. Il guidatore ha abbandonato il furgone pochi metri dopo l'incidente e si è dato alla fuga, ma è stato rintracciato dalle forze dell'ordine dopo poche ore.

Il tema dell'educazione stradale resta importantissimo in Europa e, nonostante i traguardi raggiunti finora, l'obiettivo di dimezzamento del numero delle vittime stradali entro il 2010, attestandosi al -42 %.

Alla luce di quanto detto, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. Ha essa adottato strumenti o linee guida volti al rafforzamento dell'educazione stradale negli Stati membri?

2. Intende essa proporre nuovi obiettivi in tema di riduzione delle vittime della strada?

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

1. Con l'entrata in vigore della direttiva 2006/126/CE ([1]), concernente la patente di guida, a decorrere dal 19 gennaio 2013, le norme che disciplinano il rilascio della patente per ciclomotori, motocicli, camion e mezzi pesanti sono state rafforzate e sono stati introdotti requisiti minimi per gli esaminatori che concedono tale patente. Inoltre la direttiva 2003/59/CE sulla qualificazione iniziale e la formazione periodica dei conducenti professionali di camion e autobus fissa i requisiti minimi per la formazione in materia di sicurezza stradale di tale categoria di conducenti.

2. L'UE ha già adottato un obiettivo ambizioso volto a dimezzare, tra il 2010 e il 2020, il numero di decessi negli incidenti stradali. Si sta inoltre discutendo un nuovo obiettivo destinato a diminuire il numero di feriti gravi negli incidenti stradali. Tale obiettivo potrebbe essere fissato al più presto nel 2015, quando gli Stati membri comunicheranno i primi dati in materia. L'obiettivo a lungo termine è ridurre quasi a zero ([2]) il numero di vittime di incidenti stradali.

([1]) GU L 403 del 30.12.2006.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0144:FIN:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001497/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Awareness of road safety training

The night of 10 February witnessed one more in a long line of tragic road accidents. In Milan a white van ran over a boy of just 10, who is now in a coma. The driver abandoned the van a few metres beyond the accident and ran off, but was caught by the police several hours later.

The subject of road safety training remains of primary importance in Europe, together, despite the targets so far achieved, with the objective of halving the number of road accident victims by 2010, currently standing at -42%.

In view of the above, can the Commission specify the following:

1. Has it adopted any instruments or guidelines aimed at reinforcing road safety training in Member States?

2. Does it intend to define new objectives in terms of the reduction of the number of road accident victims?

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

1. With the full entry into force of Directive 2006/126/EC ([1]) on driving licences from 19 January 2013, the rules on obtaining a driving licence for mopeds, motorcycles, trucks and lorries have been strengthened and minimum requirements for driving licence examiners have been introduced. In addition, the directive 2003/59/EC on initial qualification and periodic training of professional truck and bus drivers set minimum requirements for road safety related training of these drivers.

2. The EU has already adopted an ambitious target to reduce the number of road deaths by half between 2010 and 2020. In addition, a new target is being discussed on the reduction of serious road traffic injuries. Such a target could earliest be set in 2015, when first data on serious injuries will be reported by the Member States. For the long-term, the objective is to reduce the number of road traffic crash victims to almost zero ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 403, 30.12.2006.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0144:FIN:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001499/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Educare a nuove relazionalità: le istituzioni a fianco dei cittadini

Nella progettualità europea sussiste, naturalmente, una spiccata tensione nei riguardi della partecipazione attiva dei suoi cittadini.

Quest'ultima si ripropone nelle priorità di specifici programmi, il cui fine risiede nel coinvolgimento della società civile e nella promozione di una sensibilità nei rispetti delle istituzioni europee, attraverso, peraltro, iniziative che contemplino una maggiore interazione fra queste ultime e il cittadino.

In linea con quanto detto, allora, ben si pone un'interessante esperienza, che trova luogo in Italia, in questi giorni, e che vede, fianco a fianco, rappresentanti delle istituzioni e giovani studenti perseguire un medesimo intento pedagogico: la corretta socializzazione a nuove forme relazionali.

Membri della polizia postale incontreranno studenti della secondaria superiore di cento città italiane, per affrontare insieme il tema della convivialità virtuale, dell'interazione in rete, rilevandone rischi ed opportunità, nel rispetto delle diverse individualità.

In particolare, sarà riservata particolare attenzione per temi di una certa delicatezza, quali il *cyber-bullismo*, l'adescamento di minori, la violazione della privacy.

Di conseguenza, in merito a quanto sopra, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. Come interpreta iniziative di tale portata, che concretizzano istanze di prossimità ai cittadini mediante la proposizione di contesti dialogici caratterizzati dall'immediatezza del rapporto faccia a faccia?

2. Quali altre iniziative analoghe può individuare nello scenario socio-istituzionale europeo?

3. Qual è il suo proposito in relazione alla promozione di iniziative affini?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

La Commissione è favorevole a tutte le iniziative che contribuiscono a far incontrare le istituzioni e i cittadini nell'ambito di discussioni faccia a faccia.

Negli ultimi 18 mesi il Presidente della Commissione e la maggior parte dei Commissari hanno partecipato a dialoghi con i cittadini organizzati nel contesto dell'Anno europeo dei cittadini 2013 in 50 città in tutti e 28 gli Stati membri. Anche membri del Parlamento europeo e politici a livello nazionale e locale hanno partecipato a questi dibattiti con cittadini di ogni estrazione sociale i quali hanno avuto l'opportunità di esprimere direttamente le loro preoccupazioni a politici di punta dell'UE.

Per quanto concerne in particolare i giovani, l'iniziativa unionale «Si torna a scuola» incoraggia il personale delle istituzioni europee a trascorrere una giornata in una scuola. L'iniziativa offre agli studenti l'opportunità senza pari di porre domande sull'UE e di sentire le esperienze di coloro che partecipano direttamente al processo decisionale europeo. Nel 2013, funzionari di 8 istituzioni e organi dell'UE hanno dibattuto con 65 400 studenti di 886 scuole in 22 Stati membri. L'esercizio dovrebbe svolgersi in Italia ad ottobre nel corso della Presidenza italiana del Consiglio dei Ministri.

Tramite il programma «L'Europa per i cittadini» ([1]) la Commissione sostiene anche progetti transnazionali volti ad accrescere la partecipazione democratica dei giovani; essa favorisce in particolare i partenariati tra le autorità locali e le organizzazioni della società civile.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001499/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Coming to terms with new forms of interaction: how the institutions can help the public

One of the EU's key concerns is to encourage active citizenship.

This is clear from the priorities set for specific programmes intended to involve civil society more closely in the EU's work and familiarise the public with the European institutions, including by means of initiatives which bring those institutions and members of the public into closer contact with one another.

A similar approach is apparent in an interesting experiment taking place in Italy, in which representatives of a government agency will be joining schoolchildren to explore ways of dealing with the new forms of interaction made possible by modern technology.

This will involve meetings between communications police officers and upper secondary school children from 100 towns and cities around Italy, at which the subject of online interaction, its advantages and drawbacks, and how it may be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect, will be discussed.

The discussions will focus in particular on sensitive issues such as cyber bullying, grooming and personal privacy.

1. What view does the Commission take of initiatives of this kind, which help to forge closer ties between institutions and the general public by providing opportunities for face-to-face discussions?

2. Can it give any examples of similar initiatives involving interaction between civil society and public institutions that have taken place in the EU?

3. Does it believe that initiatives of this kind should be encouraged?

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

The Commission welcomes all initiatives that help bringing together institutions and citizens in face-to-face discussions.

In the past 18 months the Commission President and most Commissioners have taken part in Citizens' Dialogues organised as part of the 2013 European Year of Citizens in 50 cities in all 28 Member States. Members of the European Parliament and national and local politicians have also taken part in these debates with citizens from all walks of life that gave have allowed citizens to express their concerns directly to leading EU politicians.

Specifically targeting youngsters, the 'EU Back to School' initiative encourages staff of the European institutions to spend a day in a school. The initiative offers students the unique opportunity to ask questions about the EU and to hear the experiences of those directly involved European policy making. In 2013, officials from 8 EU institutions and bodies spoke with 65 400 students in 886 schools in 22 Member States. The exercise is planned to take place in Italy in October during the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

Through the Europe for Citizens Programme ([1]), the Commission also supports transnational projects to increase the democratic participation of young; it notably favours partnerships between local authorities and civil society organisations.

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

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001505/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(12 februarie 2014)

Subiect: Regulamentul (CE) nr. 396/2005 și vinurile comercializate pe piața UE

De-a lungul timpului au fost publicate diverse studii care indicau prezența unor pesticide în vinurile aflate pe piața europeană. Mai mult, din testele efectuate de organizații precum UFC-Que Choisir sau European Pesticide Action Network, a rezultat faptul că astfel de substanțe au fost găsite în toate vinurile supuse testării.

Cu toate că nivelurile de pesticid găsite au fost sub limita maximă admisă, în unele produse s-a constatat prezența a până la 14 astfel de substanțe.

Dacă pornim de la premisa că siguranța alimentară a acestor vinuri scade direct proporțional cu numărul de substanțe potențial toxice din compoziția lor, atunci ar trebui analizat impactul consumului acestei băuturi asupra sănătății umane.

Regulamentul (CE) nr. 396/2005 prevede conținuturile maxime aplicabile reziduurilor de pesticide, însă doar pentru strugurii propriu-ziși, nu și pentru produsul finit, în acest caz vinul. În plus, alte state ale lumii au reglementări exprese pentru conținutul de astfel de substanțe în produsul finit.

A analizat Comisia oportunitatea unei astfel de reglementări la nivelul UE? De asemenea, există studii care să analizeze impactul acestor posibile combinații de reziduuri de pesticide asupra sănătății umane?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(19 martie 2014)

Comisia este pe deplin conștientă de studiile care au fost publicate și care indică prezența pesticidelor în vinurile vândute pe piața europeană. În UE, limitele maxime de reziduuri (LMR) sunt stabilite pentru produsele agricole de bază, pe baza unei bune practici agricole (BPA) și a celui mai scăzut nivel de expunere necesar pentru a permite protejarea consumatorilor vulnerabili ([1]). Aceasta include stabilirea de LMR pentru strugurii destinați producției de vin, precum și pentru strugurii de masă. Statele membre sunt responsabile de controalele efectuate asupra strugurilor de vin pentru a verifica respectarea LMR, ceea ce garantează siguranța consumului lor pentru consumatori.

Controalele vizează produsul brut, în cazul căruia măsurile de executare pot fi apoi adoptate în mod direct, în caz de neconformitate. În plus, statele membre pot controla produsele finite ținând cont de factorii specifici de prelucrare a vinului, dacă aceștia sunt disponibili, sau presupunând, în cel mai rău caz, că limitele aplicabile vinului sunt identice cu cele aplicabile strugurilor. Cu toate acestea, este bine cunoscut faptul că practicile oenologice duc la reduceri considerabile ale majorității pesticidelor. Pentru a obține o imagine completă privind expunerea consumatorilor, inclusiv privind expunerea cumulată la reziduuri multiple, programul coordonat al UE a programat efectuarea unor analize asupra vinului, în calitate de produs alimentar, în cursul anului 2013. Rezultatele acestor analize vor fi publicate în cursul primului trimestru al anului 2015.

([1]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 396/2005 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 23 februarie 2005 privind conținuturile maxime aplicabile reziduurilor de pesticide din sau de pe produse alimentare și hrana de origine vegetală și animală pentru animale și de modificare a Directivei 91/414/CEE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001505/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 and wines sold on the EU market

Some time ago, a number of studies were published indicating the presence of pesticides in wines sold on the European market. Tests carried out by organisations such as the consumer association UFC Que Choisir and European Pesticide Action Network found pesticides in all the wines analysed.

Even though the amounts of pesticides found were under the maximum permitted levels, some of the products tested were found to contain up to 14 different substances.

If we start from the premise that the safety of these wines is directly proportionate to the number of potentially toxic substances they contain, it is clearly important to analyse the impact that consuming these wines may have on human health.

Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 sets maximum levels for pesticide residues, but these apply only to grapes and not to the final product, in this case wine. Other countries in the world have specific rules governing the content of pesticide residues in the finished product.

Has the Commission considered whether it would be appropriate to introduce such rules at EU level? Have any studies been carried out to analyse the impact of these possible combinations of pesticide residues on human health?

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

The Commission is well aware of the studies that were published indicating the presence of pesticides in wines sold on the European market. In the EU maximum residue levels (MRLs) are established for raw agricultural products based on good agricultural practice (GAP) and the lowest consumer exposure necessary to protect vulnerable consumers ([1]). This includes the setting of MRLs for grapes intended for wine production as well as for table grapes. Member States are responsible for controls on wine grapes to check compliance with MRLs which makes sure that they are safe for consumers.

Controls take place on the raw product for which enforcement measures can then directly be taken in case of non-compliances. Additionally, the Member States can control final products taking into account specific processing factors for wine where available, or assuming as a worst case that the levels in wine are the same as those in grapes. It is however well known that oenological practices lead to considerable decreases of most pesticides. In order to get a complete overview on consumer exposure, including cumulative exposure to multiple residues, the EU coordinated programme scheduled wine as a food commodity to be analysed in 2013. The results of these analyses shall be published by the first quarter of 2015.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 February 2005 on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin and amending Council Directive 91/414/EC.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001506/14
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (NI)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Threats to the integrity of an independent public authority's communications security in Ireland

The directive on privacy and electronic communications (2002/58/EC) has proven to be a valuable asset in the protection of online privacy.

The US National Security Agency's PRISM programme and the attacks on the European Parliament's and Commission's wifi networks last year were a wake-up call that showed the urgency in advancing a solid piece of legislation on data protection, particularly in the sphere of electronic communications.

Recent reports in Ireland regarding the suspected bugging of the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC) ([1]) using commercially unavailable technologies raise issues of fundamental importance. This is a body that deals not only with personal data but also with national security data. Although the GSOC has stated that the databases were not compromised, the possible disclosure of sensitive information about those who have complained about a member of An Garda Síochána, or those who have been complained about, causes great concern as it is not yet evident who was behind the alleged bugging.

These potential breaches of the internal security and communications systems of public authorities are a disturbing development which demands a robust EU-wide response, especially where the technologies employed are not commercially available.

Given the recent threats to communication systems across all of Europe which bring risks to our citizens' personal data and privacy:

1. how does the Commission plan to address the challenges resulting from globalisation and the use of new technologies?

2. are there mechanisms the Commission can use to deal with these new threats and to prevent an attack of this kind in future?

3. are there any measures planned for the Commission to look into the above incident in Ireland and to protect Irish and European citizens from possible threats?

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

The proposed General Data Protection Regulation ([2]) will adapt the current legal framework for the protection of personal data to better respond to the challenges posed by the development of new technologies. The regulation will provide a single set of rules applicable across the EEA guaranteeing that the fundamental right to personal data protection is fully respected, thus ensuring greater legal certainty. Controllers and processors must implement appropriate technical and organisational data security measures. Pursuant to the regulation, 'data protection by design' and 'data protection by default' will also become key binding principles.

As regards the consequences of the PRISM revelations and its follow up by the Commission, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-013893/2013 ([3]).

([1]) The body responsible for receiving and dealing with all complaints made by members of the public concerning the conduct of members of the police force in Ireland.
([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation), COM(2012) 11 final.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-001507/14
do Komisji
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(12 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Ograniczenie sankcji finansowych za przekroczenie kwot mlecznych i przygotowanie producentów mleka do prowadzenia działalności po zniesieniu kwotowania

W bieżącym roku kwotowym (2013/2014) w większości państw członkowskich dostawy mleka są wyższe niż przed rokiem, a dynamika skupu rośnie. Wszystkie sygnały wskazują na dość dynamiczny wzrost produkcji. Rolnicy inwestują w nowe budynki i maszyny oraz zwiększają stada w celu przygotowania się do liberalizacji rynku po 2015 r.

Z dostępnych informacji wynika, że w okresie od kwietnia do listopada roku kwotowego 2013/2014 wyższe niż przed rokiem dostawy odnotowały następujące kraje: Estonia (+6,4 %), Holandia (+6,3 %), Luksemburg (+4,7 %), Irlandia (+3,9 %), Belgia (+3,4 %), Cypr (+2,9 %), Dania (+2,7 %), Niemcy (+2,5 %), Wielka Brytania (+2,4 %), Finlandia (+2,2 %), Łotwa (+1,5 %), Polska (+0,9 %), Szwecja (+0,6 %), Rumunia (+0,5 %), Hiszpania (+0,5 %). W skali całej Unii Europejskiej skup mleka jest wyższy niż w ubiegłym roku kwotowym o 1,5 %. Oznacza to, że w kilkunastu krajach członkowskich istnieje poważne ryzyko przekroczenia kwot mlecznych, co pociągnie za sobą dotkliwe kary finansowe. Uważam, że trzeba podjąć jakieś działania, żeby to zjawisko nie powodowało narastania problemów finansowych producentów mleka.

Problemy z płaceniem kar za nadprodukcję mleka szczególnie dotykają młodych rolników, którzy rozwijają produkcję mleka, którzy mają problemy z zaplanowaniem produkcji i brak środków (oszczędności) na zapłacenie kar.

Komisja Europejska powinna wykazać się pewną elastycznością i szybko podjąć odpowiednie działania i przedstawić konkretne propozycje. Sugeruję rozważyć natychmiastowe zniesienie korygującego współczynnika tłuszczowego jeszcze w tym roku kwotowym a także zmniejszenie lub zniesienie kar za przekroczenie kwot.

Czy, mając na uwadze powyższe okoliczności oraz fakt, że zgodnie z reformą WPR kwoty mleczne zostaną zniesione w przyszłym roku, Komisja nie powinna zaproponować rozwiązań skutkujących ograniczeniem sankcji finansowych lub ich całkowitym zniesieniem? Czy Komisja nie powinna zaproponować dodatkowych działań, które pomogą unijnym producentom mleka lepiej przygotować się do prowadzenia działalności po zniesieniu kwot mlecznych? Czy Komisja zniesie w trybie pilnym korygujący współczynnik tłuszczowy jeszcze w tym roku kwotowym?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(7 marca 2014 r.)

Komisja uprzejmie prosi szanownego Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią udzieloną na pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie nr E-014095/2013 ([1]).

Sytuacja w sektorze mleczarskim była przedmiotem debaty na posiedzeniu Rady ds. Rolnictwa i Rybołówstwa w dniu 17 lutego 2014 r. Kwestia ponownego rozpatrzenia decyzji dotyczących oceny funkcjonowania reformy WPR nie zyskała zdecydowanego poparcia. Rozmowy będą kontynuowane na posiedzeniach Rady w marcu i kwietniu w celu ułatwienia refleksji w kontekście sprawozdania, które Komisja ma przedstawić w czerwcu 2014 r.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001507/14
to the Commission
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Reduction of financial penalties for exceeding milk quotas and preparing milk producers to take action following the removal of quotas

During the current quota year (2013/2014), most Member States have seen their milk deliveries increase while the purchasing dynamic grows. All signs are pointing to a rather dynamic growth in production. Farmers are investing in new buildings and machinery, as well as increasing the size of their herds, in order to prepare for the liberalisation of the market after 2015.

I have seen data which show that, in the period from April to November of the 2013/2014 quota period, the following countries recorded increased deliveries compared with the previous year: Estonia (+6,4%), the Netherlands (+6,3%), Luxembourg (+4,7%), Ireland (+3,9%), Belgium (+3,4%), Cyprus (+2,9%), Denmark (+2,7%), Germany (+2,5%), the United Kingdom (+2,4%), Finland (+2,2%), Latvia (+1,5%), Poland (+0,9%), Sweden (+0,6%), Romania (+0,5%) and Spain (+0,5%). Across Europe, milk purchases are up 1.5% on the previous quota period. This means that over a dozen Member States are seriously at risk of exceeding their milk quotas, which would lead to painful financial penalties. I feel that steps must be taken to ensure that this phenomenon does not lead to increased financial problems for milk producers.

Problems with paying fines for the overproduction of milk particularly affect young farmers, who are expanding milk production, have problems planning their production and lack funds (savings) to pay fines.

The Commission should show a degree of flexibility, swiftly take appropriate steps and propose specific measures. I suggest that consideration be given to the immediate elimination of the fat correction factor in this quota year and to the reduction or removal of penalties for exceeding quotas.

Given the above and the fact that the CAP reform stipulates that milk quotas will be removed next year, should the Commission not propose strategies leading to the reduction or complete abolition of financial penalties? Should the Commission not propose additional measures to help EU milk producers to better prepare for taking action following the removal of milk quotas? Will the Commission abolish the fat correction factor as a matter of urgency during the current quota year?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-014095/2013 ([1]).

The situation in the dairy sector has been discussed at the Council Agriculture and Fisheries on 17 February 2014. No clear majority emerged to re-open the CAP Health Check decisions. Discussion will continue at the Council meetings in March/April with a view to help reflection in the context of the report to be submitted by the Commission in June 2014.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001509/14
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Proposals for the marketing of plant reproductive material

Last year, the Commission published its proposal for a regulation on the production and making available on the market of plant reproductive material (COM(2013)0262).

Is the Commission satisfied that the original proposal contained adequate measures to:

1. safeguard ornamental plants and home gardeners?

2. safeguard small-scale fruit and vegetable producers?

With regard to small-scale fruit and vegetable producers, is the Commission satisfied that its own impact assessment has fully considered the effect of the regulation?

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

With regard to ornamentals, the purpose of the proposal was to ensure consumers' informed choices. The proposed legislation thus provided for the establishment of basic quality requirements, labelling and marketing with reference to a variety. Variety registration was not intended to be obligatory for the marketing of material belonging to ornamentals. Marketing requirements for ornamentals were supposed to remain proportionate and less burdensome than the requirements for species listed in Annex I to the proposal.

The proposal envisaged that small-scale fruit and vegetable producers can benefit from several exemptions and derogations. It was proposed that non-professional operators and micro-enterprises can market any plant reproductive material without registration as niche-market material and that micro-enterprises are also exempted from fees when registering a new or traditional variety.

All these measures taken together would safeguard the interests of home gardeners, small enterprises and contribute to the preservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources.

Following the vote by the European Parliament on 12 March 2014 the Commission is considering how to take into account the concerns of the Honourable Members of Parliament.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001510/14
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Gibraltar aid to the Philippines

Tropical cyclone Typhoon Haiyan devastated parts of South-East Asia and tragically killed over 6 000 people in the Philippines.

Citizens across the European Union, including my constituents in Gibraltar, have rightly been generous in supporting emergency aid for those affected. One Gibraltarian organisation had hoped to ship relief supplies onwards to the Philippines via Spain. However, health certificates for the onward shipment of food stuffs contained with the relief goods could not be obtained at the border from Gibraltar into Spain at La Linea. This prevented the aid from being shipped from Gibraltar via Spain to the Philippines in a timely and inexpensive manner.

Is the Commission aware of this incident which prevented aid reaching the Philippines?

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

The Commission would like to thank the Member of Parliament for bringing this matter to its attention.

The European Union has strict rules in place with respect to the import and transit of products of animal origin. According to Union legislation, products of animal origin must be certified by the country of origin to ensure they do not pose a risk to the animal health of the EU territory.

In this case, assuming the shipment contained such products of animal origin, such a certificate should have been issued by the Gibraltarian authorities.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-001522/14
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(12. februára 2014)

Vec: Rast poplatkov na účtoch za elektrinu

Pokiaľ hovoríme o energetickej politike, tá je v aktuálnom období charakterizovaná regulačnou neistotou a zvyšujúcou sa intervenciou na národnej úrovni. Toto však vedie k spomaleniu, ba možno povedať ku kroku späť, v integrácii trhu s energiou v Európe. Vzhľadom na rast účtov za elektrinu, obzvlášť daní a poplatkov, sa do popredia záujmu dostáva cenová dostupnosť a konkurencieschopnosť.

Akými konkrétnymi krokmi môže Komisia prispieť k tomu, aby k neúnosnému nárastu poplatkov na účtoch za elektrickú energiu nedochádzalo? Ako sa pričiniť o cenovú dostupnosť elektrickej energie pre európske obyvateľstvo?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(31. marca 2014)

Komisia podrobne analyzovala faktory ovplyvňujúce ceny energie a náklady na energiu a ich vplyv na spotrebiteľov energie v nedávnom oznámení a priloženom pracovnom dokumente útvarov Komisie (SWD) o cenách energie a nákladov na energiu v Európe [COM(2014) 21 a SWD (2014) 20].

Komisia sa domnieva, že najefektívnejším a ekonomicky udržateľným spôsobom poskytovania bezpečných a cenovo dostupných dodávok energie občanom je prostredníctvom otvorenej súťaže na transparentnom a integrovanom vnútornom trhu s energiou, ako sa stanovuje v európskych právnych predpisoch obsahujúcich primerané záruky pre zraniteľných odberateľov. Dokončenie vnútorného trhu s energiou môže prispieť k úsporám nákladov a pomôcť spojiť maloobchodné a veľkoobchodné trhy. Koncom roka 2014 Komisia predloží oznámenie o maloobchodnom trhu s energiou v EÚ. Dobre fungujúci maloobchodný trh s energiou bude zohrávať kľúčovú úlohu pri podpore energetickej účinnosti a reakcie na dopyt prostredníctvom využívania efektívnejších výrobkov a speňažovaniu flexibility pri využívaní energie spotrebiteľmi v ich prospech.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001522/14
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Rising electricity bills

Energy policy is currently characterised by regulatory uncertainty and increasing intervention at national level. However, this is leading to a slowdown, or maybe even a step backwards, in the integration of the energy market in Europe. In view of the rise in electricity costs — and particularly the rise in taxes and fees — affordability and competitiveness have become key concerns.

What specific steps can the Commission take to make sure this rise in electricity bills does not become insupportable? What can be done to ensure the affordability of electrical energy for European citizens?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The Commission analysed the drivers of energy prices and costs and their impacts on energy consumers in detail in a recent Communication and associated staff working document (SWD) on energy prices and costs in Europe [COM(2014) 21 and SWD(2014) 20] .

The Commission believes that the most efficient and economically sustainable way of providing citizens with secure and affordable energy supplies is through open competition in a transparent and integrated internal energy market as foreseen in European legislation with appropriate safeguards for vulnerable customers. The completion of the internal energy market can contribute to cost savings and help connect retail markets with wholesale markets. Later in 2014 the Commission will present a communication on energy retail markets in the EU. A well-functioning retail market for energy will be instrumental in incentivising energy efficiency and demand response through the use of more efficient products and by monetising flexibility in energy use by consumers for their benefit.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-001523/14
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(12. februára 2014)

Vec: Problematika energetickej chudoby

V rámci Európskej únie existujú rôzne mechanizmy, ktoré pomáhajú vyrovnať sa s následkami energetickej chudoby. Predovšetkým je možné zaviesť špeciálne tarify pre zraniteľných spotrebiteľov a rovnako je možné zriadiť verejného dodávateľa. Za každých okolností je nevyhnutné prijať také opatrenia, ktoré prispejú k dôstojnej existencii i najviac odkázaných skupín obyvateľov. Nimi sú najmä nízkopríjmové domácnosti, dôchodcovia, osamelí rodičia, nezamestnaní alebo osoby poberajúce sociálne dávky.

Ako môže Komisia efektívnym spôsobom pomôcť preklenúť energetickú chudobu, ktorá sužuje predovšetkým zmieňované nízkopríjmové obyvateľstvo?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(24. marca 2014)

Komisia si v tejto veci dovoľuje odkázať váženú pani poslankyňu na svoje odpovede na písomné otázky E-004799/13 a E-000046/14.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001523/14
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: The issue of energy poverty

There are various mechanisms within the European Union which help tackle the consequences of energy poverty. Above all, special tariffs can be introduced for vulnerable customers, and a public supplier can be established. In any event, measures must be taken to ensure decent conditions even for the most disadvantaged population groups. These are mainly low-income households, pensioners, single parents, the unemployed and those on social benefits.

How can the Commission effectively help overcome this energy poverty, which is mainly affecting the aforementioned low-income groups?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-004799/13 and E-000046/14 in this respect.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-001524/14
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(12. februára 2014)

Vec: Nové pravidlá pre tabakové výrobky

Cieľom predkladanej legislatívy ohľadom nových pravidiel pre tabakové výrobky je znížiť atraktivitu fajčenia predovšetkým medzi mladými ľuďmi. Do platnosti vstupujúce nové pravidlá zakážu cigarety s charakteristickými prísadami. Minulosťou sa stanú tiež tabakové výrobky s mentolovou príchuťou, na ktoré sa zákaz vzťahuje od leta 2020. Kombinované výstrahy pred negatívnymi dôsledkami fajčenia na zdravie budú pokrývať 65 % prednej i zadnej časti obalov. Všetky tieto snahy by mali prispieť a viesť k zníženiu požívania tabakových výrobkov.

Predmetná dohoda má byť potvrdená Radou EÚ a Európskym parlamentom najneskôr v marci toho roku. Je v možnostiach Komisie prispieť k tomu, aby sa tak v zmieňovanom období skutočne stalo?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(25. marca 2014)

Podľa posúdenia vplyvu, ktoré tvorí podklad pre návrh Komisie na revíziu smernice o tabakových výrobkoch ([1]), by navrhované opatrenia viedli do piatich rokov po transpozícii k zníženiu spotreby tabaku približne o 2 % pod východiskovú hranicu. To zodpovedá zníženiu počtu fajčiarov v EÚ o 2,4 milióna v priebehu 5 rokov.

Na základe tohto návrhu dosiahli Európsky parlament a Rada v decembri 2013 dohodu o revidovanej smernici o tabakových výrobkoch. Túto dohodu schválil Európsky parlament 26. februára 2014 a Rada 14. marca. Uverejnenie smernice v Úradnom vestníku sa očakáva na jar roku 2014, pričom účinnosť nadobudne 20 dní po uverejnení.

Členské štáty by mali transponovať smernicu do dvoch rokov po nadobudnutí jej účinnosti. V súlade s bežnou praxou sa Komisia bude usilovať o zabezpečenie správnej transpozície.

Na zabezpečenie úplnej funkčnosti smernice o tabakových výrobkoch sa predpokladajú delegované a vykonávacie právomoci, ktoré zabezpečia uplatňovanie pravidiel stanovených v smernici. Na pomoc Komisii v tejto súvislosti sa budú zhromažďovať technické a odborné informácie.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001524/14
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: New rules for tobacco products

The aim behind the legislation put forward concerning new rules for tobacco products is to make smoking less attractive, mainly among young people. The new rules entering into force prohibit cigarettes with characteristic ingredients. Menthol-flavoured tobacco products will also become a thing of the past, falling under the prohibition from summer 2020 onwards. Combined warnings of the negative health impacts of smoking will cover 65% of the back and front of packets. All these efforts should contribute towards reducing the use of tobacco products.

The agreement in question should be ratified by the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament no later than March this year. Is it within the Commission's capabilities to ensure that this actually becomes a reality within the period in question?

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

According to the impact assessment underpinning the Commission proposal for the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive (TPD), ([1]) the proposed measures would lead to a reduction of tobacco consumption of around 2% beyond the baseline, within a five year period after transposition. This corresponds to 2.4 million fewer smokers in the EU over 5 years.

On the basis of the proposal, the European Parliament and Council reached an agreement on the revised TPD in December 2013. The European Parliament endorsed this agreement on 26 February 2014 and the Council on 14 March. Publication in the Official Journal is expected in spring 2014 and the directive will enter into force 20 days following publication.

Member States should transpose the directive within two years after its entry into force. In line with standard practice, the Commission will seek to ensure proper transposition of the directive.

In order to make the TPD fully operational delegated and implementing powers are foreseen to give effect to the rules laid down in the directive. Technical and scientific input will be collected to assist the Commission in this regard.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-001532/14
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(12. februára 2014)

Vec: Problematika dopytu a ponuky zručností na pracovnom trhu EÚ

Medzi závažné problémy Európskej únie, ktoré súvisia s vysokou nezamestnanosťou, a to najmä mladých ľudí, patrí nesúlad medzi dopytom a ponukou zručností na pracovnom trhu. Zručnosti, ktoré mladým ľuďom ponúkajú univerzity, ako aj vzdelávací systém ako celok jednoducho nekorešpondujú so zručnosťami, ktoré vyžaduje súčasný trh výskumu a práce. Napriek obrovskej nezamestnanosti existuje v našej ekonomike mnoho sektorov, ktorým chýba reálna pracovná sila. V oblasti informačných a komunikačných technológií je napríklad v Európskej únii okolo 70 000 voľných pracovných miest.

Aké konkrétne opatrenia zamerané na zladenie dopytu a ponuky zručností na pracovnom trhu Európskej únie, a teda na celkové posilnenie jej konkurencieschopnosti plánuje Komisia v najbližšom čase prijať?

Odpoveď pani Vassiliouovej v mene Komisie
(27. marca 2014)

V oznámení o prehodnotení vzdelávania ([1]) z roku 2012 sa určili reformy na európskej a vnútroštátnej úrovni, ktoré sú potrebné na riešenie nesúladu medzi ponúkanými a požadovanými zručnosťami a zvýšeného dopytu po vyšších a lepších zručnostiach. V rámci záruky pre mladých ľudí ([2]) sa členské štáty vyzývajú, aby zabezpečili, že každý mladý človek **vo veku do 25 rokov** získa kvalitnú ponuku do štyroch mesiacov po ukončení formálneho vzdelávania alebo strate pracovného miesta. Na zlepšenie digitálnych zručností, ktoré majú pre pracovný trh veľký význam, sa začali realizovať iniciatívy otvárania systémov vzdelávania ([3]) a veľkej koalície pre pracovné miesta v oblasti digitálnych technológií ([4]). Okrem toho bolo vynaložené väčšie úsilie s cieľom zlepšiť prognózovanie zručností a dopytu po nich prostredníctvom Panorámy zručností EÚ ([5]).

Program Erasmus+ ([6]) podporuje modernizáciu systémov vzdelávania, odbornej prípravy a v oblasti mládeže. Programom Erasmus+ sa podstatne rozširujú možnosti štúdia alebo odbornej prípravy v zahraničí, čím sa zlepšujú možnosti mladých ľudí nájsť si zamestnanie. Vďaka zvýšeniu jeho rozpočtu o 40 % sa budú poskytovať granty na mobilitu viac než 4 miliónom ľudí. Okrem toho nové projekty v oblasti spolupráce pomôžu absolventom v príprave na európsky trh práce.

Na zlepšenie transparentnosti a uznávania zručností a kvalifikácií, ako aj spoločného chápania zabezpečenia kvality vzdelávania a odbornej prípravy boli vytvorené viaceré európske politiky. V tejto súvislosti bude program Erasmus+ podporovať ďalšie vytváranie nástrojov, akými sú kvalifikačné rámce, systémy prenosu kreditov, rámce zabezpečovania kvality a validácia zručností a kompetencií ([7]). Napokon v súčasnosti prebieha verejná konzultácia o európskom priestore pre zručnosti a kvalifikácie ([8]). V rámci nej sa zbierajú názory zainteresovaných strán na to, ako tieto politiky ďalej posilniť.

([1]) COM(2012) 669.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079
([3]) COM(2013) 654.
([4]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0
([5]) http://euskillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/skills-qualifications_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/consultations/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001532/14
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: The issue of skills supply and demand on the EU labour market

Serious problems faced by the European Union relating to high unemployment, especially among young people, include the gap between the skills supply and demand on the labour market. Skills offered to young people by universities, as well as the education system as a whole, simply do not correspond to the skills required by the current research and labour market. Despite sky-high unemployment, there are many sectors in our economy which are lacking in manpower. In information and communication technology, for example, there are around 70 000 job vacancies in the European Union.

What specific measures is the Commission planning to adopt in the near future to bring the supply of skills into line with demand on the EU's labour market, and to strengthen its competitiveness overall?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

The 2012 Rethinking Education ([1]) Communication identified the reforms necessary at European and national level to address the 'skills-mismatch' and the increased demand for higher and better skills. The Youth Guarantee ([2]) calls on Member States to ensure that every young person below 25 gets a good-quality offer within four months after leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. In order to improve digital skills, which are highly labour-market relevant, the Opening up Education initiative ([3]) and the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs ([4]) have been launched. Furthermore, increased efforts are being made to improve the forecasting of skills demand and supply through the EU Skills Panorama ([5]).

The Erasmus+ programme ([6]) supports the modernisation of education, training and youth systems. Erasmus+ substantially expands the opportunities to learn or train abroad which will increase the employability of young people: with a budget increase of 40%, more than 4 million people will receive mobility grants. Moreover, new cooperation projects will help prepare graduates for the European labour market.

Several European policies have been developed to improve the transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications as well as the common understanding of quality assurance in education and training. In this context, Erasmus+ will drive the further development of tools such as qualification frameworks, credit transfer systems, quality assurance frameworks and validation of skills and competences ([7]). Finally, a public consultation on a European Area of Skills and Qualifications ([8]) is currently on-going; it will collect stakeholders' views on how these policies can be further strengthened.

([1]) COM/2012/0669.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079
([3]) COM/2013/0654.
([4]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0
([5]) http://euskillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/skills-qualifications_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/consultations/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001541/14
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Thailand's slave fishermen

The humanitarian situation in some of the states of Burma has led to citizens seeking refuge in Thailand. However, Thailand is not a signatory to the International Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. The Burmese migrants who make it to Thailand are therefore forced into the 'underground' economy. Large numbers are being forced onto Thai fishing boats, many of whom working unpaid for months. Fish caught by Thai vessels have ended up in the European Union.

Is the Commission aware of these slave fishermen? What representations have been made to the Thai authorities to bring this exploitation to an end?

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

The Commission is aware of reports regarding poor human rights and labour conditions in the Thai fisheries sector and refers the Honourable Member to its previous reply E-008945/2013.

The EU supports the ratification and effective implementation of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) core labour standards and cooperates with the ILO. The Commission will continue to follow closely the ILO work in monitoring the implementation by Thailand of ILO conventions.

Once the EU-Thailand Partnership and Cooperation Agreement enters into force, this instrument will provide an additional framework for engagement with Thailand on human rights.

Furthermore, in the ongoing negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement the EU attaches great importance on including provisions on trade and sustainable development. Promoting the effective implementation of core labour standards forms an important part of this objective. These provisions could also provide a framework for dialogue in this area, including with relevant stakeholders.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-001552/14
upućeno Komisiji
Sandra Petrović Jakovina (S&D)
(12. veljače 2014.)

Predmet: Rezultati referenduma u Švicarskoj

Na nedavno održanom referendumu u Švicarskoj 50,3 % švicarskih glasača izjasnilo se za uvođenje godišnjih kvota za radnike iz svih država članica EU-a.

Ovo pitanje vrlo je važno za Hrvatsku, posebno zato što ona, kao najnovija država članica EU-a, nije još ni počela primjenjivati načelo slobode kretanja osoba, koje uključuje pravo nastanjivanja u drugoj državi članici u svrhu zaposlenja u njoj. Drugo pitanje vezano je uz diskriminaciju među državama članicama i njihovim građanima, odnosno u ovom slučaju, drugačiji tretman hrvatskih građana.

EU i Švicarska bile su blizu potpisivanja protokola uz sporazum o slobodi kretanja osoba kojim bi se postojeći sporazumi između EU-a i Švicarske proširili i na Hrvatsku.

Potrebno je naglasiti da je Švicarska preuzela obveze prema međunarodnom pravu. Sporazum o slobodi kretanja osoba i robe između EU-a i Švicarske koji je trenutno na snazi dovodi se u pitanje jer je diskriminacija među državama članicama u suprotnosti s njegovim odredbama, budući da sloboda kretanja osoba, sloboda pružanja usluga i sloboda kretanja kapitala zajedno sačinjavaju dio zajedničkog tržišta.

Imajući u vidu gore navedeno, rezultat referenduma nije samo neusklađen s brojnim postojećim sporazumima između EU-a i Švicarske, nego i ugrožava proširenje prethodno spomenutog sporazuma o slobodi kretanja osoba na hrvatske građane. To bi u konačnici moglo za posljedicu imati da hrvatski građani budu u potpunosti izostavljeni iz godišnjih kvota.

Ne dovodeći u pitanje zajedničku korist odnosa između EU-a i Švicarske, Unija ne bi smjela dopustiti diskriminirajući tretman nijednog svojeg građana.

Na posljednjem sastanku Vijeća države članice izjavile su da neće dopustiti diskriminaciju hrvatskih građana u smislu rada u Švicarskoj.

Imajući u vidu rezultate referenduma i njegove implikacije na gore navedeni sporazum, koje radnje namjerava poduzeti Komisija, i u kojem vremenskom roku, kako bi osigurala da ne bude diskriminacije hrvatskih građana, posebno u vezi sa zapošljavanjem, te kako bi osigurala da se gore navedene slobode, koje predstavljaju temelje Unije, dosljedno primjenjuju na sve građane EU-a?

Odgovor visoke predstavnice/potpredsjednice Ashton u ime Komisije
(27. ožujka 2014.)

Poštovana zastupnica ispravno je napomenula da se EU spremao potpisati Protokol kojim bi se Sporazum o slobodnom kretanju osoba između Europske unije i Švicarske proširio na Hrvatsku. Nakon ishoda švicarskog referenduma 9. veljače 2014., Švicarsko federalno vijeće izjasnilo se da trenutačno nije u mogućnosti potpisati Protokol jer se čini da mu novi članak ustava, uveden nakon referenduma, izričito priječi sklapanje međunarodnih sporazuma koji su u suprotnosti s tim člankom.

Švicarska su tijela najavila da namjeravaju do kraja ožujka izraditi analizu utjecaja referenduma na Protokol i njegovo moguće potpisivanje. Ovisno o rezultatima te analize Europska će komisija odlučiti o svojem daljnjem postupanju. U međuvremenu obustavljeni su pregovori o pridruživanju Švicarske programima Obzor 2020. i Erasmus+, čije je sklapanje povezano s Protokolom.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001552/14
to the Commission
Sandra Petrović Jakovina (S&D)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Results of the referendum in Switzerland

The referendum held recently in Switzerland resulted in 50.3% of Swiss voters declaring themselves in favour of implementing annual quotas for workers from all EU Member States.

This issue is of great importance for Croatia, particularly given that, as the EU's newest Member State, it has not yet even started to apply the principle of the free movement of persons, which implies the right of establishment in another Member State for the purposes of employment in that Member State. The other issue raised is that of discrimination between Member States and their citizens; in this particular case, the different treatment of Croatian citizens.

The EU and Switzerland were on the point of signing the protocol to the agreement on the free movement of persons which would extend the existing EU-Swiss agreements to Croatia.

It should be emphasised that Switzerland undertook obligations under international law. The current agreement on the free movement of persons and goods in force between the EU and Switzerland is called into question as discrimination between Member States is contrary to its provisions, since the free movement of persons, the freedom to provide services and the free movement of capital all form part of the common market.

In view of the above, the result of the referendum is not only incompatible with a number of existing EU-Swiss agreements, but also jeopardises the extension of the aforementioned agreement on the free movement of persons to Croatian citizens. It may ultimately result in Croatian citizens being left out of the annual quotas altogether.

Without questioning the mutually beneficial relations between the EU and Switzerland, the Union should not allow for discriminatory treatment against any of its citizens.

At the most recent meeting of the Council, the Member States declared that they would not allow for discrimination against Croatian citizens in terms of working in Switzerland.

In view of the result of the referendum and its implications on the abovementioned agreement, what action does the Commission intend to take, and within what time frame, to ensure that there is no discrimination against Croatian citizens, particularly as regards employment, and to ensure the uniform application of all abovementioned freedoms — which represent the very foundations of the Union — to all EU citizens.

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

The Honourable Member correctly points out that the EU was about to sign the Protocol extending the EU-Swiss Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons to Croatia. Following the outcome of the Swiss referendum of 9 February 2014, the Swiss Federal Council explained that it is currently not in a position to sign the Protocol because the new constitutional article introduced by the referendum seems to explicitly prevent it from concluding international agreements contrary to the article.

The Swiss authorities indicated to conclude their analysis on the implications of the vote on the Protocol and its possible signature by the end of March. Depending on the result of this analysis, the European Commission will decide on its further course of action. In the meantime, negotiations for Swiss association to Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+, the conclusion of which were linked to the Protocol, were suspended.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001554/14
an die Kommission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(13. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Hygienestandards für Muskatnuss gemäß Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1881/2006

Muskatnuss ist der Samen des Muskatnussbaums (Myristica fragrans) und wird als Gewürz verwendet. Die europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) klassifiziert Muskatnuss als Gewürzsamen und nicht als Nuss. Auch wird Muskatnuss nicht als ganze Frucht verzehrt, sondern gerieben als Gewürz oder zu Öl verarbeitet verwendet. Dennoch sind die Vorschriften für die Höchstwerte von Aflatoxinen in Lebensmitteln gemäß Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1881/2006 für Muskatnuss dieselben wie, oder sogar niedriger als, für einige Nüsse und Schalenfrüchte.

1. Warum sind die erlaubten Höchstwerte für Aflatoxine in Muskatnuss nicht höher angesetzt, basierend auf den geschilderten Verzehrgewohnheiten?

2. Nach welchen Kriterien werden diese erlaubten Höchstwerte festgelegt?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(26. März 2014)

Aflatoxine sind gentoxische Karzinogene. Das Ziel von Höchstwerten besteht letztlich darin, die Exposition des Menschen gegenüber Aflatoxinen zu senken, um auf diese Weise ein hohes Gesundheitsschutzniveau zu gewährleisten. Die Höchstgehalte für Aflatoxine werden so niedrig angesetzt, wie dies mit vertretbarem Aufwand bei guter Praxis in der gesamten Herstellungs- und Vertriebskette erreichbar ist. Diese gute Praxis stützt sich auf die Gute landwirtschaftliche Praxis, die Gute Herstellungspraxis und die Gute Lagerpraxis.

Wenn die EU-Höchstgehalte für Aflatoxine bei Muskatnuss regelmäßig überschritten werden, ist dies ein Zeichen dafür, dass keine gute Praxis angewandt wird. Dies war z. B. 2010 und 2011 der Fall bei Muskatnuss mit Ursprung in Indonesien. Bei einem Audit, das das Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt (FVO) im März 2012 ([1]) in Indonesien durchführte, wurden schwerwiegende Mängel bei der Anwendung der Guten landwirtschaftlichen Praxis und der Guten Herstellungspraxis durch Anbauer, Verarbeiter und Exporteure hinsichtlich der Verfahren zur Verringerung der Aflatoxinkontamination auf ein Minimum festgestellt. Im Anschluss an das Audit hat die zuständige indonesische Behörde Maßnahmen zur Behebung der Mängel ergriffen, und ab 2013 wurden dann die EU-Höchstgehalte wesentlich seltener überschritten.

Höchstgehalte für Aflatoxine werden für Lebensmittel festgesetzt, die in hohem Maße zur Exposition des Menschen beitragen, oder für Lebensmittel, wie etwa Muskatnuss, bei denen manchmal sehr hohe Aflatoxingehalte festgestellt werden, wenn keine gute Praxis angewandt wurde. Die Festsetzung von Höchstgehalten verpflichtet die Unternehmer entlang der gesamten Herstellungs- und Vertriebskette, gute Praxis anzuwenden.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2945

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001554/14
to the Commission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Public health standards for nutmeg under Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006

Nutmeg is the seed of the nutmeg tree (Myristica fragrans) and is used as a spice. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) classifies nutmeg as a spice seed, not a nut. Moreover, the fruit is not consumed in its entirety but instead is grated for use as a spice or processed to produce an oil. However, under the rules laying down maximum levels of aflatoxins in foodstuffs, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006, the permitted levels for nutmeg are the same as for nuts and indeed lower than the levels permitted for certain types of nut.

1. Why are the permitted maximum levels of aflatoxins in nutmeg not higher, given the ways in which it is normally consumed?

2. What criteria are used in setting these maximum levels?

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

Aflatoxins are genotoxic carcinogens. The overall aim of setting maximum levels is to reduce human exposure to aflatoxins and consequently ensuring a high level of human health protection. The maximum levels for aflatoxins are set at a level as low as reasonably achievable by applying good practices along the production and distribution chain. These good practices are based on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and Good Storage Practices (GSP).

Regular exceeding of the EU maximum levels for aflatoxins in nutmeg is an indication that good practices are not applied. This was e.g. the case for nutmeg originating from Indonesia in 2010 and 2011. A Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) audit performed in March 2012 ([1]) in Indonesia identified serious shortcomings in the implementation in GAP and GMP by the growers, processors and exporters as regards practices to minimise aflatoxin contamination. Following the audit, actions have been undertaken by the competent authority of Indonesia to remediate the situation and the frequency of exceeding the EU maximum level decreased significantly from 2013 onwards.

Maximum levels for aflatoxins are set for food commodities identified as a major contributor to human exposure or for food commodities, such as nutmeg, where sometimes very high levels of aflatoxins are found in case no good practices are applied. The setting of a maximum level obliges operators all along the production and distribution chain to apply good practices.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2945

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001555/14
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Rate of financial contributions of associated countries for participation in Horizon 2020

Article 7(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1291/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council establishing Horizon 2020 — the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) states that 'specific terms and conditions regarding the participation of associated countries in Horizon 2020, including the financial contribution based on the GDP of the associated country, shall be determined by international agreements between the Union and the associated countries'.

Can the Commission say whether there is a standard rate for the financial contribution for associated countries in the framework Programmes (i.e. a fixed proportion of GDP for all associated countries) or whether different rates apply?

If a standard rate applies, what is this rate?

If different rates apply, what is the rate for each associated country? Can the Commission explain how the rate is decided and, in particular, whether or not a country's predicted/previous level of success in the programme is taken into consideration when determining the financial contribution to be made?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

A standard rate for the financial contribution of associated countries to the framework Programmes does not exist. In line with Article 7 of the Horizon 2020 Regulation, the contribution is based on the GDP of the associated country, together with that of the EU.

In principle, the Commission aims to use a simple ratio (ratio of GDP of the country to the GDP of the EU). However, in some cases, legislation (the EEA Agreement in its Article 82; the 1978 Fusion Cooperation Agreement between Euratom and Switzerland in its Article 11 ([1])) prescribes a formula slightly more favourable for the associated country (ratio of GDP of the country to the sum of the GDPs of the EU and the country concerned).

In the case of enlargement countries, given their privileged position vis-à-vis the EU, this slightly more advantageous formula has been used and a significant discount has been applied in FP7 ([2]) associations to partly take account of the predicted level of success in the programme. That discount was extended to the Neighbourhood Country Moldova in FP7.

While the association agreements for FP7 are in the public domain, the association agreements for Horizon 2020 are currently under negotiation and the Commission cannot pre-empt the outcome of those negotiations.

([1]) OJ L 242, 4.9.1978.
([2]) 7th Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001557/14
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Review: Gibraltar

In view of the new restrictions imposed by the Spanish authorities at the pedestrian border between Spain and Gibraltar, does the Commission have plans to review its initial conclusions?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-00358/2014, E-13941/2013 and E-13389/2013 ([1]).

As already announced, after the expiry of the six month deadline regarding its recommendations, the Commission intends to assess the situation again. Nevertheless, following new complaints pointing to long waiting times at the pedestrian lanes, the Commission has again contacted the Spanish authorities to draw their attention to the need to improve the situation of EU citizens commuting daily between Gibraltar and Spain.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001558/14
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Turkish lira

In view of the drastic reduction in the value of the Turkish lira against the US dollar and the euro in the last six months, does the Commission have any plans to review Turkey's position as an EU candidate country?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The reduction in the value of the lira is not a reason to review Turkey's position as an EU candidate country.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001563/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Educazione alimentare e benessere

I problemi relativi agli stili alimentari in auge fra la popolazione mondiale — in particolare in quella occidentale — sono da circa un trentennio oggetto di grande attenzione da parte delle agenzie sanitarie.

Diverse statistiche comparative si ripropongono di fare il punto della situazione riguardo alle abitudini alimentari, al loro cambiamento nel tempo e in relazione con l'insorgere di disagi psico-fisici e malattie cardiovascolari.

Quanto all'Europa, sono due i fattori che interferiscono con la lettura e l'analisi dei dati registrati: le differenze fra Stati membri e l'incidenza del fenomeno dell'invecchiamento della popolazione.

Ad ogni buon conto, analisi mirate hanno evidenziato l'incremento, a partire dagli anni Ottanta, dei tassi di obesità nel lungo periodo e l'aumento concomitante di malattie cardiache, cerebrali e del diabete.

Uno studio recente condotto da un centro universitario canadese in 17 paesi ha posto in relazione il grado di diffusione di comuni apparecchi tecnologici (quali auto, pc, tv) con la frequenza dei casi di obesità e diabete. I risultati della ricerca individuano una relazione interessante fra le due condizioni sia pure in maniera più evidente nei paesi del Sud del mondo.

In riferimento a quanto sopra illustrato, può la Commissione riferire:

1. quali ulteriori documenti e studi di matrice europea integrano e ampliano in maniera significativa la conoscenza del fenomeno suesposto;

2. quali sono state in passato le iniziative rilevanti attuate allo scopo di divulgare le conoscenze esistenti in merito al problema succitato fra la società civile e le istituzioni nazionali;

3. quali sono le ulteriori e possibili attività future contemplate dalla Commissione in merito alla divulgazione di corretti e equilibrati stili alimentari fra la popolazione europea?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

In tema di alimentazione e obesità la Commissione si pregia segnalare le seguenti fonti di informazione: la relazione «Uno sguardo alla sanità: Europa 2012» ([1]), l'indagine europea sulla salute condotta mediante interviste ([2]), i progetti NOPA ([3]) e COSI ([4]) nonché i progetti del 7° programma quadro (I.Family ([5]), EATWELL ([6]), PREVIEW ([7]) e SPLENDID ([8])). La strategia UE del 2007 sugli aspetti sanitari legati all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità ([9]) promuove una dieta equilibrata e stili di vita attivi. Essa incoraggia collaborazioni finalizzate ad interventi ed atte a coinvolgere gli Stati membri dell'UE (Gruppo ad alto livello sulla nutrizione e l'attività fisica ([10])) nonché la società civile (piattaforma d'azione europea per l'alimentazione, l'attività fisica e la salute ([11])). Nel febbraio 2014 il Gruppo ad alto livello ha convenuto un piano di attuazione ([12]) in tema di obesità infantile ([13]).

([1]) http://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/HealthAtAGlanceEurope2012.pdf (una relazione della commissione mista e dell'OCSE).
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/health_status_determinants/data/database.
([3]) Banca dati europea sull'alimentazione, l'obesità e l'attività fisica (realizzata dall'OMS Europa con il sostegno dell'UE) http://data.euro.who.int/nopa/.
([4]) Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (realizzata dall'OMS Europa con il sostegno dell'UE) http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/nutrition/activities/monitoring-and-surveillance/who-european-childhood-obesity-surveillance-initiative-cosi.
([5]) Progetto I.Family (266044) del 7°PQ dell'UE, Determinants of eating behaviour in European children, adolescents and their parents http://www.ifamilystudy.eu/.
([6]) Progetto EATWELL (226713) del 7°PQ dell'UE, Interventions to promote healthy eating habits: evaluation and recommendations.
([7]) Progetto PREVIEW (312057) del 7°PQ dell'UE, PREVention of diabetes through lifestyle Intervention and population studies in Europe and around the World . http://preview.ning.com/.
([8]) Progetto SPLENDID (610746) del 7°PQ dell'UE, Personalised guide for eating and activity behaviour for the prevention of obesity and eating disorders http://splendid-program.eu/.
([9]) COM(2007) 279.
([10]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_it.htm
([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_it.htm
([12]) Con riserva dei Paesi Bassi.
([13]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf

I programmi europei di distribuzione di frutta, verdura ([14]) e latte ([15]) nelle scuole contribuiscono a promuovere abitudini alimentari più sane tra gli alunni. Il 30 gennaio 2014 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta ([16]) volta a consolidare la dimensione educativa dei due programmi al fine di aumentarne l'efficacia.

La Commissione ha inoltre avviato tre progetti pilota ([17]): due di questi mirano ad incrementare il consumo di frutta e verdura fresche nelle comunità in cui il reddito delle famiglie è inferiore al 50 % rispetto alla media UE, mentre il terzo si occupa di promuovere un'alimentazione sana tra bambini, donne in gravidanza e anziani. Nell'ambito delle proposte della Commissione quali i programmi Salute per la crescita ([18]) e Orizzonte 2020 ([19]) si potranno infine sostenere ulteriori progetti per promuovere diete sane ed equilibrate.

([14]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_it.htm
([15]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/milk/school-milk-scheme/index_en.htm
([16]) COM(2014) 32.
([17]) SANCO/2011/C4/01, SANCO/2012/C4/02 e SANCO/2013/C4/02.
([18]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_it.htm
([19]) COM(2011) 809 def. del 30.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001563/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Nutritional and welfare education

For the last thirty years or so, health agencies have dedicated a large amount of their attention to issues surrounding the eating patterns of the world's population, in particular in the West.

Various comparative statistics have reiterated the need to take stock of the situation regarding eating habits and how they have changed over time, and also in relation to the onset of physical and mental issues and cardiovascular diseases.

There are two factors that distort how this information is read and analysed with respect to Europe: the differences between individual Member States and the rate at which the population is ageing.

In any event, long-term obesity rates have increased since the 1980s, alongside growing cases of cardiac and brain diseases and diabetes (according to targeted analysis).

A Canadian university recently carried out a study in 17 countries which identified a correlation between the prevalence of everyday technology (including cars, PCs, TVs) and the number of cases of obesity and diabetes. The results of the study identified an intriguing connection between the two factors which was even more apparent in countries in the Southern Hemisphere.

With reference to the above, can the Commission state:

1. Which other documents and studies with a European focus could significantly add to the information currently available on the above phenomenon?

2. Which relevant initiatives have been implemented in the past to publicise existing knowledge concerning the above problem to the general public and national institutions?

3. Which possible additional activities is it considering in the future in order to promote the concept of healthy, balanced diets to the European population?

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

The Commission would like to point to the following information sources on the issue of nutrition and obesity: the 'Health at a Glance Europe 2012' ([1]) report, the European Health Interview Survey ([2]), the NOPA ([3]) and COSI ([4]) projects, and the 7th Research Framework Programme projects I.Family ([5]), EATWELL ([6]), PREVIEW ([7]) and SPLENDID ([8]).The 2007 EU Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([9]) promotes a balanced diet and active lifestyles. The strategy encourages action-oriented partnerships involving the EU Member States (High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([10])) and civil society (EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([11])). In this context, in February 2014, the High Level Group agreed on an Action Plan ([12]) on Childhood Obesity ([13]).

([1]) http://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/HealthAtAGlanceEurope2012.pdf (a joint Commission and OECD report)
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/health_status_determinants/data/database
([3]) European Database on Nutrition, Obesity and Physical Activity (carried out by WHO-Europe with EU support) http://data.euro.who.int/nopa/
([4]) Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (carried out by WHO-Europe with EU support) http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/nutrition/activities/monitoring-and-surveillance/who-european-childhood-obesity-surveillance-initiative-cosi
([5]) EU FP7 project I.Family (266044) Determinants of eating behaviour in European children, adolescents and their parents http://www.ifamilystudy.eu/
([6]) EU FP7 project EATWELL (226713) Interventions to promote healthy eating habits: evaluation and recommendations http://eatwellproject.eu/en/
([7]) EU FP7 project PREVIEW (312057) PREVention of diabetes through lifestyle Intervention and population studies in Europe and around the World. http://preview.ning.com/
([8]) EU FP7 project SPLENDID (610746) Personalised Guide for Eating and Activity Behaviour for the Prevention of Obesity and Eating Disorders http://splendid-program.eu/
([9]) COM(2007) 279.
([10]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm
([12]) With reserve by the Netherlands.
([13]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf

The EU-wide School Fruit and Vegetables and School Milk Schemes ([14]) ([15]) further contribute to establishing healthier eating habits among school children. On 30 January 2014, the Commission adopted a proposal ([16]) to strengthen the educational dimension of the two schemes in order to increase their effectiveness.

In addition, the Commission has launched three pilot projects ([17]): two aim to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables in communities where the household income is below 50% of the EU average; one aims to promote healthy diets among children, pregnant women and elderly. Finally, the Commission's proposals for a third Health Programme ([18]) and for the Horizon 2020 ([19]) Programme can support further projects on healthy and balanced diets.

([14]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_en.htm
([15]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/milk/school-milk-scheme/index_en.htm
([16]) COM(2014) 32.
([17]) SANCO/2011/C4/01, SANCO/2012/C4/02 and SANCO/2013/C4/02.
([18]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_en.htm
([19]) COM(2011) 809 final, 30.11.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001564/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Riduzione delle emissioni di CO_2: un progetto pilota

Nel quadro degli obiettivi stabiliti da Europa 2020 in relazione alle sfide ambientali e delle priorità a cui sono chiamati i coordinamenti locali che aderiscono al Covenant of Mayors, la forza progettuale di compagini territoriali come quella del Molise (ALI Molise e Regione) non può che essere da stimolo e modello per altre realtà europee.

Difatti, il progetto pilota varato dalla piccola regione del Mezzogiorno d'Italia, finalizzato alla riduzione dei tassi di emissione di CO_2, si fa forte di una rilevante operazione di miglior rendimento energetico, di contenimento dei consumi e di potenziamento delle fonti di energia alternative. Al contempo, il progetto si avvale della predisposizione di un valido strumento di monitoraggio, ossia di una banca dati, atto a fornire informazioni sui cicli di produzione-distribuzione e consumo energetico, in maniera capillare.

In riferimento alla felice esperienza molisana, qui presentata, può la Commissione:

1. Esplicitare la propria opinione in relazione ai punti di forza del progetto pilota;

2. informare riguardo a ulteriori progetti implementati, affini a quello precedentemente descritto;

3. valutare la replicabilità del progetto molisano in altri contesti europei?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(24 marzo 2014)

Alla Commissione sono pervenuti Piani di azione per l'energia sostenibile da singoli firmatari molisani del Patto dei sindaci, di cui più di sessanta sono già stati convalidati. Non siamo invece a conoscenza dello specifico progetto citato nell'interrogazione. Una volta pervenuto all'ufficio del Patto dei sindaci, tale progetto pilota potrà essere valutato e paragonato ad altre iniziative. La Commissione attribuisce grande importanza alle azioni locali sotto l'egida del Patto dei sindaci e usa lo strumento del *Benchmark of Excellence* per promuovere i contatti in rete e la condivisione di buone pratiche nell'ambito del Patto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001564/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Pilot project for reducing CO_2 emissions

In view of the targets set by Europe 2020 concerning environmental challenges and the priorities placed on the local and regional authorities belonging to the Covenant of Mayors, the sheer levels of foresight shown by regional associations such as that in the Molise region (ALI ComuniMolisani) can only serve to inspire other organisations throughout Europe to follow their example.

The pilot project launched by the small region in southern Italy, which is aimed at cutting down CO_2 emissions, is built around considerable efforts to increase energy efficiency, limit consumption rates and develop alternative forms of energy. At the same time, the project benefits from a powerful monitoring tool, namely a database that is capable of giving highly detailed information on energy consumption and production-distribution cycles.

With reference to Molise's successful initiative described above, can the Commission:

1. give its opinion on the strong points of the pilot project?

2. provide any information on other similar schemes that have been carried out?

3. assess how feasible it would be to replicate Molise's project in other European contexts?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

While Sustainable Energy Action Plans of the individual Covenant signatories from the Molise Region are available to the Commission and over 60 of them have so far been validated, the Commission is not aware of the particular project referred to in the question. Once this pilot project is reported to the Covenant of Mayors Office it can be subsequently evaluated and compared to other initiatives. The Commission attaches great importance to local actions under the Covenant of Mayors and uses its Benchmark of Excellence feature to promote networking and sharing of good practices within the Covenant.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001565/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(13 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Operazione di smaltimento di armi chimiche provenienti dalla Siria: coinvolgimento del porto italiano di Gioia Tauro (Reggio Calabria) e rischi legati all'elettrolisi in mare

Lo scrivente fa seguito all'interrogazione n. E-000025/2014 dopo aver appreso dalla stampa ulteriori dettagli relativi all'operazione di smaltimento di armi chimiche siriane in atto nel sud dell'Europa, quali in particolare il coinvolgimento dello Stato italiano. Tali sostanze, infatti, transiteranno per il porto di Gioia Tauro, in provincia di Reggio Calabria, nella regione Calabria. Si parla di circa 500 tonnellate di aggressivi chimici catalogati, secondo la Convenzione sulle armi chimiche, come agenti di classi 1 e 2 (cioè maggiormente tossici): trattasi di molecole di agenti nervini già formate e dei loro immediati precursori. I ministri italiani delle Infrastrutture e degli Esteri e il capo dell'Organizzazione per la proibizione delle armi chimiche hanno riferito alla stampa che il trasferimento dei container (una sessantina) nel porto avverrà senza stoccaggio a terra, nell'arco di 36-48 ore e nella massima sicurezza ([1]). Secondo il Sindacato unitario dei lavoratori portuali, invece, l'operazione potrebbe comportare notevoli rischi legati al fatto che il porto di Gioia Tauro non sarebbe preparato a gestire eventuali imprevisti ([2]). Sempre dalla stampa, inoltre, si apprende che le armi chimiche saranno poi inertizzate nel Mar Mediterraneo, in un'area compresa tra Italia, Grecia e Malta mediante idrolisi, una reazione chimica di scissione prodotta dall'acqua. Si tratterebbe della prima operazione di tal genere nella storia dell'ONU e dell'Organizzazione per la proibizione delle armi chimiche, ma che le autorità non ritengono comportare rischio alcuno. Tanto il coinvolgimento di un porto italiano, quanto il trattamento in mare di tali sostanze destano grande preoccupazione nell'opinione pubblica italiana, che ricorda quanto accaduto nel corso della Seconda Guerra mondiale nel porto di Bari, quando un attacco militare ha comportato l'affondamento di pericolosi quantitativi di iprite, con contagio di civili e militari per i decenni successivi ([3]).

Alla luce di quanto esposto, la Commissione:

1. Non ritiene l'operazione incompatibile con gli obiettivi comuni per la protezione e la conservazione dell'ambiente marino di qui al 2020, sanciti con la direttiva 2008/56/CE?

2. Può riferire quali siano i rischi dell'idrolisi di tali sostanze per il Mar Mediterraneo?

3. Quali iniziative intende intraprendere per controllare le precise modalità attraverso le quali verranno smaltiti i residui?

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

1. La direttiva quadro sulla strategia per l'ambiente marino non disciplina attività specifiche, ma punta al raggiungimento del «buono stato ecologico» delle acque marine dell'UE entro il 2020. Gli Stati membri dell'UE sono responsabili del conseguimento di questo obiettivo attraverso le strategie nazionali per l'ambiente marino.

2.-3. La distruzione dell'arsenale siriano di armi chimiche è stata approvata e viene monitorata dal consiglio esecutivo dell'Organizzazione per la proibizione delle armi chimiche (OPCW) e dal Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU. Il piano figura in una serie di documenti pubblici dell'OPCW che contengono le decisioni pertinenti del consiglio esecutivo dell'Organizzazione. Il Programma delle Nazioni Unite per l'ambiente (UNEP) e l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS) hanno partecipato attivamente alla programmazione dell'operazione. La missione comune ha recentemente organizzato una riunione con le principali ONG ambientali per spiegare che la distruzione avverrà secondo le disposizioni legislative internazionali e nazionali. L'idrolisi dei precursori chimici avverrà in mare, a bordo di una nave statunitense. Le sostanze chimiche e i loro effluenti non saranno scaricati in mare al termine dell'operazione. I governi della Danimarca e del Regno Unito hanno accettato, insieme alla Norvegia, di mettere a disposizione imbarcazioni a sostegno del piano. La Germania, il Regno Unito e la Finlandia hanno inoltre accettato di trattare gli effluenti sul loro territorio. Va infine sottolineato che l'UE e gli Stati membri hanno contribuito finanziariamente a questa operazione, con l'obiettivo di evitare che le armi chimiche vengano riutilizzate contro il popolo siriano.

([1]) http://notizie.tiscali.it/articoli/interviste/14/02/daveri-armichimichesiria-intervista.html
([2]) http://tv.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2014/01/18/gioia-tauro-i-portuali-armi-chimiche-ce-paura-mai-trattato-materiale-cosi-pericoloso/261517/
([3]) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9DzeuBF1mc#t=30

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001565/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Operation to dispose of chemical weapons from Syria: involvement of the Italian port of Gioia Tauro (Reggio Calabria) and risks associated with electrolysis in the sea

Further to Question E-000025/2014, the writer has learned more details from the press about the operation under way in southern Europe to dispose of Syrian chemical weapons, especially the involvement of the Italian Government. In fact these substances will pass through the port of Gioia Tauro, Province of Reggio Calabria, Region of Calabria. The reports suggest around 500 tonnes of aggressive chemicals classified under the Chemical Weapons Convention under Schedules 1 and 2 (the most toxic substances). These are molecules of intact nerve agents and their immediate precursors. The Italian Ministers of Infrastructure and Foreign Affairs and the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) have informed the press that the containers (about 60 of them) could be transferred at the port without storage on land, in the space of 36 — 48 hours and in maximum security. ([1]) According to the United Union of Port Workers, by contrast, the operation could pose considerable risks, because the port of Gioia Tauro is not prepared to handle any unforeseen occurrences. ([2]) The press also reports that the chemical weapons will then be made inert in the Mediterranean Sea, in an area between Italy, Greece and Malta. Water will be used to trigger the reaction of chemical fission, in a process known as hydrolysis. This would be the first such operation in the history of the UN and OPCW but, according to the press, the authorities believe it poses no risk at all. Both the involvement of an Italian port and the treatment of such substances at sea are causing grave concern in Italy, where the public have not forgotten what happened at the port of Bari during the Second World War. There a military attack caused the submersion of dangerous quantities of sulphur mustard, which contaminated civilians and members of the armed forces for decades. ([3])

In the light of these statements:

1. Does the Commission not consider this operation incompatible with the common objectives for the protection and conservation of the marine environment up to 2020, set by Directive 2008/56/EC?

2. Can it state what risks the hydrolysis of such substances poses to the Mediterranean Sea?

3. What initiatives does it intend to take to control the precise methods of disposal of the residues?

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

1. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive does not regulate specific activities but aims at 'Good Environmental Status' of marine waters in the EU by 2020. EU Member States are responsible for achieving this objective through their marine strategies.

2 and 3. The destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons has been agreed and is supervised by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council and the UN Security Council. This plan is contained in a series of public OPCW documents containing relevant decisions by the OPCW Executive Council. In the planning of the operation both United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Health Organisation (WHO) were actively involved. The Joint Mission has recently organised a meeting with leading environmental NGOs to explain that the destruction will take place in accordance with international and national legislation. Hydrolysis of chemical precursors will take place at sea on a US ship, and there is no intention to discharge any chemicals or their effluent after hydrolysis into the sea. The Danish and UK Governments, along with Norway, have agreed to provide vessels to support the plan and, in addition to Germany, the UK and Finland have also agreed to treat waste effluents on their territory. It should also be underlined that the EU and other MS have also been contributing financially to this operation, aimed at preventing a repetition of the use of chemical weapons against the Syrian people.

([1]) http://notizie.tiscali.it/articoli/interviste/14/02/daveri-armichimichesiria-intervista.html
([2]) http://tv.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2014/01/18/gioia-tauro-i-portuali-armi-chimiche-ce-paura-mai-trattato-materiale-cosi-pericoloso/261517/
([3]) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9DzeuBF1mc#t=30

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001567/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Stallo al Consiglio sul mais ogm: nuovi orientamenti dalla Commissione nel rispetto della sovranità alimentare degli Stati membri

Il Consiglio UE non è riuscito a trovare una maggioranza qualificata a favore o contro l'autorizzazione alla coltivazione del mais geneticamente modificato 1507 della Pioneer.

Alla luce del parere tecnico positivo dell'Agenzia per la sicurezza alimentare, la Commissione ha la facoltà di emendare o ritirare la proposta, secondo quanto previsto dai servizi giuridici.

Nel 2010 la Commissione aveva proposto agli Stati membri una maggiore flessibilità al loro interno per decidere se autorizzare o meno coltivazioni OGM. Nel 2011 il Parlamento europeo aveva dato parere positivo, ma sempre in seno al Consiglio non era stato raggiunto l'accordo.

Intende la Commissione delineare nuovi orientamenti sulla libertà di scelta degli Stati membri di vietare le coltivazioni ogm sul loro territorio, nel rispetto del principio di sussidiarietà e in coerenza con il principio di sovranità alimentare a tutela della salute dei cittadini e dell'ambiente?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2014)

La Commissione ha pubblicato nel luglio 2010 una proposta di revisione della direttiva 2001/18/CE ([1]) per fornire agli Stati membri una base giuridica che consentisse loro di adottare decisioni in tema di colture OGM per motivi diversi da quelli basati su una valutazione scientifica del rischio sanitario e ambientale eseguita a livello europeo. Tale modifica consentirebbe agli Stati membri di limitare o vietare le colture di OGM su parte del loro territorio o nella sua integrità.

Nel luglio 2011 il Parlamento europeo ha adottato in prima lettura una posizione sulla proposta, ma finora il Consiglio non è stato in grado di trovare un accordo nel merito a motivo di una minoranza di blocco tra gli Stati membri. La Presidenza greca ha presentato di recente una nuova proposta di compromesso che i Ministri riuniti in sede di consiglio Ambiente il 3 marzo 2014 hanno ritenuto una valida base per riprendere le discussioni con la speranza di raggiungere un accordo politico nell'ambito della Presidenza greca.

([1]) GU L 106 del 17.4.2001, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001567/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Council deadlock on GM maize: new Commission guidelines respecting food sovereignty in Member States

The European Council has been unable to reach a qualified majority on the subject of the genetically modified maize Pioneer 1507, and whether or not to allow its cultivation.

Following the positive expert opinion put forward by the Food Safety Authority, the Commission is now able to amend or withdraw the proposal, as provided for by the legal services of the European Parliament.

In 2010, the Commission proposed increased flexibility for Member States to deliberate on the issue of growing GM crops within their own territory, and the following year the European Parliament gave its backing to the proposal, but the Council was again unable to reach a consensus.

Does the Commission intend to draft new guidelines on the freedom of Member States to choose whether to ban GM crops within their own territory, respecting the principle of subsidiarity and consistent with that of food sovereignty, in order to protect the environment and the health of their citizens?

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

The Commission published in July 2010 a proposal revising Directive 2001/18/EC ([1]) to provide a legal basis to Member States in order to decide on GMO cultivation on grounds other than those based on a scientific assessment of health and environmental risks performed at European level. This amendment would allow Member States to restrict or prohibit GMO cultivation in part or all of their territory.

The European Parliament adopted a first reading position on the proposal in July 2011; however so far the Council had been unable to reach an agreement on this proposal due to a blocking minority of Member States. The Greek Presidency recently presented a new compromise proposal which was considered as a good basis to resume the discussions by most of the Ministers in the Environmental Council on the 3 March 2014, with the hope of reaching a political agreement under the Greek Presidency.

([1]) OJ L 106, 17.4.2001, p. 1.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001573/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(13 februari 2014)

Betreft: Kankermedicijnen voor kinderen

Volgens cijfers van het European Consortium for Innovative Therapies for Children blijkt dat sinds 2007 in Europa 28 nieuwe kankermedicijnen voor volwassenen op de Europese markt kwamen. De kloof met het aantal nieuwe kankermedicijnen voor kinderen groeit daarmee. Dit komt doordat farmaceutische bedrijven proberen te vermijden dat ze bij de ontwikkeling van nieuwe medicijnen deze ook moeten testen op kinderen. Testen bij kinderen zijn duurder en moeilijker waardoor veel farmaceutische bedrijven alle middelen inzetten om eronderuit te komen. Hierdoor wordt echter veel trager vooruitgang geboekt in het bestrijden van kanker bij kinderen dan bij volwassenen.

De kinderoncologen roepen de Commissie op de Europese regelgeving ter zake meer sluitend te maken zodat farmaceutische bedrijven verplicht worden na te gaan of hun medicijn voor het bestrijden van kankers bij volwassenen, ook gebruikt kan worden voor het bestrijden van kankers bij kinderen.

Is de Commissie zich bewust van deze problematiek?

Gaat de Commissie stappen ondernemen om tegemoet te komen aan de vraag van de kinderoncologen en dus farmaceutische bedrijven verplichten na te gaan of de nieuw ontwikkelde kankermedicijnen ook bruikbaar zijn voor het bestrijden van kankers bij kinderen?

Wat is de timing die de Commissie hiervoor voor ogen heeft?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001666/14
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(14 februari 2014)

Betreft: Kinderkankermedicijnen

Sinds 2007 kwamen in Europa 28 nieuwe kankermedicijnen voor volwassenen op de Europese markt. 26 daarvan zouden ook voor kinderen werken. Maar in 14 gevallen konden de producenten onder de verplichting uitkomen om het nieuwe middel ook op kinderen te testen. Dat blijkt uit cijfers van het European Consortium for Innovative Therapies for Children with Cancer (ITCC). In theorie zijn farmaceutische bedrijven verplicht om nieuwe medicijnen tegen kanker ook op kinderen te testen, maar de regelgeving voorziet in uitzonderingen. De producenten interpreteren die uitzonderingen blijkbaar zeer ruim waardoor er minder kindertests dan nodig zouden gebeuren. Daarnaast zijn de medische testen voor kindermedicijnen immers peperduur en er zijn veel minder kinderkankerpatiënten dan volwassenen patiënten. Ook zijn de toxicologische eisen strenger bij kinderen en moet je werken met verschillende leeftijdscategorieën. Als een firma een medicijn bij 20 000 volwassenen getest heeft, wat relatief snel kan, blijkt de verleiding groot om het medicijn snel op de markt te brengen en de tests op kinderen achterwege te laten.

Recent vroegen Belgische kinderoncologen dan ook dat de wetgeving, die op EU-niveau geregeld is, aangepast wordt zodat firma's hun nieuwe vondsten zo veel mogelijk op kinderen moeten testen. Daarmee sluiten de experts zich aan bij hun collega's van het Britse Institute for Cancer Research en bij het Europees consortium van kinderoncologen.

Vandaar de volgende vragen:

1. Erkent de Commissie dit probleem?

2. Plant de Commissie bijkomende regelgeving om het hiaat in de wetgeving aan te passen?

3. Plant de Commissie eventuele straffen voor bedrijven die medicijnen niet voldoende op kinderen testen?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(24 maart 2014)

In 2013 heeft de Commissie bij het Europees Parlement een eerste voortgangsverslag over de Pediatrieverordening (EG) nr. 1901/2006 ([1]) ingediend, waarbij gewezen wordt op belangrijke verbeteringen in verband met geneesmiddelen voor kinderen, maar ook op enkele zwakke punten en tekortkomingen. ([2])

De Pediatrieverordening beoogt het aantal geneesmiddelen dat specifiek getest en goedgekeurd is voor kinderen te verhogen. Uit studies bleek immers dat veel van de producten die eerder bij kinderen werden gebruikt, niet specifiek onderzocht of goedgekeurd werden voor kinderen.

De verordening heeft een mechanisme ingevoerd dat bedrijven ertoe dwingt alle geneesmiddelen die zij ontwikkelen te onderzoeken op mogelijk gebruik voor kinderen. Zoals bij elke verplichting is echter een evenwichtige aanpak nodig, en daarom verleent de wetgeving vrijstellingen voor producten die zijn ontwikkeld voor ziekten of aandoeningen die uitsluitend bij volwassenen voorkomen.

Op het gebied van oncologie kunnen bedrijven er moeilijk toe verplicht worden ook geneesmiddelen voor kinderen te ontwikkelen wanneer het geneesmiddel oorspronkelijk werd ontwikkeld om enkel kankers bij volwassen te bestrijden.

Dit sluit niet uit dat bedrijven zich op eigen initiatief inzetten voor verder pediatrisch kankeronderzoek, verder dan de wettelijke verplichtingen. Door haar onderzoeksprogramma's en de wetgeving voor zeldzame ziekten ([3]) levert de EU impulsen aan het kankeronderzoek, aangezien alle kinderkankers worden beschouwd als zeldzame ziekten.

Een volgend verslag van de Pediatrieverordening is gepland voor 2017, en een uitgebreide raadpleging met al de betrokkenen — die groot aantal verschillende meningen over de Verordening vertegenwoordigen — zal daarin worden opgenomen.

([1]) PB L 378 van 27.12.2006, blz. 20.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/paediatrics/2013_com443/paediatric_report-com(2013)443_nl.pdf
([3]) Verordening (EG) nr. 141/2000 inzake weesgeneesmiddelen, PB L 18 van 22.1.2000, blz. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001573/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Cancer drugs for children

Since 2007, according to figures supplied by the European Consortium for Innovative Therapies for Children, 28 new cancer drugs for adults have been launched onto the European market. This further increases the disparity with the number of new cancer drugs for children. The reason is that, when developing new drugs, pharmaceutical companies try to avoid having to test them on children as well. Tests on children are more expensive and more difficult, so that many pharmaceutical companies make every effort to avoid them. As a result, however, progress in fighting cancer is far slower in the case of children than adults.

Child oncologists are calling on the Commission to tighten up the relevant legislation so as to require pharmaceutical companies to ascertain whether their cancer drugs for adults can also be used to fight cancer in children.

Is the Commission aware of this problem?

Will the Commission take steps to respond to the call from child oncologists and thus compel pharmaceutical companies to ascertain whether newly developed cancer drugs can also be used to fight cancer in children?

What time frame does the Commission have in mind for this?

Question for written answer E-001666/14
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Cancer drugs for children

Since 2007, 28 new cancer drugs for adults have been placed on the European market. 26 of them would also be effective in children. But in 14 cases, the manufacturers managed to evade the obligation to test the new drug on children as well as adults. This is apparent from figures supplied by the European Consortium for Innovative Therapies for Children with Cancer (ITCC). In theory, pharmaceutical companies are obliged to test new cancer drugs on children as well, but the rules provide for exceptions. Manufacturers evidently interpret these exceptions very broadly, so that fewer tests are performed on children than are necessary. In addition, medical trials of children's drugs are extremely expensive and there are far fewer child cancer patients than adults. The toxicological requirements are also more stringent in the case of children, and it is necessary to carry out trials with different age groups. If a firm has tested a drug on 20 000 adults, which can be done relatively quickly, there is a strong temptation to place it on the market without delay and not to test it on children.

Recently, therefore, child oncologists in Belgium called for EU legislation to be amended so as to compel firms to test their new discoveries on children wherever possible. In making this appeal, the experts were following the example of their colleagues at the British Institute for Cancer Research and the European Consortium.

1. Does the Commission acknowledge this problem?

2. Is the Commission planning additional regulation in order to eliminate the lacuna in the legislation?

3. Is the Commission possibly planning to introduce penalties for businesses which do not sufficiently test drugs on children?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

In 2013, the Commission has submitted to the European Parliament a first progress report on the Paediatric Regulation (EC) No 1901/2006 ([1]), pointing to important improvements in the paediatric medicines landscape, but also recognising some weaknesses and deficits ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, p. 20.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/paediatrics/2013_com443/paediatric_report-com(2013)443_en.pdf

The Paediatric Regulation intends to increase the number of medicines specifically tested and approved for the use in children. This was done because studies showed that previously many of the products used in children were not specifically studied or authorised in children.

The regulation introduced a mechanism that compels companies to consider the potential paediatric use of medicinal products they develop. However, as with any obligation a balanced approach is necessary and the legislation provides therefore derogations for products which are developed for a disease or a condition which occurs only in the adult population.

In the area of oncology, it is therefore difficult to oblige companies to also develop medicines for paediatric use when the medicine is initially developed to be used in adult cancers only.

This does not exclude that companies engage on their own initiative in further paediatric oncology research, beyond what is legally required. The EU provides through its research programmes and through the rare diseases legislation ([3]) incentives for oncology research, all paediatric cancers being rare diseases.

A further report on the Paediatric Regulation is scheduled for 2017 and extensive prior consultation with all stakeholders — who hold a wide range of different views on the regulation — will feed into that.

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 on orphan medicinal products, OJ L 18, 22.1.2000, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001584/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Statistiche sulla propensione al risparmio — aggiornamento

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-003815/2012, può la Commissione fornire degli aggiornamenti in merito a dati più attuali, alla luce dell'evolversi della situazione finanziaria?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

1. Eurostat raccoglie dati annuali sui risparmi delle famiglie tramite il programma di trasmissione SEC (regolamento (CE) n. 2223/96 del Consiglio, del 25 giugno 1996, relativo al Sistema europeo dei conti nazionali e regionali nella Comunità ([1])) e dati trimestrali sulla base del regolamento (CE) n. 1161/2005 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 6 luglio 2005 ([2]).

2. Conformemente a quest'ultimo regolamento l'Istituto italiano di statistica ha trasmesso il 29 dicembre ad Eurostat i propri dati più recenti relativi ai conti settoriali trimestrali. I tassi di risparmio dei nuclei familiari basati su tali dati sono pubblicati sul sito web di Eurostat ([3]). Si noti che i dati trimestrali pubblicati dall'Istat sono stagionalizzati, il che non vale per i dati (per paese) pubblicati da Eurostat.

3. Per quanto concerne i risparmi dei nuclei familiari, la tabella riportata in allegato fornisce una rassegna dei tassi di risparmio dei nuclei familiari nel tempo e tra i vari paesi (dati annuali). Le differenze possono essere spiegate, tra l'altro, dalla struttura demografica (le persone più anziane tendono a risparmiare di più), dalle disponibilità di credito (l'assenza di soglie d'indebitamento favorisce l'incremento dei consumi e la contrazione del risparmio), dalle aspettative negative per quanto concerne le prospettive economiche (elevati tassi di disoccupazione, prospettive di tagli nelle prestazioni pensionistiche) e dalle differenze culturali.

4. Considerato il gran numero di fattori che influenzano i tassi di risparmio e le conseguenti differenze all'interno di uno stesso paese, non è facile influenzare i tassi nazionali di risparmio agendo su politiche comuni a livello di UE. Pertanto la Commissione non è attualmente tenuta a formulare proposte in tal senso.

([1]) GU L 310 del 30.11.1996.
([2]) GU L 191 del 22.7.2005.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/sectoraccounts, dominio «Quarterly sector accounts».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001584/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Statistics on the propensity to save — update

Referring back to my earlier Question E-003815/2012, can the Commission provide an update regarding the most recent data, in the light of the changing financial situation?

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

1. Eurostat collects annual data on households saving rates, through the ESA transmission programme (Council Regulation (EC) No 2223/96 of 25 June 1996 on the European system of national and regional accounts in the Community ([1])) and quarterly data through Regulation (EC) No 1161/2005 of the EP and of the Council of 6 July 2005 ([2]).

2. In accordance with the latter regulation, the Italian National Statistical Institute (Istat — Istituto Italiano di Statistica) transmitted on 29 December 2013 its latest quarterly sector accounts data to Eurostat. The household saving rates based on these data are published on Eurostat's website ([3]). Please note that the quarterly data published by Istat are seasonally adjusted, which is not the case for the (country) data released by Eurostat.

3. Concerning household saving, the table in Annex gives an overview of the household saving rates over time and across countries (annual data). Differences can be explained, *inter alia*, by the demographic structure (the elderly tend to save more), credit facilities (the absence of indebtedness thresholds favours higher consumption and lower saving), negative expectations concerning the economic outlook (high unemployment, expected cuts in pension benefits) and cultural differences.

4. In view of the large number of factors influencing savings rates and the resulting cross-country differences, it is not easy to influence national saving rates through common policies at EU level. Therefore, the Commission is not at the moment expected to make proposals in that sense.

([1]) OJ L 310, 30.11.1996.
([2]) OJ L 191, 22.7.2005.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/sectoraccounts domain 'Quarterly sector accounts'.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-001585/14
an die Kommission
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL)
(13. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Derzeitige Bedrohungen der Unabhängigkeit der Zentralbank Zyperns

Nach meiner Teilnahme an der Reise der Ad-hoc-Delegation des ECON-Ausschusses im Januar 2014 nach Zypern wurde ich von einem besorgniserregenden Konflikt zwischen dem Präsidenten der Republik Zypern und dem Gouverneur der Zentralbank Zyperns in Kenntnis gesetzt.

Nach meinen Informationen übt Präsident Anastasiades regelmäßig unzulässigen Druck auf Zentralbank-Gouverneur Demetriades aus, um direkten Einfluss auf die Entscheidungen der Zentralbank zu nehmen. Präsident Anastasiades hat offizielle Presseerklärungen veröffentlicht und den Medien Interviews gegeben, in denen er den Gouverneur fachlich wie menschlich diskreditiert. Unter anderem wurde Gouverneur Demetriades vom Präsidenten der Republik Zypern kritisiert, weil er zu viel Zeit benötige, um seinen Aufgaben als Mitglied des EZB-Rats nachzukommen.

Die Unabhängigkeit der Zentralbank Zyperns ist ein Grundsatz, der in der zyprischen Verfassung verankert ist. Ebenso erlauben die EU-Verträge es Regierungsvertretern nicht, ihre Macht zu missbrauchen, um Einfluss auf Zentralbankentscheidungen zu nehmen. Aus genau diesem Grund wird der Präsident der EZB für acht Jahre ernannt, ohne die Möglichkeit einer Wiederwahl.

1. Ist sich die Kommission der vorgenannten wiederholten Bedrohungen der Unabhängigkeit der Zentralbank Zyperns bewusst?

2. Hat die Kommission — als Hüterin der Verträge — in diesem Fall irgendwelche Maßnahmen ergriffen oder die zyprische Regierung oder den Präsidenten der Republik Zypern um Erklärung ersucht?

3. Falls ja, hält die Kommission die bislang erhaltenen Antworten für zufriedenstellend oder ist sie der Ansicht, dass die Lage weiter beobachtet werden muss? Falls nein, plant die Kommission, den Fall zu untersuchen, und in welchem Zeitrahmen will sie dies tun?

4. Erachtet die Kommission die politische Einmischung in den Auftrag der Zentralbank Zypern und von Gouverneur Demetriades als hilfreich, wenn es darum geht, die Finanzkrise Zyperns zu überwinden und das Vertrauen der Investoren wiederherzustellen?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(11. März 2014)

Die öffentlichen Äußerungen zyprischer Regierungsmitglieder zur zyprischen Zentralbank und deren Gouverneur sind der Europäischen Kommission bekannt. Als Hüterin der Verträge der Europäischen Union behält sie die Entwicklungen in Zypern genauestens im Auge. Die Unabhängigkeit der Zentralbanken ist durch die Verträge garantiert. Die Kommission ist jederzeit bereit, die Einhaltung dieses Grundsatzes durch die Mitgliedstaaten zu überprüfen und gegebenenfalls Maßnahmen zu ergreifen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001585/14
to the Commission
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Current threats to the independence of the Central Bank of Cyprus

Following my participation in the ECON ad hoc delegation to Cyprus in January 2014, I received notice about a worrying conflict between the President of the Republic of Cyprus and the Governor of the Central Bank of Cyprus.

According to my information, President Anastasiades has been exerting constant and undue pressure on Central Bank Governor Demetriades in an effort to exercise direct influence on the Central Bank's decisions. President Anastasiades has issued official press statements and given media interviews discrediting the Governor's technical and personal reputation. Among other things, Governor Demetriades has been criticised by the President of the Republic of Cyprus for the time needed to fulfil his tasks as a member of the ECB's Governing Council.

The independence of the Central Bank of Cyprus is a principle anchored in the Cypriot constitution. Similarly, the EU treaties do not allow government representatives to misuse their power in order to exert influence over central bank decisions. For precisely this reason, the President of the ECB is appointed for eight years with no option for a second mandate.

1. Is the Commission aware of the abovementioned repeated threats to the independence of the Central Bank of Cyprus?

2. Has the Commission, as guardian of the Treaties, taken any action in this case or asked for explanations from the Cypriot government or the President of the Republic of Cyprus?

3. If so, does the Commission consider the answers received so far to be satisfactory or does it believe that it is necessary to continue to monitor the situation? If not, is the Commission planning to investigate this case and in what timeframe?

4. Does the Commission consider political interference in the Central Bank of Cyprus and Governor Demetriades' mandate to be helpful in overcoming Cyprus' financial crisis and in restoring investor confidence?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2014)

The European Commission is aware of the public statements made by members of the Cypriot authorities in relation to the Central Bank of Cyprus and its Governor. As guardian of the European Union Treaties, the European Commission has and will continue to closely follow the events in Cyprus. The independence of Central banks is guaranteed by the Treaties, and the Commission stands ready to assess all Member States' conduct in relation to this and to take action where it deems necessary.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-001586/14
a la Comisión
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(13 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Ejecución de los fondos Feader en Castilla-La Mancha

El 24 de octubre de 2013 el Comisario de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural, Dacian Ciolos, escribió una carta al Ministro de Agricultura del Gobierno Español, Miguel Angel Arias Cañete, alertando de una posible pérdida de fondos Feader en los programas de desarrollo rural de Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura, Galicia, Canarias, Madrid y Comunidad Valenciana. Para evitarlo, pedía un seguimiento adicional del Ministerio en estos programas de desarrollo rural y anunciaba reuniones de sus servicios con los responsables de los programas regionales.

¿Cree la Comisión que está garantizada, a día de hoy, la ejecución de esos programas operativos?

¿Cree la Comisión que, con los datos que tiene hoy, el programa de desarrollo regional de Castilla-La Mancha se ejecutará en el 100 % de sus compromisos presupuestarios?

Con los últimos datos que maneja la Comisión, ¿cuál es el grado de ejecución real del programa Feader de Castilla-La Mancha?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de marzo de 2014)

El 24 de octubre de 2013, cuando el Comisario de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural escribió al Ministro de Agricultura español, el grado de ejecución en el caso de Castilla-La Mancha era del 55,4 %. Para evitar el riesgo de anulación de compromisos, los responsables debían declarar a la Comisión gastos con cargo al Feader por un importe de 65,4 millones EUR antes del 31 de diciembre de 2013.

La declaración efectiva de gastos que se presentó a la Comisión el 31 de diciembre de 2013 fue de 81 806 295 EUR. El grado de ejecución del programa ascendió al 68,2 %, es decir un importe de 779 664 838 EUR para una contribución del Feader dedicada a este programa de 1 143 138 224 EUR.

Al haberse ejecutado totalmente el compromiso correspondiente a 2011, a finales de 2013 no se produjo ninguna anulación de compromisos para el programa de desarrollo rural de Castilla-La Mancha.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001586/14
to the Commission
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Implementation of EAFRD funding in Castilla-la Mancha

On 24 October 2013, the Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Dacian Ciolos, wrote to the Spanish Government's Minister of Agriculture, Miguel Angel Arias Cañete, drawing attention to a possible loss of EAFRD funding for rural development programmes in Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura, Galicia, Canarias, Madrid and the Valencian Community. To prevent this happening, Commissioner Ciolos asked the Ministry of Agriculture to carry out additional monitoring of the rural development programmes in question and said that his services would be holding a series of meetings with the managing authorities of the regional programmes.

Does the Commission believe that the implementation of these operational programmes has now been assured?

Does the Commission believe that, with the data it has received, the Castilla-La Mancha regional development programme will now go ahead with 100% of its budgetary commitments?

According to the most recent information held by the Commission, what is the real state of implementation of the EAFRD programme in Castilla-La Mancha?

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

On 24 of October 2013, when the Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development wrote to the Spanish Minister of Agriculture, the rate of implementation for Castilla-La Mancha was of 55.4%. In order to avoid the risk of de-commitment, it was essential that the managing authority submitted to the Commission for expenses of EUR 65.4 million EAFRD before 31 December 2013.

Actually a declaration of expenses of EUR 81 806 295 was submitted to the Commission on 31 December 2013. The programme execution rate has reached 68.2%, corresponding to EUR 779 664 838 out of EUR 1 143 138 224 of EAFRD contribution to the programme.

The commitment corresponding to 2011 has been fully executed. As a consequence, no de-commitment has been applied to the Castilla-La Mancha RDP at the end of the year 2013.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-001587/14
upućeno Komisiji (potpredsjednici/Visokoj predstavnici)
Davor Ivo Stier (PPE)
(13. veljače 2014.)

Predmet: VP/HR — Situacija u Bosni i Hercegovini

Na sjednici Odbora za vanjske poslove (AFET) 11. veljače 2014. spomenuo sam da je gospodin Bakir Izetbegović, član Predsjedništva Bosne i Hercegovine, izjavio da je tijekom krize u Bosni i Hercegovini bio u stalnom kontaktu s turskim ministrom vanjskih poslova te da je pozvao Tursku u pomoć.

Na sjednici sam vas upitao jesu li gospodin Izetbegović ili drugi članovi Predsjedništva BiH bili u stalnom kontaktu s vama tijekom krize. Također sam vas pitao da se izjasnite o konkretnim radnjama koje namjeravate poduzeti kako biste pokazali vodstvo EU-a u osiguravanju mira i stabilnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini.

Budući da ste na sjednici AFET-a mogli tek djelomično odgovoriti na moja pitanja, ponavljam ih u pisanom obliku i očekujem vaše odgovore.

Odgovor visoke predstavnice/potpredsjednice Ashton u ime Komisije
(1. travnja 2014.)

Vijeće za vanjske poslove raspravljalo je 10. veljače o BiH na temelju saznanja o lokalnim prosvjedima koji su tih dana dosegnuli vrhunac. Bosanskohercegovačka javnost jasno je i glasno zahtijevala poboljšavanje socijalno-ekonomske situacije i vladavine prava. Na jednako jasan način vlasti BiH ukazano je da postoji hitna potreba za poduzimanjem trenutačnih mjera po tom pitanju.

To je važno u ovom trenutku kad EU i njegovi međunarodni partneri pažljivije razmatraju načine na koje bi proširili svoje sudjelovanje u BiH te što se može učiniti da bi se ponovno potaknule reforme u toj državi.

Dana 10. veljače o razvojima u BiH također su raspravljali ministri vanjskih poslova EU-a na zajedničkom sastanku s ministrima vanjskih poslova država kandidatkinja, uključujući turskog ministra vanjskih poslova. Turska igra važnu ulogu u pružanju potpore međunarodnim naporima u BiH. EU i Turska proučavaju načine za dodatno poboljšavanje suradnje kako bi povećali stabilnost države i zajamčili stvaran napredak.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001587/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Davor Ivo Stier (PPE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

At the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) meeting of 11 February 2014, I mentioned that Mr Bakir Izetbegović, a BiH Presidency Member, had said that he had been in constant contact with the Turkish Foreign Minister during the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina and had called on Turkey for help.

I asked you at the meeting if Mr Izetbegović or other Members of the BiH Presidency had been in constant contact with you during the crisis. I also asked you to elaborate on the concrete actions that you are planning to take in order to project EU leadership in securing peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Since you could only partially answer my questions at the AFET meeting, I repeat these questions in written form and look forward to your answers.

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

The Foreign Affairs Council on 10 February discussed BiH in light of the protests on the ground, which peaked in those days. The calls by the BiH public for an improvement of the socioeconomic situation and the rule of law were loud and clear. The BiH authorities have been encouraged in similarly clear terms of an urgent need to take immediate measures in this regard.

This is important now when the eyes of the EU and its international partners are looking more closely at how to broaden our engagement with BiH and what could be done to reenergise the country's reforms.

On 10 February, the EU foreign ministers also discussed the developments in BiH, in a joint meeting with foreign ministers from the EU Candidate Countries, including from Turkey. Turkey plays an important role in supporting the international efforts in BiH. The EU and Turkey are looking into ways how to further improve the collaboration to deepen country's stability and ensure effective progress.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-001589/14
a Bizottság számára
Bánki Erik (PPE)
(2014. február 13.)

Tárgy: A GMO-k köztermesztésével kapcsolatos tagállami önrendelkezést biztosító GMO-csomag

Bizonyára ismeretes a Bizottság előtt, hogy Magyarország az Alaptörvényben rögzítette: területén nem kíván genetikailag módosított növényeket termeszteni és ilyen szervezeteket tartalmazó élelmiszereket előállítani.

Az Európai Unió jelenleg hatályos GMO-szabályrendszere értelmében, amennyiben egy GM-növény termesztési engedélyt kap az Unió területén, a tagállami tiltást kizárólag egy ún. védzáradék bevezetésével lehet elrendelni, melynek megszerzése rendkívül bizonytalan kimenetelű. Noha az Európai Bizottság 2010. július 14-én nyilvánosságra hozott, ún. köztermesztéses GMO-csomagja jelentős pozitív változásokat hozna a védzáradék alkalmazása terén, a javaslat tárgyalása néhány tagállam ellenállása miatt megakadt.

1. A Bizottság véleménye szerint az EP-választások előtt van-e esély arra, hogy a Tanácsban előrelépés történjen a GMO-k köztermesztésével kapcsolatos tagállami önrendelkezést biztosító GMO-csomagban?

2. Mit tehet Magyarország abban az esetben, ha még a köztermesztéses rendelet elfogadása előtt egy újabb GM-növény kap uniós termesztési engedélyt, de annak magyar területen való termesztését alaptörvényi rendelkezéseire hivatkozással meg akarja tiltani?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. március 14.)

A Bizottság tudatában van annak, hogy a GM-növények termesztésének kérdése aggodalmat kelt egyes tagállamokban. Ezért a Bizottság 2010 júliusában olyan javaslatot terjesztett elő ([1]), amely lehetővé tenné a tagállamok számára, hogy területükön az egészségügyi vagy környezeti kockázatokon kívül egyéb indokokkal is korlátozhassák vagy betilthassák a GMO-termesztést. Az Európai Parlament 2011 júliusában az első olvasat során már kialakította álláspontját a javaslatról. Sajnálatos módon a 2012 folyamán tett rendkívüli erőfeszítések ellenére egy blokkoló kisebbség megakadályozta a tanácsi álláspont elfogadását, és a tárgyalásokban egészen a közelmúltig nem történt elmozdulás. 2014. február 11-én az 1507-es GM-kukoricáról a Tanácsban folytatott vita során ([2]) azonban számos tagállam kérte a tárgyalások felújítását. Ennek hatására a görög elnökség új kompromisszumos javaslatot terjesztett elő, amelyet a Környezetvédelmi Tanács 2014. március 3-i ülésén a miniszterek többsége megfelelő vitaalapnak minősített, és amely felélesztette a reményt, hogy még a görög elnökség alatt megszülethet a politikai megállapodás a kérdésben.

A jelenlegi jogszabályok értelmében a tagállamok az emberi egészségre vagy a környezetre jelentett kockázat megfelelő bizonyítása (a 2001/18/EK irányelv ([3]) 23. cikke és az 1829/2003/EK rendelet ([4]) 34. cikke) vagy kellően megalapozott összeférhetetlenségi indokok esetén alkalmazhatják a védzáradék rendelkezéseit. A Bizottság javaslata – elfogadása esetén – utat nyitna azelőtt, hogy e lehetőség kiterjedhessen a fenti kockázatoktól eltérő egyéb jogos megfontolásokra, például társadalmi és gazdasági aggályokra, város- és vidékfejlesztési vagy földhasználati indokokra vagy általános politikai célkitűzésekre is. Ahhoz, hogy lehetőség nyíljon a hasonló jogos megfontolások figyelembe vételére, a javaslat elfogadása szükséges.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/gmo/legislation/docs/proposal_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0758:FIN:HU:PDF
([3]) HL L 106., 2001.4.17, 1. o.
([4]) HL L 268., 2003.10.18, 1. o.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001589/14
to the Commission
Erik Bánki (PPE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: GMO Package ensuring self-determination for Member States regarding commercial cultivation of GMOs

The Commission will be aware that the Fundamental Law of Hungary states that the country does not wish to cultivate genetically-modified crops or produce foodstuffs containing such organisms on its territory.

Pursuant to the EU's GMO regulations currently in force, if a permit to cultivate a GM crop is obtained in the Union, a Member State may only introduce a ban by means of a safeguard clause, which cannot be obtained with any certainty. Although the GMO Package presented by the Commission on 14 July 2010 would bring about considerable positive changes in the area of applying safeguard clauses, discussion of the proposal ground to a halt because of objections raised by a few Member States.

1. Does the Commission believe that any progress will be made in the Council with regard to the GMO Package enabling the self-determination of Member States in the area of the commercial cultivation of GMOs before the EP elections?

2. What action will Hungary be able to take if a new GM crop, the cultivation of which it wants to ban on its territory in accordance with its Fundamental Law, is granted an EU cultivation permit before the regulation is adopted?

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

The Commission is aware that cultivation of GM crops is a source of concerns in some Member States. This is why the Commission made in July 2010 ([1]) a proposal to allow Member States to restrict or ban the cultivation of GMOs on their territory for other grounds than risks to health and the environment. The European Parliament adopted a first reading position on this proposal in July 2011. Unfortunately despite huge efforts in 2012, a blocking minority prevented the adoption of a Council position, and the discussions remained blocked until very recently. However during the discussions in the Council on 11 February 2014 related to maize 1507 ([2]), many Member States asked to resume the discussions. As a result, the Greek Presidency presented a new compromise proposal which was considered as a good basis to resume the discussions by most of the Ministers in the Environmental Council on the 3 March 2014, with the hope of reaching a political agreement under the Greek Presidency.

Under existing legislation, Member States may use the provisions of the safeguard clause on a given GMO, if they provide enough evidence of a risk to health and to the environment (Article 23 of Directive 2001/18/EC ([3]) and Article 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 ([4])) and for duly justified coexistence reasons. The Commission proposal, if adopted, would allow extending that possibility to other legitimate considerations, such as socioeconomic concerns, town and country planning, land use, general environmental policy objective different to risks. The proposal needs to be adopted in order to allow for such legitimate considerations to be taken into account.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/gmo/legislation/docs/proposal_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0758:FIN:EN:PDF
([3]) OJ L 106, 17.4.2001, p. 1.
([4]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003 p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001590/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Adolescentes europeos y el uso de nuevas tecnologías

Las **nuevas tecnologías** y el uso intensivo de estas por parte de los **adolescentes** están provocando que se activen nuevas zonas del cerebro en detrimento de otras en las que residen la memoria o la capacidad organizativa. Asimismo, el uso de estas nuevas herramientas genera diversos comportamientos patológicos en este grupo de edad, que abarca desde los 14 a los 21 años, como el acoso escolar, la violencia o la falta de conciencia sobre la confidencialidad de los datos personales.

Así lo ha manifestado este miércoles, en Santander, el pediatra especialista en adolescencia Germán Castellanos que ha señalado que la influencia de las nuevas tecnologías en el desarrollo y cambio de los niños a adolescentes está «generando muchas expectativas» en los especialistas por los «problemas futuros» que pueda desencadenar ([1]).

Este tema se abordará en el XXII Congreso de la Sociedad Española de Medicina de la Adolescencia (SEMA) el próximo mes de marzo, ya que algunos especialistas catalogan este problema como una «adicción» como podrían ser las drogas.

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre este tema?

¿Tiene previsto la Comisión emitir recomendaciones a los Estados miembros para hacer frente a esta nueva patología, ya sea desde el punto de vista educativo como sanitario?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión es consciente de la preocupación acerca de los problemas de salud que en el futuro pueden acechar a los adolescentes europeos por su uso intensivo de las nuevas tecnologías. La función principal de la Comisión en el ámbito de la salud pública es apoyar y complementar la acción de los Estados miembros y promover la coordinación y el intercambio de buenas prácticas entre ellos. En este contexto, la Comisión lanzó a finales de 2013 una acción piloto con fondos aportados por el Parlamento Europeo para crear una red de expertos de la UE en el ámbito de la asistencia adaptada a los adolescentes con problemas de salud mental. Este proyecto abordará las cuestiones relacionadas con el uso de internet por dichos adolescentes.

Además, un paquete de trabajo de la actual Acción Común sobre Salud Mental y Bienestar ([2]) (2013-2016), con la cofinanciación del segundo programa Salud-UE y la participación de 25 Estados miembros, contribuirá entre otras cosas a identificar proyectos y buenas prácticas para hacer frente al ciberacoso.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/local/cantabria/20140212/54400196506/el-abuso-de-las-nuevas-tecnologias-por-los-adolescentes-reduce-su-memoria-y-fomenta-el-acoso-escolar.html
([2]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001590/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: European adolescents and use of new technologies

The intensive use of new technologies by adolescents is leading to the activation of new areas in their brains, to the detriment of those in which memory or organisational capacities are housed. The use of these new tools is giving rise to a range of pathological behaviours among this age group (between 14 and 21), such as school bullying, violence or failure to recognise the confidentiality of personal data.

These issues were raised this week in Santander by the paediatrician Germán Castellanos, who specialises in adolescence. He pointed out that the influence of new technologies on the development and passage of children into adolescence is 'generating a lot of expectation' on the part of specialists in terms of the 'future problems' it may cause ([1]).

The topic will be discussed at the 22nd congress of the Spanish Society for Adolescent Medicine (SEMA) in March 2014, since some specialists are already classifying this problem as an 'addiction', in terms similar to drug addiction.

What is the Commission's view on this matter?

Does the Commission plan to issue any recommendations to Member States on combating this new pathology, from either an educational or health perspective?

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

The Commission is aware of the concerns about potential future health problems related to the intensive use of new technologies by European adolescents. The Commission's main role in the field of public health is to support and complement Member States' action and foster coordination and exchange of good practice between Member States. In this context, the Commission launched in late 2013 a pilot action with funds provided by the European Parliament to create an EU expert network on adapted care for adolescents with mental health problems. This project will examine issues related to the Internet use of such adolescents.

In addition, a work package of the on-going Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-being ([2]) (2013-2016), co-financed by the second EU-Health Programme and involving 25 Member States, will *inter alia* identify projects and good practices in addressing cyberbullying.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/local/cantabria/20140212/54400196506/el-abuso-de-las-nuevas-tecnologias-por-los-adolescentes-reduce-su-memoria-y-fomenta-el-acoso-escolar.html

([2]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001591/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(13 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Libre circulación de personas en la EU

El comunicado de prensa que la Comisión emitió el día 25 de noviembre de 2013 «Libre circulación de las personas: cinco acciones en favor de los ciudadanos, el crecimiento y el empleo en la EU» parece no haber apaciguado las dudas de algunos Estados miembros sobre la apertura completa de fronteras para los ciudadanos. Desgraciadamente, en los últimos tiempos, la amenaza del proteccionismo en el mercado laboral revolotea por la Unión y pone en peligro uno de los cuatro pilares del mercado único — libertad de movimiento de bienes, servicios, capital y personas—, expuesto en el artículo 26, apartado 1 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea (TFUE).

Líderes de Estados miembros de la Unión Europea, como Holanda, Alemania, Austria o Reino Unido, han mostrado públicamente su preocupación por que trabajadores de vecinos del Este —especialmente rumanos y búlgaros que ya disponen de una libre circulación completa— invadan sus países y se aprovechen de su Estado del bienestar y, en algunos casos, incluso han sopesado tomar medidas al respecto aunque los artículos 18 y 45 del TFUE dictaminan que no se discriminará por razón de nacionalidad.

Por otro lado, otros representantes influyentes, como Marine Le Pen, del Frente Nacional de Francia, acusan directamente a la inmigración intracomunitaria en general como agravante de los problemas de sostenibilidad en los beneficios sociales, entre otros, arguyendo que los países ricos soportan la carga de trabajadores de países europeos más pobres; a pesar de que los datos empíricos demuestran que solamente un 1 % de toda la población de la UE reside inactivamente en otro Estado miembro y que, además, no suelen pedir prestaciones económicas en su nuevo país de residencia.

La guinda del pastel es el resultado del referéndum suizo, favorable a cerrar parcialmente fronteras a los ciudadanos europeos, y aunque Suiza no forme parte de la Unión Europea, sigue siendo un socio comercial relevante que ha decidido darle la espalda a una de las premisas básicas de los acuerdos con la UE.

Al final, más que en los hechos, el problema rae en el trasfondo ideológico que hay detrás y que afecta a las bases inamovibles de la unión económica.

Si el mercado único es solamente posible si existe en sus cuatro aspectos, ¿qué piensa hacer la Comisión para frenar este auge de intenciones proteccionistas contra el libre movimiento de personas? ¿Pretende la Comisión tomar medidas adicionales, además de las expuestas en el comunicado de prensa del 25 de noviembre de 2013?

Visto que el artículo 18 del TFUE incorpora que si se discrimina por razón de nacionalidad, tanto el Consejo como el Parlamento pueden tomar medidas con arreglo al procedimiento legislativo ordinario, ¿pretende la Comisión iniciar tal proceso si algún Estado miembro efectúa algún movimiento proteccionista?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

Como guardiana de los Tratados, la Comisión adoptará las medidas pertinentes para contrarrestar cualquier incapacidad de los Estados miembros para cumplir sus obligaciones en virtud de la legislación de la UE.

El principio de no discriminación por razón de la nacionalidad constituye el fundamento de la Unión Europea, en particular en relación con el mercado único. La actual legislación de la UE habilita a la Comisión para actuar contra cualquier violación de este principio.

La propuesta de Directiva de la Comisión ([1]) para facilitar el ejercicio por los trabajadores de su derecho a la libre circulación en virtud del artículo 45 del TFUE y del Reglamento (UE) n° 492/2011, una vez adoptada por los colegisladores, promoverá aún más las medidas de ejecución a nivel nacional para proteger a los trabajadores de la UE frente a la discriminación por razón de nacionalidad y frente a las medidas nacionales que restringen de forma ilegal el ejercicio de su derecho de libre circulación.

([1]) COM(2013) 236 final de 26 de abril de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001591/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Free movement of persons within the EU

The Commission's press release of 25 November 2013 'Free movement of people: five actions to benefit citizens, growth and employment in the EU' does not appear to have stilled the doubts of some Member States regarding the full opening of borders to citizens. Unfortunately, the threat of protectionism in the labour market has cast its shadow across the Union in recent times and is endangering one of the four pillars of the single market enshrined in Article 26(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: the free movement of goods, services and people.

Leaders of EU Member States such as the Netherlands, Germany, Austria or the United Kingdom have publicly voiced their fears that workers from neighbouring eastern countries, particularly Romanians and Bulgarians, who already enjoy complete free movement, will flood into their countries and take advantage of their welfare states. In some cases, they have even considered taking action in this respect, even though Articles 18 and 45 of the TFEU prohibit any discrimination on the grounds of nationality.

Meanwhile, other influential representatives, such as Marine Le Pen of France's National Front, point directly to intra-Community migration in general as a factor contributing, among other things, to the sustainability problems of social benefits systems, arguing that the rich countries are carrying the burden of caring for workers from poorer European countries, even though empirical data show that only 1% of the EU's population resides inactively in another Member State and, furthermore, that these people do not usually seek economic support in their new country of residence.

The cherry on the cake is the outcome of the Swiss referendum, favouring partial closure of the country's borders to European citizens. Although Switzerland does not belong to the EU, it is nevertheless an important trade partner, which has decided to turn its back on one of the fundamental principles of its agreements with the Union.

The root of the problem extends beyond these events to the ideology underlying them, which impinges on the non-negotiable basis of economic union.

If the single market is only possible if upheld by all four of its pillars, how does the Commission intend to check this surge in protectionist attitudes seeking to block the free movement of persons? Does the Commission intend to apply measures in addition to those outlined in its press release of 25 November 2013?

Given that Article 18 TFEU provides that Parliament and the Council may act in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure to adopt rules designed to prohibit discrimination on grounds of nationality, does the Commission intend to launch this procedure if any Member State introduces protective measures?

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

As a guardian of the Treaties the Commission will take appropriate action to counter any failure of Member States to comply with their obligations under EC law.

The principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of nationality is the bedrock of the European Union, in particular in relation to the Single Market. Current EU legislation empowers the Commission to act against any violations of this principle.

The Commission's proposal ([1]) for a directive to facilitate the exercise by workers of their right of free movement under Article 45 TFEU and Regulation (EU) No 492/2011, once adopted by the co-legislators, will further promote enforcement measures at national level to protect EU workers from discrimination on grounds of nationality and from national measures that unlawfully restrict the exercise of their right of free movement.

([1]) COM(2013) 236 final of 26 April 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001597/14
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: EU budget

Can the Commission confirm that there will be no revision of the recently adopted EU budget until 2019 at the earliest? Furthermore, in the case of new Member States joining the Union, what will the process be?

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

Council Regulation (EU, euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 lays down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020.

In the event of unforeseen circumstances the MFF may be revised (Article 17 MFF Regulation). Such a revision requires a unanimous Council decision and the consent of the European Parliament.

Furthermore, Article 2 of the MFF Regulation foresees that the Commission shall present a review of the functioning of the MFF by the end of 2016 at the latest. This compulsory review shall, as appropriate, be accompanied by a legislative proposal for the revision of the MFF Regulation. Again, such a revision requires a unanimous Council decision and the consent of the European Parliament.

In the event of enlargement of the Union between 2014 and 2020, the MFF shall be revised to take account of the expenditure requirements resulting therefrom (Article 21 MFF Regulation).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001598/14
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: CAP funding

Can the Commission confirm that there will be no review of CAP funding until the next CAP reform in five years? What will be the process if a new Member State joins the Union?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2014)

Regulation (EU) No 1311/2013 ([1]) lays down the multiannual financial framework (MFF) for financial years 2014 to 2020, including the amounts available for market related expenditure and direct payments to farmers for that period.

The Member States' ceilings for direct aids and budgetary limits for certain market-related expenditure are laid down in Regulations (EU) No 1307/2013 ([1]), 1308/2013 ([1]) and 1310/2013 ([1]). The breakdown by Member States of Union support for rural development is fixed by Regulation (EU) 1305/2013 ([1]).

Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No 1311/2013 provides that, by the end of 2016 at the latest, the Commission shall present a review of the functioning of the MFF, where appropriate accompanied by a legislative proposal for revising Regulation (EU) No 1311/2013. However, the same Article provides that pre-allocated national envelopes shall not be reduced through this 2016 mid-term review of the MFF.

In the event of enlargement of the Union, Article 21 of Regulation (EU) No 1311/2013 provides that the MFF shall be revised to take account of the expenditure requirements resulting therefrom.

([1]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001599/14
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: European Convention on Human Rights and Union membership

Can the Commission clarify the implications for an existing Member State's EU membership if it were to withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-005000/2006 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2006-5000&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001602/14
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Transparency in the Commission

Can the Commission update Parliament on the action it is taking to ensure that citizens have access to internal documents in order to hold the institution to account? Furthermore, can the Commission include the action that it is taking in an effort to be more open, transparent and accountable to EU citizens?

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

The Commission implements Regulation (EC) 1049/2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents. Annual reports on this activity are submitted to the European Parliament, the latest of which has recently been examined by the LIBE committee (In 't Veld report).

Another initiative in the area of transparency is the revision of the 'Interinstitutional Agreement on the Transparency Register'. The High Level Interinstitutional (EP/Commission) Working Group for the revision of the Transparency Register concluded its work in December 2013. Formal approval of the revised agreement is ongoing.

Detailed information about the Commission's transparency policy can be accessed via the Commission's 'transparency portal' on the Internet ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001609/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Accordi di partenariato economico UE-Africa

Indiscrezioni provenienti da fonti africane confermano che lo scorso gennaio la Commissione ha raggiunto un accordo con i governi dei paesi ECOWAS riguardo una partnership economica relativa al commercio di beni, servizi e investimenti. L'accordo non è stato ancora formalizzato, ma il commissario De Gucht ha già affermato di essersi posto come target la conclusione degli accordi entro gli inizi di aprile. Nel frattempo la East African Community ha affermato che il dialogo con le autorità politiche di Bruxelles non è ancora concluso e che un paio di questioni restano ad oggi irrisolte.

Alla luce di quanto emerso, può la Commissione chiarire.

1. quali siano le reali prospettive di una pronta conclusione dei negoziati e la formale firma degli accordi di partenariato tra l'UE e i diversi blocchi commerciali africani?

2. in che misura il rispetto dei diritti umani peserà nella formulazione finale degli accordi?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(24 marzo 2014)

L'UE sta negoziando accordi di partenariato economico (APE) con cinque regioni africane: i negoziati con l'Africa occidentale si sono conclusi e nelle prossime settimane si attende l'approvazione a livello politico. I negoziati con il gruppo APE della Comunità dell'Africa orientale e della Comunità di sviluppo dell'Africa meridionale sono in una fase avanzata e potrebbero concludersi nel prossimo futuro se si registrerà un sufficiente consenso politico. I negoziati con l'Africa centrale e con l'Africa orientale e meridionale sono meno progrediti e, in questa fase, non vi sono chiare prospettive di progresso.

I diritti umani sono contemplati nell'accordo di partenariato di Cotonou tra i paesi dell'Africa, dei Caraibi e del Pacifico (ACP) e l'UE e i suoi Stati membri, il che significa che si possono prendere misure appropriate se una delle parti non ottempera agli obblighi che le incombono in materia di rispetto dei diritti umani. Gli APE comprendono clausole di non esecuzione relative a dette disposizioni per assicurare che l'adozione di tali misure, comprese le misure di natura commerciale, non venga ostacolata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001609/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Economic partnership agreements between the EU and Africa

According to unconfirmed reports from African sources, in January the Commission reached an agreement with the governments of Ecowas [Economic Community of West African States] countries concerning an economic partnership relating to the sale of goods, services and investments. The agreement has not yet been formalised, but the EU Trade Commissioner De Gucht has declared that he has set himself the target of conclusion of the agreements by the beginning of April. In the interim the East African Community has affirmed that the dialogue with the political authorities in Brussels is not yet finished and a couple of questions remain unresolved.

In the light of this news, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What are the real prospects of an imminent conclusion to the negotiations and the formal signature of partnership agreements between the EU and the various African business factions?

2. To what extent does respect for human rights have an incidence in the final formulation of the agreements?

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

The EU is negotiating Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with five regions in Africa: Negotiations with West Africa have been concluded and endorsement at political level is expected in the next few weeks. Negotiations with the East African Community and the Southern Africa Development Community EPA Group are at an advanced stage and could be concluded in the near future if there is sufficient political will. Negotiations with Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa are less advanced, with unclear prospects for progress at this stage.

Human rights are covered by the Cotonou Partnership Agreement between the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and the EU and its Member States, which provides that appropriate measures may be taken if a party fails to fulfill its obligations concerning the respect of human rights. EPAs include non-execution clauses that refer to these provisions to ensure that the adoption of such measures, including trade-related measures, will not be prevented.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001618/14
à Comissão
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(13 de fevereiro de 2014)

Assunto: Vacinas com sais de alumínio

Considerando que vários artigos científicos sobre os riscos para a saúde da utilização de partículas de alumínio enquanto coadjuvante nas vacinas, por exemplo nas vacinas contra a difteria, o tétano, a poliomielite entre outras, dão conta da possibilidade de riscos neurotóxicos e neurodegenerativos e de consequências negativas a nível neurocognitivo, devido aos efeitos dos sais de alumínio sobre o cérebro humano;

Tendo em conta que estes dados têm causado algumas dúvidas nos cidadãos, verificando-se até alguns casos de recusa, por parte de cidadãos, da toma de vacinas incluídas nos programas de vacinação nacionais, devido à utilização de sais de alumínio, o que poderá por em causa a saúde pública;

Tendo em conta que existem coadjuvantes substitutos que não apresentam riscos para a saúde humana, por serem componentes orgânicos do corpo humano, como é o caso do fosfato de cálcio, que em alguns casos deixaram de ser utilizados para serem substituídos por estes sais de alumínio;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento do risco de neurotoxicidade de coadjuvantes das vacinas à base de sais de alumínio?

Conhece a razão para a substituição de coadjuvantes orgânicos, como é o caso do fosfato de cálcio, sem riscos para a saúde humana, por sais de alumínio?

Que medidas a Comissão prevê tomar para aprofundar a investigação nesta área, continuar a garantir a segurança das vacinas administradas na União Europeia e promover a confiança da população nos programas nacionais de vacinação?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(31 de março de 2014)

A toxicidade sistémica aguda do alumínio é conhecida e consiste sobretudo em neurotoxicidade, osteomalacia e anemia. O limite superior de alumínio em alergénios e vacinas é de 1,25 mg por dose, tal como definido na *Farmacopeia Europeia* com base em dados de eficácia e de segurança de ensaios clínicos e em cálculos adicionais. As vacinas autorizadas na UE contêm menos do que esta quantidade máxima por dose. Além disso, os adjuvantes com alumínio são utilizados nas vacinas há 70 anos e o seu perfil de segurança pode ser considerado como devidamente caracterizado. Por conseguinte, as vacinas que contêm alumínio continuam a proporcionar benefícios notáveis à população em geral por reduzirem substancialmente a doença, a incapacidade e a morte.

Até agora, dados de estudos clínicos e do sistema de vigilância de eventos adversos não revelaram problemas de segurança relativamente ao alumínio, para além de um nível aceitável de reações locais. A Agência Europeia de Medicamentos ([1]) acompanha e avalia as novas reações adversas. Em casos que suscitem preocupação, a Comissão pode tomar medidas, incluindo a comunicação aos profissionais da saúde. Tal deverá contribuir para promover a confiança do público no programa de vacinação.

Com base na experiência de longa data com sais de alumínio em vacinas, não houve tentativas significativas por parte dos fabricantes de investigar o fosfato de cálcio como alternativa ao alumínio.

Por último, a Comissão tem financiado projetos de investigação de grande dimensão, como o PHIME ([2]), sobre o papel da exposição a uma série de metais pesados nas doenças neurodegenerativas ou perturbações do desenvolvimento neurológico, ou o Aditec ([3]), que investiga estratégias de imunização inovadoras, incluindo o desenvolvimento e ensaio de novos adjuvantes (sem alumínio).

([1]) Agência Europeia de Medicamentos.
([2]) http://www.med.lu.se/labmedlund/amm/forskning/haelsorisker_av_metaller/phime
([3]) http://www.aditecproject.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001618/14
to the Commission
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Vaccines with aluminium salts

Whereas several scientific articles on the health risks of using aluminium particles as an adjuvant in vaccines, e.g. in vaccines against diphtheria, tetanus and poliomyelitis amongst others, describe the possibility of neurotoxic and neurodegenerative risks and negative consequences at the neurocognitive level, due to the effects of aluminium salts on the human brain;

Bearing in mind that these data have caused people doubts, in some cases leading to them refusing to take vaccines included in national vaccination programmes because of the use of aluminium salts, possibly jeopardising public health;

Bearing in mind that there are substitute adjuvants that do not present risks to human health, since they are organic components of the human body, such as calcium phosphate, which in some cases have ceased to be used on being replaced by these aluminium salts;

I ask the Commission:

Is it aware of the risk of neurotoxicity from vaccine adjuvants based on aluminium salts?

Does it know the reason for the replacement of organic adjuvants, such as calcium phosphate, which are risk-free for human health, by aluminium salts?

What measures does the Commission intend to take to further research in this area, to continue to ensure the safety of vaccines administered in the European Union and to promote public confidence in national vaccination programmes?

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

Acute systemic toxicity of Al is known and mainly consists of neurotoxicity, osteomalacia and anemia. The upper limit for Al for allergens and vaccines is 1.25 mg per dose as established in the European Pharmacopoeia based on efficacy and safety data from clinical trials and additional calculations. Authorised vaccines in the EU contain less than this maximum amount per dose. Moreover, Al adjuvants have been used in vaccines for 70 years and their safety profile can be considered as adequately characterised. Therefore, vaccines containing Al continue to offer outstanding benefits to the general population by greatly reducing disease, disability and death.

Up to now, data from clinical studies and the surveillance system of adverse events have not revealed safety concerns regarding the aluminium, apart from an acceptable level of local reactions. The European Medicines Agency ([1]) monitors and assesses new adverse reactions. In case of concern, the Commission can take action, including communication to healthcare professionals. This should contribute to promote public confidence in the vaccination programme.

Based on the long term experience with Al salts in vaccines, there have been no significant attempts from manufacturers to investigate calcium phosphate as an alternative to aluminium.

Finally, the Commission has funded large-scale research projects such as PHIME ([2]) on the role of exposure to a number of heavy metals in neurodevelopmental and neurogenerative diseases, or ADITEC ([3]) investigating innovative immunizations strategies including the development and testing of novel adjuvants (not Al based).

([1]) The European Medicines Agency.
([2]) http://www.med.lu.se/labmedlund/amm/forskning/haelsorisker_av_metaller/phime
([3]) http://www.aditecproject.eu/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001624/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Informazioni circa il progetto di costituzione della macroregione adriatico-ionica

Il processo di formalizzazione della macroregione adriatico-ionica sta procedendo speditamente verso la realizzazione della nuova realtà amministrativa. Si auspica che la stesura nella forma definitiva del progetto avvenga per la primavera del 2014 durante la presidenza greca dell'UE. La nuova strategia è frutto della cooperazione di quattro paesi dell'UE e di quattro paesi dei Balcani non-UE. Tale forma innovativa di cooperazione interregionale e transnazionale ha lo scopo di rafforzare i rapporti economici tra i partecipanti, sviluppare il tessuto economico e sociale delle regioni coinvolte.

Considerati i molteplici settori coinvolti, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quali sono gli sviluppi e le opportunità concrete che la costituzione della macroregione adriatico-ionica comporteranno per l'Unione europea?

2. Sono previsti finanziamenti per lo sviluppo delle PMI situate nelle regioni comprese nella macroregione?

3. In particolare, può fornire un quadro generale sui benefici, sui programmi e finanziamenti che tale accordo avrà sulla regione Marche?

4. Quali progetti e finanziamenti saranno disponibili per le imprese e i lavoratori della regione Marche per lo sviluppo di attività collegate agli obiettivi della macroregione?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

1. La strategia dell'UE per la regione adriatica e ionica intende incrementare la prosperità e l'occupazione nella regione e contribuire agli obiettivi della strategia Europa 2020. Inoltre, essa rafforzerà la cooperazione tra i paesi partecipanti ed aiuterà i paesi candidati e candidati potenziali a integrarsi con l'UE.

2. Le strategie macroregionali non arrecano finanziamenti aggiuntivi, ma possono contribuire a un uso più efficace dei finanziamenti esistenti nel perseguimento di obiettivi comuni. Le PMI possono beneficiare dei finanziamenti dell'UE grazie ai Fondi strutturali e di investimento europei, a COSME, ecc.

3. Ciascuna regione, come anche ciascun Paese, è responsabile di incanalare i propri finanziamenti unionali e nazionali/regionali a sostegno dei progetti macroregionali. Inoltre le strategie macroregionali, grazie alla creazione di strutture efficaci per le connessioni in rete, possono contribuire allo sviluppo di nuovi progetti e dare impulso ai progetti transnazionali esistenti.

4. La regione Marche dovrebbe esaminare e decidere quali finanziamenti indirizzare a vantaggio degli obiettivi della strategia (crescita blu, trasporti ed energia, ambiente e turismo sostenibile). L'approccio macroregionale aiuta inoltre ad allineare i programmi unionali per farli interagire verso importanti obiettivi condivisi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001624/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Plans to set up an Adriatic-Ionian macroregion

The plans for an Adriatic-Ionian macroregion are quickly taking shape and it is hoped that they will be finalised by Spring 2014, during the Greek Presidency of the EU. Four EU countries and four non-EU Balkan countries have worked together on the new strategy. The aim of this innovative form of interregional and transnational cooperation is to strengthen economic ties between the countries involved and boost economic and social development in each region.

Given that the project covers a wide range of areas, can the Commission:

1. say what specific benefits and opportunities the Adriatic-Ionian macroregion will provide for the EU?

2. say whether any development funding will be made available to SMEs in the macroregion?

3. provide a general overview of the benefits, initiatives and funding that the project will bring to the Marche region of Italy in particular?

4. say what programmes and what funding will be made available to businesses and workers in the Marche region for initiatives in keeping with the strategic objectives set for the macroregion?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

1. The EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region aims at boosting prosperity and jobs in the Region and contributing to the Europe 2020 goals. Moreover, it will strengthen cooperation among participating countries and help candidates and potential candidate countries integrate with the EU.

2. The macroregional strategies do not bring extra funds, but can help with a more effective use of existing funds towards common goals. SMEs can benefit from EU funds like the European Structural and Investment Funds, COSME, etc.

3. Each region and country is responsible for channelling their EU and national/regional funds to support macro-regional projects. Moreover, macro-regional strategies, through the creation of effective structures for networking, can help the development of new projects and give momentum to existing transnational ones.

4. The region of Marche should explore and decide what funds to channel to the benefit of the strategy's objectives (blue growth, transport and energy, environment, and sustainable tourism). The macro-regional approach helps also by aligning EU programmes to act together towards major shared goals.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-001629/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Energías renovables — cierre de todas las plantas de cogeneración en Cataluña

La industria ha decidido comenzar a paralizar sus plantas de cogeneración ([1]). Apenas una semana después de hacerse pública la propuesta de estándares de retribución —que supone un recorte de más de 1 000 millones de euros—, las empresas han decidido paralizar parte de sus plantas de generación eléctrica con esta tecnología para evitar incurrir en pérdidas. En la última semana, se han paralizado instalaciones con una potencia instalada cercana a los 650 MW. A esta cantidad habría que añadirle las más de 200 plantas (712 MW) que ya están paradas desde el segundo semestre de 2013, después de la introducción de los impuestos a la generación, lo que supone, en total, más del 25 % de la potencia instalada de la cogeneración y entre un 20 y un 30 % de las instalaciones existentes. La intención del sector es intentar hacer comprender al Ministerio de Industria que los recortes que prepara el sector acabarán por llevar al cierre a todas estas instalaciones, clave en la competitividad de la industria española. La cogeneración tiene en estos momentos un total de 1 000 instalaciones industriales, que suponen el 12 % de la electricidad producida en el Estado español. Esta semana, está previsto que cierren las seis plantas de purines por cogeneración en Cataluña ([2]). Las medidas que han precipitado estos cierres son que el Ministerio de Industria español quiere rebajar un 40 % el precio de la electricidad que generan estas instalaciones con efecto retroactivo y, además, les reclama la devolución de tres millones y medio de euros. Mantener las plantas abiertas les supone una pérdida diaria de 20 000 euros. El sector porcino está preocupado porque habían encontrado una salida a los purines de sus instalaciones, ya que son unos excrementos que contaminan gravemente el subsuelo. Además, están en juego miles de puestos de trabajo.

¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de este tema? ¿Tiene previsto hacer recomendaciones al Estado español sobre este tema?

¿Cree la Comisión que el Estado español cumplirá los objetivos para 2020 en materia de energías renovables si sigue aplicando este tipo de medidas?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión sigue de cerca la reforma del sector eléctrico en España mediante un diálogo con las autoridades españolas y analiza su incidencia en la cogeneración y el despliegue de las fuentes de energías renovables. La Comisión se ha comprometido a mantener el rumbo de la UE hacia sus objetivos para 2020 en materia de energías renovables y eficiencia energética, y se propone lograr una aplicación efectiva de la legislación de la UE en el terreno de la cogeneración, como disponen la Directiva sobre cogeneración ([3]) (2004/8/CE) y la Directiva de eficiencia energética ([4]) (2012/27/UE), que sustituirá a la primera a partir del 5 de junio de 2014. El método de análisis desarrollado para la Comisión, basado en modelos económicos, indica que las actuales medidas estratégicas vigentes en España no podrían, por sí solas, alcanzar el objetivo marcado para 2020 (un 20 % de energías renovables). Cuando un Estado miembro se desvía de la trayectoria ([5]) que obligatoriamente debe seguir hacia el objetivo de 2020, la Comisión puede tomar oficialmente medidas para solventar esta deficiencia.

([1]) http://www.eleconomista.es/interstitial/volver/nuezene14/energia/noticias/5534837/02/14/La-industria-paraliza-el-25-de-la-cogeneracion-por-la-reforma-electrica.html
([2]) http://www.324.cat/noticia/2307213/catalunya/Saturen-les-sis-plantes-de-tractament-de-purins-de-Catalunya-per-la-retallada-de-lEstat
([3]) DO L 52 de 21.2.2004.
([4]) DO L 315 de 14.11.2012.
([5]) Como se indica en el anexo I, parte B, de la Directiva 2009/28/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001629/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 February 2014)

Subject: Renewable energies — closure of all combined heat and power plants in Catalonia

Energy producers in Spain have begun to shut down combined heat and power (CHP) plants ([1]). Barely a week after the publication of proposals for new payment standards — which impose a cut of over EUR 1 billion — companies have decided to close some of their CHP plants in order to avoid financial losses. Last week saw the closure of power stations which had a total installed capacity of around 650 MW. In addition, more than 200 plants (712 MW) have been out of operation since the second half of 2013, following the introduction of power generation taxes. This means that 20 to 30% of installations have been shut down in total, resulting in a 25% reduction in CHP installed capacity. The sector hopes that these measures will make it clear to the Ministry of Industry that spending cuts will eventually lead to the closure of all such installations, and the competitiveness of Spanish industry will be dealt a serious blow as a result. Spain currently has a total of 1 000 industrial CHP installations, accounting for 12% of electricity produced in the country. This week, all six slurry-based CHP plants in Catalonia are expected to close ([2]). These closures are considered necessary because the Spanish Ministry of Industry plans to impose a 40% retroactive reduction on the price of electricity generated in the installations and is demanding back payments of EUR 3.5 million. Keeping the plants open would result in a daily loss of EUR 20 000. The issue is also raising concerns in the pig sector, since untreated pig slurry seriously contaminates the subsoil and these plants provide a way of safely disposing of the waste. On top of all these problems, thousands of jobs are at stake.

Is the Commission aware of the above? Does it plan to issue recommendations on the matter to the Spanish Government?

Does the Commission believe that Spain will reach the 2020 renewable energy targets if it continues to introduce these kinds of measures?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2014)

The Commission follows closely the electricity sector reform in Spain in dialogue with the national authorities and analyses the impact on cogeneration and the deployment of renewable energy sources. The Commission is committed to keep the EU on track for its 2020 renewable and energy efficiency targets and aims at the effective implementation of the EU legislation on cogeneration as laid down in the Cogeneration Directive ([3]) (2004/8/EC) and the Energy Efficiency Directive ([4]) (2012/27/EU) that will repeal the Cogeneration Directive as of 5 June 2014. Economic modelling-based analysis developed for the Commission indicates that Spain's current policy measures alone would be insufficient to reach its national renewable energy target of 20% by 2020. Should a Member State fall below its binding trajectory ([5]) towards 2020 target, the Commission can take legal measures to address this deficiency.

([1]) http://www.eleconomista.es/interstitial/volver/nuezene14/energia/noticias/5534837/02/14/La-industria-paraliza-el-25-de-la-cogeneracion-por-la-reforma-electrica.html
([2]) http://www.324.cat/noticia/2307213/catalunya/Saturen-les-sis-plantes-de-tractament-de-purins-de-Catalunya-per-la-retallada-de-lEstat
([3]) OJ L 52, 21.2.2004.
([4]) OJ L 315, 14.11.2012.
([5]) As set out in Annex I, Part B of Directive 2009/28/EC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001632/14
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Western Arc as a project of common interest

Chapter I, Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 states that:

'1. Projects of common interest [PCIs] shall contribute to the development of the trans-European transport network through the creation of new transport infrastructure;

2. A PCI shall:

(a) contribute to the objectives falling within at least two of the four categories set out in Article 4; [e.g. cohesion/cross-border/reducing quality gaps, etc.]

(b) comply with Chapter II [on the comprehensive network], and if it concerns the core network, comply in addition with Chapter III;

5. PCIs are eligible for Union financial assistance'.

Does this entitle Western Arc to funding for a feasibility study as a project of common interest on socioeconomic grounds?

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

Some eligible projects concerning the Western Arc are among the pre-identified projects in the annex to the CEF Regulation ([1]), notably studies concerning the rail connection Shannon Foynes — Limerick junction and studies and works on port capacity, Motorways of the Sea and rail interconnections concerning the link Dublin — Cork — Southampton.

It should also be noted that projects in the Western Arc, arising in the comprehensive network or concerning actions as outlined in Article 7 of the CEF Regulation (in areas such as freight noise, telematics applications, motorways of the sea) may be eligible under the remaining share of the CEF budget (i.e. 15% to 20% of the funding).

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010, OJ L 348, 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001633/14
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: EU aid to the Palestinian territory

I have been contacted by a constituent who tells me that he has read a recent report which says that EUR 2 billion of EU aid intended for the Palestinian Arabs has been lost or misused in recent years.

My constituent believes that, during this period of austerity, foreign aid should be directed only at those areas which are in dire need of it and at projects which can be seen as both efficient and effective.

Given my constituent's concerns about missing or misused EU aid for this region, could the Commission confirm:

1. whether it is currently monitoring how EU aid is used in Palestine to ensure that it reaches the people who need it the most?

2. whether it is aware of any aid which has been misplaced or misspent?

3. if so, what action does it intend to take to avoid any loss of aid in the future?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

Assuming that the Honourable Member refers to the recent Court of Auditors' report on the European Union Direct Financial Support to the Palestinian Authority ([1]), there is no such reference concerning the misuse of funds in the report and, on the contrary, it states that 'the Commission and the EEAS had succeeded in implementing direct financial support to the Palestinian Authority in difficult circumstances' and that 'the Commission has established a robust verification system for ensuring that funding reaches the eligible beneficiaries'.

([1]) http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR13_14/SR13_14_EN.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001639/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Contrabbando di fiori

Tutti gli anni, per la festa di San Valentino, l'Europa, e in particolare l'Italia, sono letteralmente invase da fiori provenienti da paesi extra-UE (ad esempio dalla Turchia), ma contrabbandati come prodotti nostrani, soprattutto italiani.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere quali misure concrete intende attuare per stroncare questo fenomeno che danneggia gravemente la produzione floricola europea?

La Commissione non intende istituire il 14 febbraio la «Giornata europea dei fiori», anche come occasione per fare il punto sulla lotta alla contraffazione di prodotti floricoli europei, da celebrare ogni anno a Sanremo, in contemporanea con il locale Festival?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(24 marzo 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza che prodotti della floricoltura di paesi terzi siano spacciati come coltivati nell'UE, né che si esportino fiori recisi dalla Turchia in Italia. I dati sulle importazioni indicano che negli ultimi quattro anni ([1]) non sono stati esportati dalla Turchia in Italia né fiori né boccioli di fiori recisi, per mazzi o per ornamento. A livello di UE le importazioni di tali prodotti dalla Turchia rappresentano soltanto il 3,3 %.

Al fine di valutare se i fiori dei paesi terzi sono stati fatti passare per prodotti coltivati nell'UE, si invita l'onorevole parlamentare a presentare ai servizi della Commissione qualsiasi elemento rilevante in suo possesso in modo da consentire a tali servizi di esaminare la situazione e, nel caso accertassero violazioni o frodi, adottare le opportune misure.

La Commissione non ha intenzione di istituire il 14 febbraio come Giornata europea del fiore.

([1]) Non sono ancora disponibili i dati per i primi mesi del 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001639/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Unlawful trade in flowers

Every year, at the time of St Valentine's day, Europe, and Italy in particular, are flooded with flowers from non-EU countries (Turkey, for example) that are passed off as home-grown — and more especially Italian — products.

What practical steps will the Commission take to curb this phenomenon, which is seriously damaging European flower-growing?

Will not the Commission — not least to provide an opportunity to review the action taken to stamp out the trade in flowers sold under a bogus European label — establish 14 February as 'European Flower Day', which could be celebrated annually in Sanremo, coinciding with the local festival?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

The Commission is not aware of floricultural products from third countries passed off as EU grown nor of cut flowers from Turkey exported to Italy. Data on imports indicate that no cut flowers or flower buds suitable for bouquets or ornamental purposes were exported from Turkey to Italy in the last four years ([1]). At EU level, imports from Turkey of these products only represent 3.3%.

In order to assess if flowers from third countries were passed off as home-grown products, we would invite the Honourable Member to submit any relevant element in his possession to the Commission services to enable them to analyse the situation and take measures, should any infringements or frauds be found.

The Commission has no intention to establish 14 February as 'European Flower Day'.

([1]) Data for the first months of 2014 are not available yet.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001652/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Alimentazione e povertà

L'Italia è il primo paese in Europa per prodotti agroalimentari con marchi di qualità. Il «riscatto» italiano, secondo i dati diffusi nel rapporto Istat, passa per i prodotti con certificazione Dop, Igp e Stg che, escluso il settore vinicolo, sono 248, distanziando i 192 della Francia e i 161 della Spagna.

Nonostante ciò, a causa della crisi, oltre 10 milioni di italiani non riescono a permettersi un pasto proteico adeguato almeno ogni due giorni, con un aumento del 35 % rispetto all'anno precedente. La Coldiretti afferma che il 24,9 % delle famiglie italiane vive una situazione di «deprivazione».

Nel 2013 in Italia oltre 4 milioni di poveri sono stati addirittura costretti a chiedere aiuto per il cibo da mangiare. Tra questi si contano ben 428 587 bambini con meno di 5 anni di età e 578 583 persone over 65 anni. 303 485 persone hanno beneficiato dei servizi mensa, mentre oltre 3,7 milioni di poveri hanno ricevuto assistenza con pacchi alimentari.

Può la Commissione far sapere se dispone di dati analoghi a quelli presentati per quanto riguarda gli altri Stati membri dell'UE?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

Nell'ambito dell'indagine annuale relativa alle statistiche unionali sul reddito e sulle condizioni di vita (EU-SILC) ([1]) Eurostat raccoglie informazioni sulla parte della popolazione che non è in grado di consumare ogni due giorni carni rosse, carni di pollame, pesce o cibi di tenore proteico equivalente.

Nel 2012 le percentuali più grandi sono state registrate in Lettonia (25,3 %), Ungheria (32,0 %) e Bulgaria (51,9 %). Tra il 2011 e il 2012 l'aumento maggiore (in termini relativi) è stato osservato in Italia (dal 12,4 % al 16,8 %), Grecia (dal 9,2 % al 14,2 %) e nel Regno Unito (dal 4,9 % al 9,3 %). A livello dell'UE28 si è registrato un aumento dal 9,7 % all'11,0 %.

La capacità di poter acquistare carni rosse, carni di pollame, pesce o cibi di tenore proteico equivalente ogni due giorni costituisce una delle nove voci relative alle difficoltà economiche dei nuclei familiari e alla convenienza dei beni durevoli esaminate nell'ambito di EU-SILC. Le altre otto voci corrispondono alla capacità di: 1) pagare l'affitto/il mutuo o le bollette in tempo utile, 2) riscaldare adeguatamente l'alloggio, 3) far fronte a spese impreviste, 4) trascorrere una settimana di vacanza fuori casa, 5) avere un'automobile, 6) avere una lavatrice, 7) avere una televisione a colori e 8) avere un telefono. L'indicatore del tasso di deprivazione materiale grave evidenzia la percentuale della popolazione che vive in nuclei familiari non in grado di permettersi quattro o più delle nove voci. Esso è uno dei tre componenti dell'indicatore «a rischio di povertà o di esclusione sociale» (AROPE) della strategia Europa 2020. Nel 2012 i valori più elevati di grave deprivazione materiale si sono registrati in Ungheria (25,7 %), Romania (29,9 %) e Bulgaria (44,1 %). Tra il 2011 e il 2012 l'aumento maggiore (in termini relativi) della grave deprivazione materiale è stato riscontrato n Italia (dall'11,2 % al 14,5 %), a Malta (dal 6,6 % al 9,2 %) e nel Regno Unito (dal 5,1 % al 7,8 %). A livello dell'UE28 l'indicatore è cresciuto passando dall'8,9 % al 9,9 %.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database, sottosezione «Material Deprivation», tabella «ilc_mdes03».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001652/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Food and poverty

Italy leads Europe in terms of quality-marked foodstuffs. According to data published in the Istat (Italian Statistical Institute) report, the Italian 'redemption' comes from products with PDO, PGI and TSG certification of which, excluding the wine sector, there are 248, far ahead of France's 192 and Spain's 161.

Nevertheless, due to the crisis, more than 10 million Italians are unable to afford a suitably nutritious meal at least once every two days, an increase of 35% over the previous year. The Italian farmers' association Coldiretti reports a situation of 'deprivation' affecting 24.9% of Italian families.

In 2013, more than 4 million poor people in Italy were obliged to seek help to get food to eat. These include a full 428 587 children under five years of age and 578 583 people over the age of 65. 303 485 people benefited from canteen services, whilst over 3.7 million poor people received assistance in the shape of food parcels.

Can the Commission say whether it has similar data to the above in respect of the other EU Member States?

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

Eurostat collects information on the share of the population unable to afford to eat meat, chicken, fish or a protein equivalent every second day in the annual survey EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) ([1]).

In 2012, the highest shares were recorded in Latvia (25.3%), Hungary (32.0%) and Bulgaria (51.9%). Between 2011 and 2012 the strongest increases (in relative terms) were observed in Italy (from 12.4% to 16.8%), Greece (from 9.2% to 14.2%) and the United Kingdom (from 4.9% to 9.3%). At EU28 level, an increase from 9.7% to 11.0% was recorded.

The item on ability to afford meat, chicken, fish or a protein equivalent every second day is one out of the nine items on households' economic strain and affordability of durables surveyed in EU-SILC. The other eight are the ability to afford: (1) to pay rent/mortgage or utility bills on time; (2) to keep home adequately warm; (3) to face unexpected expenses; (4) a one week holiday away from home; having (5) a car; (6) a washing machine; (7) a colour TV; and (8) a telephone. The indicator of Severe Material Deprivation rate shows the share of the population living in households that are unable to afford four or more of these nine items. It is one of the three components of the Europe 2020 target indicator At-Risk-Of-Poverty and social Exclusion (AROPE). In 2012, the highest values for the severe material deprivation indicator were recorded in Hungary (25.7%), Romania (29.9%) and Bulgaria (44.1%). Between 2011 and 2012 the strongest increase (in relative terms) of the Severe Material Deprivation rate was observed in Italy (from 11.2% to 14.5%), Malta (from 6.6% to 9.2%) and the United Kingdom (from 5.1% to 7.8%). At EU28 level, an increase from 8.9% to 9.9% was recorded.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database sub-section 'Material Deprivation', table 'ilc_mdes03'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001653/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Crescita della pressione fiscale in Italia ed Europa

La pressione fiscale in Italia è cresciuta di quasi tre punti percentuali dal 2000 ad oggi, passando dal 41,3 % al 44,1 %, con un'accelerazione negli ultimi anni. L'istituto nazionale di statistica Istat ha registrato che fino al 2005 questa crescita è stata in linea con la media europea, attestandosi poi su valori più elevati.

Può la Commissione fornire dati relativi agli altri Stati membri dell'Unione europea, analoghi a quelli sopra presentati?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2014)

La Commissione europea pubblica ogni anno in aprile la relazione «Taxation trends in the European Union», che è disponibile online e contiene i dati richiesti. L'edizione 2013 è consultabile al seguente indirizzo:
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_structures/2013/report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001653/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Increase in the tax burden in Italy and Europe

The tax burden in Italy has increased by almost 3 percentage points since 2000, from 41.3% to 44.1%, with an acceleration in recent years. The National Statistics Institute ISTAT records that, prior to 2005, the increase was in line with the European average, but thereafter the figures became higher.

Can the Commission provide figures on other European Union Member States comparable to those presented above?

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

The European Commission publishes each year in April the report 'Taxation trends in the European Union' which is available online and contains the data requested. The 2013 edition can be found here:
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_structures/2013/report.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001655/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Indice di competitività delle imprese

L'indice sintetico del successo di un'impresa nel sistema competitivo è calcolato in base al rapporto tra valore aggiunto per addetto e costo unitario del lavoro. Tale indice rappresenta una sintesi della misura di efficienza dei processi produttivi e fornisce, pertanto, indicazioni sulla competitività in termini di costo. In Italia, ogni 100 EUR di costo del lavoro il valore aggiunto si attesta, secondo dati del 2010, al 126,1 %. Dal 2001 al 2010, l'indice di competitività ha perso quasi 10 punti (da 135,8 a 126,1). Nella vita quotidiana, questi dati si traducono nel fatto che, secondo quanto afferma il Codacons (Coordinamento delle associazioni per la difesa dell'ambiente e dei diritti degli utenti e dei consumatori), il 50 % degli italiani è ormai in difficoltà e fatica ad arrivare alla fine del mese. Addirittura, il 50,5 % degli italiani non può nemmeno permettersi una settimana di vacanza lontano da casa, un dato peggiore persino rispetto al dopoguerra.

Può la Commissione fornire dati relativi agli altri Stati membri dell'Unione europea, analoghi a quelli sopra presentati?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2014)

La fonte dei dati citati nell'interrogazione non è chiara. L'Onorevole parlamentare troverà in allegato le cifre sull'indice di produttività del lavoro nonché i dati su valore aggiunto, occupazione e costo unitario del lavoro basati sulle informazioni più recenti a disposizione di Eurostat per tutti gli Stati membri e per gli aggregati europei per gli anni dal 2000 al 2012.

Occorre tener conto del fatto che non tutti gli Stati membri hanno già incluso nelle statistiche sull'occupazione i dati relativi al censimento della popolazione del 2011 e che la discontinuità delle serie attualmente limita, per alcuni paesi, l'interpretazione degli indicatori della produttività e del costo unitario del lavoro. L'introduzione di nuovi manuali per i conti nazionali (SEC 2010, che sostituisce SEC 95) sarà utilizzata da molti Stati membri per integrare i risultati del censimento nonché la metodologia e le fonti di dati aggiornate, il che potrebbe portare a ulteriori revisioni dei dati verso la fine del 2014. L'Onorevole parlamentare troverà in allegato i dati relativi all'occupazione contrassegnati con l'indicatore di discontinuità delle serie («b») per alcuni paesi (Grecia, Lettonia, Polonia). La brevità delle serie della Polonia è dovuta al cambiamento di classificazione delle attività (da NACE Rev. 1.1 a NACE Rev. 2).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001655/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Business competitiveness index

The composite index of the success of an undertaking in the competitive system is calculated on the basis of the ratio between value added per employee and unit labour cost. This index provides an overall measurement of the efficiency of production processes and therefore an indication of competitiveness in terms of cost. In Italy, according to the 2010 figures, for every EUR 100 of labour cost, the value added amounts to 126.1%. Between 2001 and 2010 the competitiveness index fell by almost 10 points (from 135.8 to 126.1). In everyday life, these figures translate into the fact that, according to the findings of Codacons (Coordination of Associations for Protection of the Environment and the Rights of Users and Consumers), 50% of Italians are now in difficulty and struggle to reach the end of the month. Indeed 50.5% of Italians cannot even allow themselves one week's holiday away from home, a figure even worse than that for the post-war period.

Can the Commission provide figures for other European Union Member States, comparable to those presented above?

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

The source of the data quoted in the question is unclear. Based on the latest data available to Eurostat for all Member States and European aggregates and covering the years 2000 to 2012, the Honourable Member will find in the attached annex, figures on the labour productivity index as well as data on value added, employment and unit labour cost.

It should be taken into account that the 2011 population census has not yet been incorporated into the employment statistics by all Member States, and breaks in series currently limit the interpretation of the productivity and unit labour cost indicators for some countries. The introduction of new manuals for national accounts (ESA 2010 replacing ESA 95) will be used by many Member States to incorporate the census results, as well as the upgrade methodology and data sources which may lead to further revisions of data towards the end of 2014. The Honourable Member will find in annex the employment data flagged with the break series indicator ('b') for some countries (Greece, Latvia, Poland). The short series of Poland are due to the changeover of activity classification (from NACE Rev 1.1 to NACE Rev 2).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001657/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Riforma del settore sociale in Cina

A partire dalla fine degli anni Settanta e dai primi anni Ottanta, il settore sociale in Cina ha conosciuto diverse riforme istituzionali, mirate a risolvere specifici problemi del sistema economico e sociale cinese. I primi passi sono stati mossi al fine di eliminare le barriere alla mobilità dei lavoratori e promuovere la piena occupazione. Successivamente si è anche guardato al rafforzamento della protezione sociale, fino alle ultime riforme, mirate a stimolare gli investimenti e le pari opportunità.

Nonostante ciò, la Cina deve apportare numerose migliorie, in termini di sviluppo del capitale umano, di sviluppo dell'efficienza nell'uso delle risorse umane, di sostenibilità finanziaria, di mobilità e giustizia sociale e, non da ultimo, deve far fronte al problema dell'invecchiamento della popolazione.

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

1. condivide questa valutazione sul sistema socio-economico cinese?

2. Ritiene che la riforma del settore sociale in Cina possa essere un elemento di cooperazione e scambio di buone pratiche tra UE e Cina?

3. Ha già avviato un dialogo in materia con le autorità cinesi?

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

Nel corso del vertice UE-Cina del 2013, le Parti hanno adottato il programma strategico di cooperazione UE-Cina per il 2020, un quadro politico lungimirante volto allo sviluppo del loro partenariato. Tra le priorità individuate figura la necessità di intensificare il dialogo sulle politiche sociali per poter affrontare una serie di questioni tra cui la previdenza sociale, l'assistenza sociale e l'invecchiamento della popolazione.

La Commissione intrattiene un dialogo regolare ad alto livello con i suoi omologhi cinesi in materia di occupazione e politiche sociali. La prossima tornata del dialogo, prevista per il 2014, sarà imperniata su temi quali le politiche del mercato del lavoro, la salute e la sicurezza sul lavoro e l'occupazione giovanile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001657/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Reform of the social sector in China

Since the late 1970s and the early 1980s, the social sector in China has undergone a number of institutional reforms, designed to resolve specific problems in the Chinese economic and social system. The first steps were taken to eliminate barriers to employee mobility and promote full employment. Attention was then turned to the strengthening of social protection, culminating in the latest reforms, designed to stimulate investment and equal opportunities.

Notwithstanding the above, China still needs to make a number of improvements in terms of the development of human capital, greater efficiency in the use of human resources, financial sustainability, mobility and social justice and, last but not least, measures to tackle the issue of the ageing population.

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

1. Does the Commission share this assessment of the Chinese socioeconomic system?

2. Does the Commission consider that reform of the social sector in China could be an ingredient of cooperation and the exchange of good practice between the EU and China?

3. Has the Commission instigated a dialogue on this matter with the Chinese authorities?

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

At the EU-China Summit in 2013, both sides adopted the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation, a forward looking policy framework for the development of the partnership between the two sides. One of the identified priorities is to reinforce dialogue on social policies so as to address a number of challenges including *inter alia* social welfare, social assistance and demographic ageing.

In practical terms, the Commission holds a regular high level dialogue with Chinese counterparts on employment and social policies. The next round is planned for 2014 and will have a focus on labour market policies, health and safety at work and youth employment

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001658/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Rischio di estinzione per alcuni prodotti agricoli pugliesi

Un'associazione temporanea di scopo, costituita da università, CNR e imprese, ha lanciato un allarme sul rischio di scomparsa di 19 prodotti agricoli tipici pugliesi, tra cui la carota giallo-viola di Polignano e quella di Tiggiano, i meloni di Gallipoli, i pomodori e i meloni di Morciano, i mùgnuli, una sorta di cavoli ricci diffusi nel leccese e nel barese in piccoli orti familiari, la «batata» leccese, il pomodorino di Manduria e la cipolla rossa di Acquaviva.

Si tratta di prodotti scartati per ragioni commerciali e logistiche, ma che sparuti gruppi di agricoltori pugliesi, denominati «custodi», hanno caparbiamente continuato a coltivare. L'associazione di scopo mira, tramite un progetto specifico, a ridurre il tasso attuale di erosione della biodiversità delle specie orticole pugliesi per salvare dall'estinzione genetica autentici gioielli verdi che possono arricchire il carnet di produzioni tipiche.

Alla luce di questa situazione, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza dell'attività dell'associazione di scopo in questione?

2. l'associazione in questione ha richiesto finanziamenti europei?

3. è a conoscenza del rischio estinzione di questi prodotti agricoli?

4. ritiene possibile finanziare l'attività dell'associazione di scopo al fine di preservare queste specie?

Risposta data da Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(21 marzo 2014)

1. La Commissione non è a conoscenza delle attività dell'associazione in questione.

2. La selezione dei beneficiari nell'ambito dei programmi di sviluppo rurale dell'UE (PSR) rientra nella sfera di competenza delle autorità nazionali e, nel caso dell'Italia, delle autorità regionali. La Commissione invita l'Onorevole Parlamentare a mettersi in contatto con l'Autorità di gestione al seguente indirizzo:

Regione Puglia
Assessorato alle risorse agroalimentari
Settore agricoltura
Lungomare Nazario Sauro, 45-47
I — 70121 BARI

3. La Commissione è a conoscenza del rischio estinzione di questi prodotti agricoli. Infatti, nell'ambito della legislazione sullo Sviluppo rurale, il PSR della regione Puglia offre due azioni (214.3 e 214.4) finanziate nell'ambito della misura agroambientale sulla tutela della biodiversità. Alcuni dei prodotti citati sono inseriti nell'elenco delle specie vegetali minacciate di estinzione connesse all'azione 214.3.

4. L'Azione 214.4 del PSR Puglia sui progetti integrati e sul sistema regionale della biodiversità prevede, come potenziali beneficiari, enti pubblici e privati, inclusi i consorzi universitari, che vengono selezionati mediante gare d'appalto pubbliche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001658/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Risk of extinction of a number of Puglian agricultural products

A consortium of universities, national research councils and companies has launched an alert concerning the risk of disappearance of 19 typical Puglian agricultural products, including the carrot (ranging in colour from yellow to purple) grown in Polignano and Tiggiano, the Gallipoli melon, the Morciano tomato and melon, the *mugnoli*, a luxuriant broccoli exensively grown in small family gardens in Lecce and Bari , the Lecce '*batata*' [sweet potato], the small Manduria tomato and Acquaviva red onion.

Although discarded for commercial and logistical reasons, these products continue to be obdurately cultivated by small groups of Puglian farmers known as 'custodians'. The consortium has set up a dedicated project to reduce the current rate of biodiversity erosion affecting Puglian vegetable species in order to rescue the authentic green gems which bring richness to the range of typical products from genetic extinction.

In the light of this situation, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of the activities of the consortium in question?

2. Has the consortium in question applied for European funding?

3. Is the Commission aware of the risk of extinction of these agricultural products?

4. Does the Commission consider it possible to finance the consortium's activities in order to preserve these species?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2014)

1. The Commission is not aware of the activities of the consortium in question.

2. The selection of beneficiaries under EU Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) is the responsibility of national authorities and, in the case of Italy, of regional authorities. The Commission invites the Honourable Member to contact the Managing Authority at the following address:

Regione Puglia
Assessorato alle risorse agroalimentari
Settore agricoltura
Lungomare Nazario Sauro, 45-47
I — 70121 BARI

3. The Commission is aware of the risk of extinction of these agricultural products. In fact, in the framework of legislation on Rural Development, the RDP of Region Puglia provides two actions (214.3 and 214.4) supported under agri-environment measure on biodiversity protection. Some of the products mentioned are included in the list of endangered vegetation species related to action 214.3.

4. Action 214.4 of RDP Puglia on Integrated projects and Regional System of Biodiversity foresees as potential beneficiaries private and public entities, included consortia of university, which are selected through public calls.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001660/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Spesa sanitaria in Italia e in Europa

Per il 2014 è stata pianificata una riduzione del finanziamento del sistema sanitario nazionale italiano pari a 1 miliardo di EUR, equivalente a una riduzione dei posti letto ospedalieri fino a 3,7 posti letto ogni mille abitanti.

La mobilità ospedaliera interregionale è abbastanza consistente, con circa 588 000 ricoveri ospedalieri di pazienti non residenti (8,4 % dei ricoveri ordinari per acuti nel 2011) e 523 000 ricoveri di pazienti provenienti da una regione diversa da quella di residenza.

La spesa sanitaria delle famiglie rappresenta l'1,8 % del PIL nazionale e ammonta mediamente a 949 EUR per le famiglie del Mezzogiorno e a 1 222 EUR per quelle del Centro-Nord.

Le patologie per cui è più frequente il ricovero ospedaliero sono i tumori e le malattie del sistema circolatorio, che sono anche le patologie per le quali è più elevata la mortalità. I ricoveri in regime ordinario per queste diagnosi sono però diminuiti nel tempo, in particolare quelli per le malattie del sistema circolatorio (−21,5 % tra il 1999 e il 2011) e per i tumori (−16,3 %).

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione fornire dati analoghi a quelli presentati per gli altri Stati membri dell'UE?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

I dati di Eurostat sulla disponibilità di posti letto in ospedali degli Stati membri dell'UE sono riportati nell'allegato 1. In Italia si è registrato un calo della disponibilità di posti letto per 100 000 abitanti che è passata da 384,5 nel 2007 a 342,4 nel 2011. Una simile riduzione è osservata anche nella maggior parte degli Stati membri.

Le variazioni nelle percentuali delle dimissioni ospedaliere per neoplasie e malattie del sistema circolatorio nel periodo 2001-2011 sono presentate nell'allegato 2. Le tendenze sono diseguali tra gli Stati membri. Entrambe le tabelle comprendono riferimenti ai dati disponibili a livello regionale.

La relazione congiunta della Commissione europea e dell'OCSE «Health at a Glance 2012 ([1])» fornisce dati sulla spesa sanitaria a livello unionale pro capite e in percentuale del PIL. Tale relazione indica che nel 2010 la spesa totale per la sanità in Italia in percentuale del PIL era del 9,3 %, con una quota del 7,4 % di spesa pubblica e dell'1,9 % di spesa privata. Questi valori sono vicini alla media UE per quanto concerne la spesa sanitaria, che è del 9,0 % in totale con una ripartizione del 6,5 % di spesa pubblica e di 2,4 % di spesa privata. Non si dispone di dati sulla spesa sanitaria a livello regionale.

La Commissione europea non raccoglie dati sulla mobilità ospedaliera interregionale.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/reports/european/health_glance_2012_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001660/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Health expenditure in Italy and Europe

A EUR 1 billion cut in funding has been scheduled for the Italian national health system in 2014, the equivalent of a reduction in hospital bed availability to 3.7 beds per thousand inhabitants.

Inter-regional hospital mobility is quite substantial, with around 588 000 admissions of non-resident patients (8.4% of acute hospital admissions in 2011) and 523 000 admissions of patients coming from a region other than their region of residence.

Families' health expenditure accounts for 1.8% of GDP, amounting to an average of EUR 949 for families in southern Italy and EUR 1 222 for those in the centre and north.

The pathologies for which hospital admission is most common are tumours and diseases of the circulatory system, which are also those with the highest mortality rates. Ordinary admissions of patients with these diagnoses have, however, fallen over time, especially as regards diseases of the circulatory system (−21.5% between 1999 and 2011) and tumours (−16.3%).

In the circumstances, can the Commission supply similar data to the above for the other EU Member States?

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

Eurostat data on available beds in hospitals in the EU Member States is provided in Annex 1. In Italy, there was a decrease in the availability of beds per 100 000 inhabitants from 384.5 in 2007 to 342.4 in 2011. This reduction is also observed in a majority of Member States.

Changes in the percentage of hospital discharges for neoplasms and diseases of the circulatory system during the period 2001-2011 are presented in Annex 2. Trends are uneven among Member States. Both tables include references to available data at regional level.

The Joint European Commission and OECD Health at a Glance Europe Report 2012 ([1]) provides data on health expenditure at EU level per capita and as percentage of GDP. This report shows that in 2010 the total health expenditure in Italy as a share of GDP was 9.3%, with a split of 7.4% for public expenditure and 1.9% for private. These values are close to the EU average for health expenditure, which are 9.0% in total with 6.5% for public and 2.4% for private expenditure. Data on health expenditure is not available at regional level.

The European Commission does not collect data on interregional hospital mobility.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/reports/european/health_glance_2012_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001663/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Genetica fatta in casa

Si stanno sempre più diffondendo laboratori «domestici», dove biologi fai-da-te utilizzano attrezzi di fortuna per moltiplicare e manipolare il DNA, anche umano. Alcuni Stati membri ospitano anche laboratori «pubblici», aperti a chiunque voglia e sia in grado di utilizzare questi strumenti, come avviene a Parigi o Copenaghen. Metodo di finanziamento, invece dei fondi pubblici, è il crowdfunding su internet che porta anche a una diminuzione dei costi. Alcuni siti per la raccolta di denaro però hanno vietato donazioni a progetti di ingegneria genetica che «restituissero» gadgets «genetici» ai donatori. Nonostante i rischi etici e naturali che tale diffusione della conoscenza comporta, ci sono anche lati positivi: alcuni ricercatori «fai-da-te» hanno costruito macchinari per testare la malaria, termoriciclatori o microscopi, a costo molto inferiore (oltre il 90 % in meno in alcuni casi) dei macchinari da laboratorio.

La Commissione:

1. Come valuta l'utilizzo del crowdfunding per l'ingegneria genetica e, in caso risposta positiva, ritiene di poterlo utilizzare anche per le ricerche che finanzia?

2. Non ritiene al tempo stesso molto pericoloso il diffondersi dell'ingegneria «fai-da-te» se questa non viene affiancata da una legislazione chiara che si fondi su un dibattito aperto sui principi bioetici?

3. Monitora la diffusione negli Stati membri dei laboratori aperti al pubblico?

4. Può chiarire quali regolamentazioni europee si applicano in tema di biogenetica?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

1. La Commissione, consapevole della rapida affermazione del crowdfunding (finanziamento collettivo) in Europa, ha avviato una consultazione pubblica ([1]) intesa a valutare le potenzialità e i rischi di questa fonte di finanziamento alternativa, come pure i quadri giuridici nazionali ad essa applicabili. L'obiettivo è valutare il valore aggiunto di una politica a livello europeo.

2. La Commissione è consapevole dell'esistenza del movimento per la biologia «fai da te» e si impegna a coinvolgere tutte le parti interessate nello sviluppo di una cultura della ricerca e dell'innovazione responsabili, istituendo per le tecnologie emergenti (come la biologia sintetica e le nanotecnologie) quadri normativi solidi che affrontino anche le questioni relative alla governance e all'etica ([2]). A questo proposito la Commissione rimanda altresì l'onorevole deputato all'interrogazione scritta E-004346/2011 ([3]). Il fermo impegno della Commissione a favore dell'etica nella ricerca si riflette nell'obbligo esplicito di rispettare i principi etici fondamentali e la corrispondente normativa nazionale, unionale e internazionale pertinente per tutte le attività di ricerca e innovazione nel quadro di Orizzonte 2020.

3. L'attività cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato non rientra nell'ambito di competenza della Commissione.

4. L'ingegneria genetica è contemplata nel quadro normativo dell'UE in materia di biotecnologia che comprende un'ampia gamma di atti normativi ([4]). Per quanto riguarda i test genetici, le norme per l'immissione in commercio sono stabilite dalla direttiva 98/79/CE ([5]) relativa ai dispositivi medico-diagnostici in vitro.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finances/crowdfunding/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.topic&id=1252&lang=1
Per un esempio concreto in questo contesto, che comprende anche il movimento «fai da te», cfr. http://www.synenergene.eu/.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) Elenchiamo di seguito alcuni esempi: direttiva 2009/41/CE sull'impiego confinato di microrganismi geneticamente modificati (OGM); direttiva 2001/18/CE sull'emissione deliberata nell'ambiente di organismi geneticamente modificati; regolamento (CE) n. 1829/2003 relativo agli alimenti e ai mangimi geneticamente modificati; regolamento (CE) n. 1830/2003 concernente la tracciabilità e l'etichettatura; direttiva 2001/83/CE e regolamento (CE) n. 726/2004 sulle procedure per l'autorizzazione dei medicinali per uso umano e veterinario.
([5]) GU L 331 del 7.12.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001663/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: DIY genetics

We are seeing a constant increase in the number of 'home' laboratories, in which DIY biologists are using makeshift instruments to multiply and manipulate DNA, including human DNA. In some Member States, there are also 'public' laboratories that are open to anyone with the wish and ability to use these instruments. Such laboratories exist in, for example, Paris and Copenhagen. Funding is raised not from public funds but by crowdfunding on the Internet, which also keeps down costs. However, some crowdfunding sites have banned donations to genetic engineering projects which would 'repay' donors by providing them with 'genetic' gadgets. Despite the ethical and natural risks involved in this spread of knowledge, there are also positive aspects: some 'DIY' researchers have developed equipment to test for malaria, heat recovery systems and microscopes that are much cheaper (by more than 90% in some cases) than standard laboratory equipment.

1. What is the Commission's opinion of the use of crowdfunding for genetic engineering and, if positive, does it think it could also be used for research funded by the Commission?

2. Does it not also think that the spread of 'DIY' engineering is very dangerous, unless it is accompanied by clear legislation based on an open debate of bioethical principles?

3. Is it monitoring the spread of laboratories that are open to the public in the Member States?

4. Can it clarify which European regulations are applicable to genetic engineering?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

1. The Commission is aware that crowdfunding is spreading rapidly in Europe. The Commission has launched a public consultation ([1]) to explore the potential and risks of crowdfunding, as well as the national legal frameworks applicable to this alternative source of financing. The aim is to assess whether a policy at European level would have added value.

2. The Commission is aware of the existence of the Do-It-Yourself Biology movement. The Commission is committed to building a culture of Responsible Research and Innovation engaging all stakeholders, and to establishing robust regulatory frameworks for emerging technologies (e.g. synthetic biology and nanotechnologies) that also address governance and ethical issues. ([2]) On this matter, the Commission would also like to refer the Honourable Member to Written Question E-004346/2011. ([3]) The Commission's strong commitment to ethics in research is reflected in the explicit requirement that all research and innovation activities under Horizon 2020 must comply with fundamental ethical principles and the related relevant national, Union and international legislation.

3. The activity referred to by the Honourable Member falls outside the Commission's area of competence.

4. Genetic engineering is addressed within the EU regulatory framework for biotechnology, which includes a vast array of legislation. ([4]) With regard to genetic tests, the rules for putting them on the market are set out in Directive 98/79/EC ([5]) on *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finances/crowdfunding/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.topic&id=1252&lang=1
For a concrete example in this context, also engaging with the DIY movement, see http://www.synenergene.eu/
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) Examples are: Directive 2009/41/EC for the contained use of genetically Modified Micro-Organisms (GMMs); Directive 2001/18/EC on the Deliberate Release into the Environment of Genetically Modified Organisms; Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed; Regulation (EC) No 1830/2003 on labelling and traceability; Directive 2001/83/EC and Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 for the authorisation of medicinal products for human and veterinary use.
([5]) OJ L 331, 7.12.1998.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001671/14
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(14 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Ukrywanie nielegalych dochodów w Niemczech

Ukrywanie nielegalnych dochodów staje się w Niemczech sportem narodowym. Niemcy wpadli na genialny pomysł i kupują raz po raz skradzione ze szwajcarskich banków dane dotyczące ich zagranicznych klientów. Proceder trwa od lat i przynosi fiskusowi grube miliony. Dane takie kupuje od byłych pracowników szwajcarskich banków niemiecki wywiad zagraniczny, jak i poszczególne landy. Ostatnio Nadrenia Północna-Westfalia za 3,5 mln euro.

Za każdym razem, gdy wiadomość taka przedostaje się do prasy, urzędy skarbowe mają pełne ręce roboty, bo wielu winnych zgłasza swe przewinienia dobrowolnie. W samej Nadrenii było ich 4257. W Badenii-Wirtembergii ponad 6 tys., co wzbogaciło budżet landu o 3,5 mld euro. Obecnie w przypadkach dobrowolnego zgłoszenia oszustwa podatkowego karą jest spłata zaległych podatków plus 6 procent odsetek. Porozumienie ze Szwajcarią byłoby dla oszustów podatkowych mniej korzystne niż obecne regulacje. Ale gwarantowało anonimowość, bo to bank dokonać miał stosownych rozliczeń.

W związku z powyższym pragnę zapytać:

1. Dlaczego Komisja pozwala na taki proceder i nie podejmuje stosownych działań w celu zaprzestania oszustw podatkowych?

2. Czy Komisja rozważyła opcję zmiany tej sytuacji poprzez wprowadzenie stosownych regulacji czyniących ten rodzaj działań nieopłacalnymi?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(24 marca 2014 r.)

Jak już wcześniej wspomniano ([1]), wprowadzenie programów dobrowolnego przekazywania informacji jest w gestii poszczególnych państw członkowskich, pod warunkiem że programy te nie pociągają za sobą naruszenia prawa UE.

Zwalczanie oszustw podatkowych i uchylania się od opodatkowania jest jednym z głównych priorytetów Komisji. W planie działania Komisji mającym na celu zwiększenie skuteczności zwalczania oszustw podatkowych i uchylania się od opodatkowania ([2]) zaproponowano ambitny szereg działań mających na celu zwiększenie przejrzystości przepisów podatkowych i zachęcanie do przestrzegania przepisów prawa podatkowego. Komisja będzie w dalszym ciągu monitorować realizację planu działań, w szczególności poprzez platformę dobrego zarządzania w kwestiach podatkowych ([3]). Jednakże państwa członkowskie mogą wprowadzić lub stosować inne środki niż te proponowane w planie działania, pod warunkiem że są one zgodne z prawem unijnym.

W zakresie współpracy z Konfederacją Szwajcarską, Komisja obecnie renegocjuje umowę UE ze Szwajcarią w sprawie opodatkowania oszczędności, a także umowy z Liechtensteinem, Monako, Andorą i San Marino, w celu dostosowania ich do zmian zachodzących w UE i na świecie. Zmiany te obejmują nową globalną normę w zakresie automatycznej wymiany informacji, której celem jest pomoc w zwalczaniu oszustw podatkowych i uchylania się od opodatkowania.

([1]) Pytanie E-013013/2013.
([2]) COM(2012) 0722 z 6 grudnia 2012 r.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/gen_info/good_governance_matters/platform/index_pl.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001671/14
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Concealment of illegal revenues in Germany

The concealment of illegal revenues is becoming a German national sport. The Germans have come upon the brilliant idea of repeatedly buying data stolen from Swiss banks concerning their foreign customers. The practice has been going on for years and has brought many millions into the treasury's coffers. German foreign intelligence and individual Lands buy up these data from former employees of Swiss banks. North Rhine-Westphalia recently paid EUR 3.5 million for such data.

Every time reports hit the press, the tax authorities are bowled off their feet with work, as many offenders come forward voluntarily to report their transgressions. In Rhineland alone, 4 257 people came forward. In Baden-Württemberg there were over 6 000, bringing EUR 3.5 billion into the Land's coffers. The current penalty in cases where offenders voluntarily report tax fraud is to pay back the tax owed plus six per cent interest. An agreement with Switzerland would be less favourable to tax cheats than the current rules are. But the agreement guaranteed anonymity, as it was the bank that had to make the appropriate settlements.

In this connection:

1. Why is the Commission allowing such practices to take place, and why is it not taking appropriate steps to put an end to tax frauds?

2. Has the Commission considered changing this state of affairs by introducing appropriate regulations to make such practices unprofitable?

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

As previously noted ([1]), the introduction of voluntary disclosure programmes is a matter for individual Member States, provided that the programmes do not entail infringements of EC law.

The fight against tax fraud and tax evasion is one of the key priorities of the Commission. The Commission's Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion ([2]) proposes an ambitious series of actions to enhance transparency of tax rules and encourage tax compliance. The Commission will continue to monitor the implementation of the action plan, in particular through the platform for Tax Good Governance ([3]). However, Member States are free to introduce or apply measures other than those proposed in the action plan, provided that they are compatible with EC law.

As far as cooperation with the Swiss Confederation is concerned, the Commission is currently renegotiating the EU agreement on taxation of savings with Switzerland, and also those with Liechtenstein, Monaco, Andorra and San Marino, with a view to bringing them into line with EU and international developments. These developments include the emerging global standard on automatic exchange of information that is designed to help combat tax fraud and evasion.

([1]) Question E-013013/2013.
([2]) COM(2012) 722 of 6 December 2012.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/gen_info/good_governance_matters/platform/index_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001672/14
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(14 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Ograniczenie zadłużenia w Europie

Według prognoz Międzynarodowego Funduszu Walutowego w najbliższych latach zanotujemy niewielki wzrost gospodarczy. W raporcie dotyczącym wsparcia wzrostu gospodarczego w UE, MFW radzi, by m.in. zmniejszyć poziom zadłużenia, zarówno w sektorze prywatnym, jak i publicznym.

Wśród zagrożeń, wyliczyć można m.in. wieloletnie problemy z długiem, czy bezrobociem w całej Europie. Zdaniem autorów istotnym czynnikiem w walce z tymi negatywnymi zjawiskami jest likwidacja długów publicznych oraz prywatnych. Eksperci podkreślają także, że sama obsługa długów jest relatywnie bardzo wysoka – w porównaniu do dochodów. Jest to średnio ponad 10 procent dla całej Europy. Kraje UE powinny też skupić się na eksporcie, bo to on znacząco wpływa na gospodarkę.

W związku z powyższym pragnę zapytać:

1. Jakie jest stanowisko Komisji w sprawie walki z zadłużeniem jak i bezrobociem panującym w całej Europie?

2. W jaki sposób Komisja planuje zmniejszyć poziom zadłużenia zarówno w sektorze prywatny jak i publicznym?

3. W jaki sposób Komisja pragnie się przyczynić do zwiększenia eksportu towarów?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Olliego Rehna w imieniu Komisji
(28 marca 2014 r.)

W najnowszej prognozie gospodarczej ([1]) Komisja uznała, że wysokie zadłużenie publiczne i prywatne w dalszym ciągu ma negatywny wpływ na trwające ożywienie gospodarcze. W odniesieniu do rynków pracy, na których w 2013 r. pojawiły się oznaki stabilizacji, w latach 2014-2015 oczekuje się jedynie stopniowej poprawy. W związku z powyższym, co potwierdzono w ostatniej rocznej analizie wzrostu gospodarczego ([2]) rozpoczynającej czwarty europejski semestr na rzecz koordynacji polityki gospodarczej, nacisk należy położyć na zróżnicowaną, sprzyjającą wzrostowi gospodarczemu konsolidację budżetową, przywrócenie kredytowania gospodarki oraz wdrożenie reform strukturalnych zwiększających konkurencyjność i wzrost gospodarczy.

W tym kontekście kilka przedstawionych przez Komisję i przyjętych przez Radę ([3]) zaleceń dla poszczególnych krajów ma na celu wspieranie ciągłego zmniejszania zadłużenia prywatnego i zapobieganie narastaniu zaburzeń równowagi w przyszłości. W zaleceniach z 2013 r. kładzie się nacisk między innymi na obniżenie zachęt podatkowych do zaciągania długów (Hiszpania, Niderlandy, Szwecja, Francja), wzmocnienie ram dotyczących niewypłacalności (Hiszpania, Słowenia) oraz poprawę ogólnego funkcjonowania rynków nieruchomości (Hiszpania, Niderlandy, Szwecja, Zjednoczone Królestwo).

We wnioskach Komisji zawartych w opublikowanych ostatnio szczegółowych ocenach sytuacji w ramach procedury dotyczącej zakłóceń równowagi makroekonomicznej ([4]) wskazano kilka obszarów polityki, które mogłyby ożywić eksport. Do wzrostu eksportu przyczyniłby się dalszy wzrost konkurencyjności i dostosowania w najbardziej narażonych na zagrożenia gospodarkach, a także wzrost popytu krajowego i zwiększenie tempa wzrostu potencjalnego w większych i mniej zadłużonych państwach członkowskich. Polityka mająca na celu ograniczenie rozdrobnienia systemu finansowego i ułatwienie dostępu dobrze rokujących projektów inwestycyjnych do finansowania również przyczyniłyby się do przesunięcia środków na rzecz sektorów eksportowych ([5]).

([1]) „European Economic Forecast – Winter 2014," European Economy (2014) 2.
([2]) Komunikat Komisji „Roczna analiza wzrostu gospodarczego na 2014 r.", COM(2013) 800 final, 13.11.2013.
([3]) Dz.U. C 217 z 30.7.2013, s. 1.
([4]) Zob. „Wyniki szczegółowych ocen sytuacji przeprowadzonych zgodnie z rozporządzeniem (UE) nr 1176/2011 w sprawie zapobiegania zakłóceniom równowagi makroekonomicznej i ich korygowania", COM(2014) 150 final, 5.3.2014, oraz „Macroeconomic Imbalances-2014", European Economy-Occasional Papers, 172-188.
([5]) Zob. również „Product Market Review 2013 – Financing the real economy", European Economy (2013) 8 oraz „Financial Fragmentation and SMEs' Financing Conditions", ramka I.2, European Economy, 2013 (7).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001672/14
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Limiting indebtedness in Europe

The International Monetary Fund is predicting that the EU will experience weak economic growth over the next few years. In its report on supporting economic growth in the EU, the IMF recommends measures such as reducing levels of indebtedness in both the public and private sectors.

The threats that we are facing include long-standing debt problems and unemployment throughout Europe. In the opinion of the authors, a crucial element in the fight against these harmful phenomena would be the liquidation of public and private debts. Experts also stress that the cost of servicing debts is relatively high in comparison to revenues. On average, this cost is over 10% for Europe as a whole. Furthermore, EU Member States should focus on exports, as this sector has a major influence on the economy.

In this connection:

1. What is the Commission's opinion on the fight against the indebtedness and unemployment that prevail throughout Europe?

2. How does the Commission plan on reducing the level of indebtedness in both the public and private sectors?

3. How does the Commission intend to help bring about an increase in the export of goods?

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

In its latest economic forecast ([1]), the Commission acknowledges that high public and private debt continues to weigh on the on-going recovery. As regards the labour markets, which showed signs of stabilisation in 2013, only gradual improvements are expected in 2014-15. Therefore, and as confirmed in the latest Annual Growth Survey ([2]) launching the fourth European Semester of economic policy coordination, emphasis needs to be put on differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation, restoring lending to the economy, and structural reforms improving competitiveness and growth.

Against this background, several country-specific recommendations (CSRs), put forward by the Commission and adopted by the Council, ([3]) aim at assisting the on-going adjustment of private indebtedness and to prevent future build-up of imbalances. The 2013 CSRs focus, *inter alia*, on reducing tax incentives for debt-taking (Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden, France), enhancing insolvency frameworks (Spain, Slovenia), and improving the broader functioning of housing markets (Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden, UK).

The Commission's findings in the recently published in-depth reviews within the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure ([4]) point to several policy areas that could improve exports. Most prominently, exports would benefit from further competitiveness gains and adjustment among vulnerable economies, assisted by an increase in domestic demand and potential growth among the larger and less indebted MS. Policies aiming at reducing financial fragmentation and improving access to finance for viable investment projects would also help the reallocation of resources into exporting sectors. ([5])

([1]) 'European Economic Forecast — Winter 2014,' European Economy (2014) 2.
([2]) 'Communication from the Commission — Annual Growth Survey 2014', COM(2013) 800 final, 13.11.2013.
([3]) OJ C217, 30.7.2013, p. 1.
([4]) See 'Results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances', COM(2014) 150 final, 5.3.2014, and 'Macroeconomic Imbalances-2014,' European Economy-Occasional Papers, 172-188.
([5]) See also 'Product Market Review 2013 — Financing the real economy,' European Economy (2013) 8 and 'Financial Fragmentation and SMEs' Financing Conditions,' box I.2, European Economy, 2013 (7).

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení P-001675/14
Komisi
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(14. února 2014)

Předmět: Evropský rok 2014

Evropský parlament, ve svém usnesení ze dne 19. ledna 2012 o zastavení plýtvání potravinami: strategie pro zlepšení účinnosti potravinového řetězce v EU (2011/2175 INI, viz níže) vyzval Radu a Komisi, aby vyhlásily rok 2014 Evropským rokem boje proti plýtvání potravinami jako klíčovou iniciativu pro informování a zvyšování povědomí evropských občanů a aby upoutaly pozornost vlád členských států k této důležité otázce s cílem vyčlenit dostatečné prostředky na problémy, které se budou v této oblasti v nejbližší době řešit. Rok 2014 však Evropským rokem boje proti plýtvání potravinami vyhlášen nebyl.

1. Může Evropská komise potvrdit, že Evropský rok občanů 2013 byl výjimečně prodloužen do roku 2014?

2. Na základě jakých argumentů bylo rozhodnuto o zvoleném tématu?

3. Které skutečnosti rozhodly o nevyhlášení roku 2014 Evropským rokem boje proti plýtvání potravinami?

4. Vyhlásí Evropská komise v budoucnu Evropský rok boje proti plýtvání potravinami?

(Usnesení ze dne 19. ledna 2012 o zastavení plýtvání potravinami: strategie pro zlepšení účinnosti potravinového řetězce v EU ([1]))

Odpověď pana Barrosa jménem Komise
(14. března 2014)

Jak již bylo uvedeno v odpovědi na otázky P-012282/2013 a E-013588/2013, Komise obdržela na Evropský rok 2014 řadu konkurenčních návrhů. Vzhledem ke specifickému charakteru roku 2014 jakožto roku voleb do Evropského parlamentu a roku institucionálních změn však Komise považuje za vhodnější, aby i v letošním roce pokračovaly akce spojené s Evropským rokem občanů 2013.

Komise včas zváží budoucí návrhy pro Evropské roky.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0014+0+DOC+XML+V0//CS

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001675/14
to the Commission
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: European Year 2014

The European Parliament, in its Resolution of 19 January 2012 entitled 'How to avoid food wastage: strategies for a more efficient food chain in the EU' (2011/2175 INI, see below), called on the Council and the Commission to declare 2014 the European Year against Food Waste as a key information and awareness-raising initiative for European citizens and to focus national governments' attention on this important topic, with a view to allocating sufficient funds to tackle the challenges of the near future. However, 2014 was not designated the European Year against Food Waste.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether the 2013 European Year of Citizens has been exceptionally extended to 2014?

2. What arguments were used as the basis for the decision on the choice of issue?

3. What facts informed the decision not to declare 2014 the European Year against Food Waste?

4. Will the Commission declare a European Year against Food Waste in the future?

(European Parliament resolution of 19 January 2012 on how to avoid food wastage: strategies for a more efficient food chain in the EU ([1]))

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2014)

As already replied to questions P-012282/2013 and E-013588/2013, the Commission has received a number of competing proposals for the European year 2014. However, considering the specific nature of 2014 as a year of elections of the European Parliament and of institutional transition, the Commission has considered that it is more appropriate to continue actions related with the 2013 European Year of Citizens into 2014.

The Commission will consider future proposals for European years in due time.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0014+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001676/14
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Scotland's EU membership

In light of Scotland's upcoming independence referendum, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. on average, how long did accession negotiations take to complete for countries which joined the EU from 1995 onwards?

2. could a territory which is negotiating secession from a Member State begin negotiations for EU membership before a final agreement on the terms and conditions of the secession is reached between the two separating countries?

3. can the Commission confirm that the 12 newest Member States have joined, or are required to join, the Schengen area? Could the Commission provide the text which sets out the legal requirements which oblige Member States to join the Schengen area and the Eurozone?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

For the reasons set out in the replies referred to below in response to question 2, the Commission can only reply to questions 1 and 3 in general terms.

1. For the 13 successful accessions since 1995 the time span from the submission of the individual membership applications until the accession dates was less than 8 years in the shortest case (Slovenia) and nearly 14 years in the longest cases (Malta and Cyprus).

2. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its replies to parliamentary questions E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012, and P-009862/2012 ([1]).

3. Countries joining the European Union are bound by the Treaties on which the EU is founded, which *inter alia* foresee, since the Maastricht Treaty entered into force in 1993, the introduction of the euro, once the conditions have been fulfilled, and since the Treaty of Amsterdam, the integration of the Schengen *acquis* into the framework of the EU.

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001680/14
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Problemy z uzyskaniem zwrotu kosztów w ramach leczenia transgranicznego

W październiku ubiegłego roku informowałem Komisję o poważnych problemach dotyczących implementacji dyrektywy w sprawie leczenia transgranicznego do polskiego prawa. Jest to skandaliczne zaniedbanie polskiego rządu. W odpowiedzi Komisja poinformowała, że będzie podejmować działania wobec państw niewypełniających obowiązków wynikających z tejże dyrektywy.

Chociaż wzmiankowana dyrektywa weszła w życie 25 października 2013 r., polscy obywatele starający się o zwrot kosztów leczenia znaleźli się w „próżni prawnej". Złożone wnioski spotykają się z odmową NFZ. Tymczasem w opinii ekspertów rację mają wnioskujący z uwagi na możliwość powołania się na zapisy dyrektywy, mimo iż nie została ona implementowana w danym kraju.

Zwracam się zatem do Komisji z prośbą o następujące informacje:

1. Czy przeprowadzona została już kontrola transpozycji ww. dyrektywy w Polsce?

2. Kiedy i jakie czynności zostaną podjęte celem zagwarantowania polskim i europejskim obywatelom pełni praw z niej wynikających?

3. Czy ubiegający się o zwrot kosztów leczenia mogą liczyć na pomoc ze strony instytucji europejskich?

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

W przypadku państw członkowskich, które jeszcze nie powiadomiły Komisji o środkach krajowych w pełni transponujących dyrektywę 2011/24/UE ([1]), Komisja wszczęła procedury określone w Traktacie o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej w odniesieniu do braku transpozycji prawodawstwa UE.

W odniesieniu do tych środków transpozycji, które otrzymano, Komisja przeprowadza obecnie szczegółową ocenę pozwalającą stwierdzić, czy środki te w pełni i prawidłowo transponują środki zawarte w dyrektywie. W przypadku gdy Komisja stwierdzi, że zgłoszone środki krajowe nie transponują prawidłowo dyrektywy, Komisja będzie zmuszona odwołać się do procedur określonych w Traktacie o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej w odniesieniu do braku transpozycji prawodawstwa UE. W ten sposób Komisja będzie wspierać tych obywateli, którzy chcą korzystać z prawa do transgranicznej opieki zdrowotnej.

Czynności te stanowią pełen zakres działań, którymi dysponuje Komisja Europejska w przypadku braku transpozycji dyrektywy. Nawet jeżeli stwierdzono brak transpozycji dyrektywy, prawo do zwrotu kosztów transgranicznej opieki zdrowotnej, o ile stanowi ona część koszyka, do którego obywatele są uprawnieni, wynika bezpośrednio z traktatów, a zatem jest stosowane niezależnie od wszelkich środków transpozycji.

([1]) Dz.U. L 88 z 4.4.2011, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001680/14
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Difficulties in obtaining reimbursement of cross-border healthcare costs

In October 2013 I drew the Commission's attention to major problems with the transposition of the directive on cross-border healthcare into Polish law. The Polish Government has been scandalously neglectful in this matter. In its answer to my question, the Commission said that it would be taking appropriate action against any Member States that fail to meet their obligations under the directive.

Although the directive came into force on 25 October 2013, Poles putting in claims for the reimbursement of medical expenses have found themselves in a legal vacuum, with their claims being rejected by the National Health Fund (NFZ). According to expert opinion, however, the claimants are in the right, as they may rely on the directive even if it has not yet been implemented in their Member State.

1. Have checks already been run on the directive's transposition in Poland?

2. What steps will be taken to ensure that people in Poland and elsewhere in the EU may fully enjoy the rights stemming from that directive, and when will they be taken?

3. Can people claiming reimbursement of medical expenses rely on the support of the European institutions?

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

For Member States who have not yet notified the Commission of national measures completely transposing Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]), the Commission has launched the procedures laid down in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union with regard to failure to transpose EU legislation.

With regard to those transposition measures which have been received, the Commission is currently carrying out a detailed assessment of whether these measures fully and adequately transpose the measures contained within the directive. Where the Commission believes that the notified national measures do not adequately transpose the directive, the Commission will, have recourse to the procedures laid down in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union with regard to failure to transpose EU legislation. In doing this the Commission will be supporting those citizens wishing to make use of their rights to cross-border healthcare.

These steps represent the full range of actions available to the European Commission where there is a failure to transpose a directive. Even where there has been a failure to transpose the directive, the rights to reimbursement for cross-border care, as long as the healthcare is part of the basket to which citizens are entitled, derive directly from the Treaties, and are therefore applicable independently of any transposition measures.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001681/14
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Przepisy dotyczące kontroli diagnostycznej pojazdów mechanicznych

Od 1 stycznia br. obowiązują w Polsce przepisy nakazujące przeprowadzającym okresowe badanie techniczne pojazdów rejestrowanie stanu licznika. Prawo to opracowano celem ukrócenia procederu tzw. przekręcania liczników samochodowych i związanych z tym oszustw. Niestety owe przepisy w gestii diagnosty pozostawiają ocenę, czy wykrytą usterkę należy uznać za „drobną" (co umożliwia dopuszczenie pojazdu do ruchu), bądź „istotną" (podlegającą konieczności jej wyeliminowania). W opinii ekspertów oraz branżowych mediów tak sformułowane regulacje stanowią czynnik korupcjogenny. W odpowiedzi Ministerstwo Infrastruktury i Rozwoju powołuje się na prawo wspólnotowe, dopuszczające uznaniowość tego elementu badania pojazdu.

Kierując się interesem społecznym wyrażonym koniecznością eliminowania zjawiska korupcji w przestrzeni publicznej, zwracam się do Komisji z pytaniem: czy prawdą jest, że unijne przepisy umożliwiają ww. praktykę w zakresie kontroli pojazdów? Ponadto, czy w toku prowadzonych prac legislacyjnych dotyczących nowego rozporządzenia w przedmiotowej sprawie poruszane wyżej kwestie zostaną doprecyzowane?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(24 marca 2014 r.)

Komisja pragnie poinformować Szanownego Pana Posła, że przepisy w zakresie rejestracji przebiegu na świadectwie przydatności do ruchu drogowego wynikają ze zmiany technicznej ([1]) z 2010 r. do dyrektywy 2009/40/WE w sprawie badań zdatności do ruchu drogowego ([2]). Oprócz wprowadzenia tych zmian technicznych, Komisja wydała zalecenie Komisji (2010/378/UE) w sprawie oceny usterek w trakcie badań przydatności do ruchu drogowego ([3]), dopuszczające uznaniowość przy ocenianiu usterek w odniesieniu do licznika kilometrów. Państwa członkowskie mogą jednak stosować bardziej rygorystyczne przepisy i uznawać manipulacje stanem licznika kilometrów za karalne wykroczenie.

Komisja jest świadoma ograniczeń wynikających z obecnych przepisów unijnych w tym zakresie i w związku z tym zaproponowała przegląd prawodawstwa w zakresie badania przydatności do ruchu drogowego w ramach pakietu w sprawie przydatności do ruchu drogowego ([4]). W ramach nowych przepisów przyjętych na marcowym posiedzeniu plenarnym PE manipulowanie licznikiem kilometrów stanie się karalnym wykroczeniem; stwierdzone w trakcie badania przydatności do ruchu drogowego będzie ono powodowało niedopuszczenie do ruchu, a informacje z odczytów licznika kilometrów dokonanych podczas wcześniejszych badań przydatności do ruchu drogowego będą udostępniane inspektorom drogą elektroniczną.

([1]) Dyrektywa Komisji 2010/458/UE dostosowująca dyrektywę 2009/40/WE (Dz.U. L 173 z 8.7.2010).
([2]) Dz.U. L 141 z 6.6.2009.
([3]) Dz.U. L 173 z 8.7.2010.
([4]) 2012/0184 (COD), 2012/185 (COD) oraz 2012/186 (COD).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001681/14
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Rules on diagnostic controls of motor vehicles

Since 1 January this year, provisions have been in force in Poland requiring the mileage to be recorded as part of the periodic technical examinations carried out on vehicles. This law was introduced to curb so-called 'clocking' and related fraud. Unfortunately, these rules leave the decision as to whether any defects found should be considered 'minor' (allowing the vehicle to remain on the road) or 'important' (requiring the vehicle to be removed from the road) up to the inspector. Experts and the car industry media believe the rules as written could lead to corruption. In response, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development refers to EC law, which allows discretion to be applied to this aspect of vehicle testing.

In view of the social interest in eliminating corruption in the public sphere, could the Commission please state whether it is true that EU rules allow the above practice in respect of vehicle controls? Will this issue be clarified in the legislative work for a new regulation on the matter?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the provisions to record the mileage on the roadworthiness certificate stems from a 2010 technical amendment ([1]) to Directive 2009/40/EC on roadworthiness tests ([2]). In addition to this technical amendment, the Commission has issued the Commission Recommendation (2010/378/EU) on the assessment of defects during roadworthiness tests ([3]) that allows discretion on the assessment of defects as regards the odometer. However Member States are free to apply stricter rules and to qualify odometer manipulation as an punishable offence.

The Commission is aware of the limits of the current Union legislation in this respect and has therefore proposed a revision of the roadworthiness test legislation as part of the Roadworthiness Package ([4]). With the new legislation voted by the EP plenary in its March session the manipulation of odometers will become a punishable infringement, manipulation of odometers will result in failing the roadworthiness test and information of odometer readings recorded at previous roadworthiness tests will be made available to inspectors electronically.

([1]) Commission Directive 2010/458/EU adapting Directive 2009/40/EC [OJ L 173, 8.7.2010].
([2]) OJ L 141, 6.6.2009.
([3]) OJ L 173, 8.7.2010.
([4]) 2012/0184(COD), 2012/185(COD) and 2012/186(COD).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001683/14
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: W sprawie konsekwencji pomocy publicznej dla PLL LOT

W wyniku udzielenia polskiemu przewoźnikowi lotniczemu PLL LOT pomocy publicznej w wysokości 400 mln PLN spółka zmuszona została do ograniczenia siatki połączeń międzynarodowych. W efekcie już od 31 marca br. skasowane zostaną zagraniczne loty z portów regionalnych, w tym z Krakowa. Z dostępnych w prasie informacji wynika, że jest to następstwem postawionego przez Komisję warunku zgody na udzielnie ww. pomocy dla LOT. Chociaż stanowisko Komisji respektuje konieczność zagwarantowania uczciwej konkurencji w sektorze lotnictwa cywilnego, to jednak jego konsekwencje mogą godzić w interesy konsumentów, w tym przypadku pasażerów LOT.

W oparciu o powyższe proszę o odpowiedź:

1. Czy Komisja przeprowadziła analizę dotyczącą sposobu wypełnienia próżni wynikającej z likwidacji międzynarodowych połączeń w ofercie LOT, przez innych przewoźników? Jeżeli tak, w jakim stopniu oferta ta zostanie podtrzymana?

2. Czy Komisja, formułując warunki, w oparciu o które wydała zgodę na pomoc publiczną dla LOT, kierowała się interesem polskich pasażerów, nierzadko stałych klientów narodowego przewoźnika?

3. Czy i w jakim zakresie istnieje możliwość ponownego uruchomienia przez LOT zlikwidowanych połączeń?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquina Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(1 kwietnia 2014 r.)

W maju 2013 r. Komisja zatwierdziła pomoc na ratowanie LOT-u zgodnie z wytycznymi dotyczącymi ratowania i restrukturyzacji przedsiębiorstw (Dz.U. C 244 z 1.10.2004). Pomoc ta została zatwierdzona tymczasowo, do momentu, kiedy Komisja będzie mogła zająć stanowisko w sprawie planu restrukturyzacji LOT-u, i nie była uzależniona od anulowania jakichkolwiek połączeń międzynarodowych oferowanych przez LOT. W czerwcu 2013 r. Polska zgłosiła, zgodnie z wytycznymi, plan restrukturyzacji LOT-u, który przewidywał anulowanie niektórych połączeń międzynarodowych w ramach proponowanych środków wyrównawczych.

W listopadzie 2013 r. Komisja wszczęła formalne postępowanie wyjaśniające dotyczące zgodności planu restrukturyzacji LOT-u z rynkiem wewnętrznym. Ponieważ dotychczas nie podjęto ostatecznej decyzji w sprawie planu restrukturyzacji LOT-u, Komisja nie jest w stanie wypowiedzieć się na temat zaproponowanych przez Polskę środków wyrównawczych i gotowości innych przewoźników do oferowania połączeń na tych samych trasach. Ponadto Komisja nie może wypowiedzieć się na temat obecnej strategii biznesowej LOT-u lub harmonogramu oferowanych połączeń.

Pomoc na ratowanie i restrukturyzację wywiera zakłócający wpływ na rynek wewnętrzny. W celu minimalizacji tych skutków w wytycznych w sprawie ratowania i restrukturyzacji zawarto wymóg podjęcia środków wyrównawczych. W przeciwnym razie pomoc zostanie uznana za „pozostającą w sprzeczności z interesem wspólnym", a zatem za niezgodną ze wspólnym rynkiem. Komisja określa adekwatność środków wyrównawczych w odniesieniu do konkretnych przypadków.

LOT będzie w stanie ponownie zapewnić połączenia, które proponuje usunąć z harmonogramu, jednak dopiero po zakończeniu okresu restrukturyzacji, tj. po skutecznym wdrożeniu planu restrukturyzacji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001683/14
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Consequences of state aid for Polish airline LOT

Subsequent to the award of PLN 400 million in state aid to the Polish air carrier LOT, the company has been forced to restrict its international operating network. With effect from 31 March 2014, international flights from regional airports, including Kraków, will be removed from the schedule. According to media reports, this is a consequence of conditions imposed by the Commission for authorising the aid. Although the Commission's position takes into account the need to guarantee fair competition in the civil aviation sector, the outcome might harm consumer interests, in this case those of LOT's passengers.

1. Has the Commission undertaken an analysis of how the vacuum resulting from the removal of some of LOT's international connections can be filled by other carriers? If so, to what extent will the schedule be retained?

2. When drawing up the conditions on the basis of which it authorised the state aid for LOT, was the Commission guided by the interests of Polish passengers, who are regular customers of the national carrier?

3. With regard to the connections which will be removed from the schedule, will it be possible for LOT to provide them again?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

In line with the Rescue and Restructuring Guidelines (OJ C 244, 1.10.2004) the Commission authorised rescue aid to LOT in May 2013. This aid was approved temporarily until the Commission could take a position on a restructuring plan for LOT, and it was not subject to the removal of any of LOT's international connections. In June 2013, in line with the Guidelines, Poland notified the restructuring plan for LOT, which provided for removing some international connections as part of the proposed compensatory measures.

The Commission opened the formal investigation procedure concerning the compatibility of LOT's restructuring plan with the internal market in November 2013. Since no final decision on LOT's restructuring plan has been taken to date, the Commission is not able to comment on the compensatory measures proposed by Poland and on the readiness of other carriers to offer the same routes. Furthermore, the Commission cannot comment on LOT's current business strategy or its schedule of connections.

Rescue and restructuring aid has a distortive impact on the internal market. In order to minimise these adverse effects, the Rescue and Restructuring Guidelines require that compensatory measures be taken. Otherwise, the aid will be regarded as 'contrary to the common interest' and therefore incompatible with the internal market. The Commission determines the adequacy of the compensatory measures on a case-by-case basis.

LOT will be able to provide the connections that it proposes to remove from the schedule again, but only after the end of the restructuring period, i.e. after the restructuring plan has been successfully implemented.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001685/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(14 februarie 2014)

Subiect: Raportul privind combaterea corupției în UE

Comisia Europeană a publicat în data de 3 februarie primul Raport anticorupție al UE. Raportul analizează fenomenul corupției la nivel comunitar și detaliat în fiecare stat membru. Rezultatele de la țară la țară variază, iar acțiunile propuse de Comisie pentru a remedia deficiențele diferă în funcție de specificul național. Totuși, se constată o absență a unei evaluări privind fenomenul în cauză în cadrul instituțiilor europene.

Intenționează Comisia ca următorul său raport să conțină și o evaluare asupra prezenței și amplorii fenomenului corupției în rândul instituțiilor europene?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(28 martie 2014)

Comisia a luat în considerare includerea în Raportul UE privind combaterea corupției a unei secțiuni referitoare la evaluarea eforturilor depuse de instituțiile UE în cadrul luptei împotriva corupției. Cu toate acestea, Comisia a decis că în această etapă nu este posibil să se aplice aceeași metodologie instituțiilor UE — inclusiv o analiză a rapoartelor independente și a cercetării academice existente — într-un mod care ar permite o evaluare suficient de temeinic și de obiectivă. Prin urmare, Comisia a decis să revină asupra acestei chestiuni în viitoarele rapoarte ale UE privind combaterea corupției.

În prezent, spre deosebire de cazul statelor membre, nu există evaluări externe independente pe care Comisia le-ar putea utiliza pentru a evalua instituțiile UE, iar cercetările științifice privind măsurile de combatere a corupției din cadrul instituțiilor UE nu sunt numeroase. Acest lucru ar trebui să se schimbe în timp și Comisia analizează posibilele modalități prin care ar putea asigura o astfel de evaluare independentă a instituțiilor UE. Deosebit de importantă în acest sens este sinergia cu Grupul de state împotriva corupției (GRECO), creat în cadrul Consiliului Europei.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001685/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: EU anticorruption report

On 3 February, the Commission published its first EU anticorruption report analysing in detail the problem of corruption in the EU and each of its Member States. The findings of the report vary from country to country, as do the Commission's recommendations, depending on the situation in each case. However, the report fails to address the problem of corruption within the EU institutions.

Will the Commission's next report contain an assessment of the extent of corruption within the EU institutions?

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

The Commission considered including in the EU Anti-Corruption Report a section assessing anti-corruption efforts of the EU's own institutions. However, the Commission decided that it was not possible at this stage to apply the same methodology — including an analysis of existing independent reports and academic research — to the EU institutions in a way which would provide a sufficiently solid and objective assessment. The Commission therefore decided to return to this question in future EU Anti-Corruption Reports.

At present, unlike for the Member States, there are no independent external reviews on which the Commission could draw to evaluate the EU's own institutions, nor is there a substantial body of academic research on anti-corruption measures within the EU institutions. This should change over time and the Commission is considering possible venues for ensuring such an independent review of EU institutions. Synergy with the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) is particularly important.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-001686/14
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(14. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Öffentliche Anhörung zum Transatlantischen Freihandelsabkommen

Auf Druck der Öffentlichkeit hat Handelskommissar Karel De Gucht am 21.1.2014 entschieden, die Verhandlungen zum Transatlantischen Freihandelsabkommen vorerst teilweise auszusetzen. Der Grund: der umstrittene Investitionsschutz, welcher es Unternehmen ermöglichen würde, vor nichtstaatlichen Schiedsgerichten unerwünschte „Handelshemmnisse" wie etwa Verbraucherschutzvorschriften, Lebensmittel- oder Umweltstandards anzufechten. De Gucht sei laut eigener Aussage mittlerweile davon überzeugt, dass eine diesbezügliche „öffentliche Reflexion" in Form einer Anhörung erforderlich sei.

1. Wie wird diese öffentliche Anhörung konkret aussehen? Wird es Volksbefragungen in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten geben?

2. Wie sieht der diesbezügliche Zeitplan aus?

3. Wird das Ergebnis der Anhörung bindend sein? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

4. Warum wurde die Öffentlichkeit nicht von vornherein in die Verhandlungen mit einbezogen? Werden in Zukunft sämtliche Informationen zu den laufenden Verhandlungen öffentlich zugänglich sein und in strittigen Fällen öffentlichen Anhörungen unterzogen? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

5. Warum wurde und wird das Europäische Parlament als einzige direkt gewählte Einrichtung der EU nicht regelmäßig über den konkreten Verhandlungsstand informiert? Wie will die Kommission künftig Transparenz gewährleisten?

-Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(18. März 2014)

Derzeit sind mehr als 1400 bilaterale Investitionsabkommen von EU-Mitgliedstaaten in Kraft, neun davon wurden mit den Vereinigten Staaten geschlossen. Fast alle diese bestehenden Abkommen enthalten Bestimmungen zur Streitbeilegung zwischen Investor und Staat (ISDS). Hierbei handelt es sich um einen Mechanismus, der der Streitbeilegung in Fragen, die Investitionsschutzbestimmungen betreffen, zwischen einzelnen Investoren und Zielländern dient, nicht der Anfechtung von Handelshemmnissen.

Die Kommission leitet im März eine öffentliche Konsultation über einen möglichen Investitionstext ein. Die Konsultation wird drei Monate dauern. Alle Interessenträger in der EU können sich daran beteiligen. Während der Konsultation werden die Verhandlungen fortgesetzt.

Die Kommission wird alle zur Konsultation eingehenden Stellungnahmen berücksichtigen, wenn sie innerhalb des institutionellen Rahmens der gemeinsamen Handelspolitik der EU, unter den auch internationale Investitionen fallen, die Verhandlungsposition der EU festlegt.

Die Interessenträger in der EU werden in vollem Umfang eingebunden. Die Kommission hat vor der Aufnahme der TTIP-Verhandlungen bereits drei öffentliche Konsultationen durchgeführt und eine eingehende Folgenabschätzung für das Abkommen vorgenommen. Nach jeder Verhandlungsrunde wurden Sitzungen mit Interessenträgern abgehalten.

Ferner möchte die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten daran erinnern, dass das Europäische Parlament in die Verhandlungen über die transatlantische Handels- und Investitionspartnerschaft (TTIP) vollumfänglich eingebunden ist und im Einklang mit den einschlägigen Bestimmungen des Rahmenabkommens zwischen der Kommission und dem Parlament alle relevanten Informationen, einschließlich der Verhandlungsunterlagen, erhält. Zudem hat das Parlament einzelne Ad-hoc-Gruppen eingesetzt, um die Verhandlungen zu überwachen, z. B. die Beobachtungsgruppe für die TTIP (die vor und nach jeder Verhandlungsrunde von der Kommission über den aktuellen Stand informiert wird) sowie die Koordinierungsgruppe, die vom Präsidenten des Europäischen Parlaments geleitet wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001686/14
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Public consultation on the transatlantic free-trade agreement

On 21 January 2014, under pressure from the public, Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht decided to suspend negotiations, in part, on the transatlantic free-trade agreement. The reason for the decision is the controversial investment protection arrangement, which would make it possible for businesses to challenge unwanted 'trade barriers', such as consumer protection rules and food and environment standards, before non-state arbitration panels. Mr De Gucht said that he was now convinced of the need for 'public reflection' on this in a consultation.

1. What specific form will this public consultation take? Will there be referendums in the Member States?

2. What is the timetable for this?

3. Will the outcome of the consultation be binding? If not, why not?

4. Why was the public not involved in the negotiations right from the outset? In future, will all information on ongoing negotiations be made public and will there be public consultations on contentious issues? If not, why not?

5. Why has Parliament, the EU's only directly elected body, not been regularly informed about the state of play on the negotiations, and why is that still the case? How does the Commission propose to ensure transparency in future??

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

The EU Member States have more than 1 400 bilateral investment agreements in force, of which nine with the US. Almost all existing agreements include Investor-to-State dispute settlement (ISDS). It is a mechanism to resolve disputes between individual investors and the host States concerning the investment protection provisions, not to challenge trade barriers.

The Commission launches the public consultation on a possible investment text in March. The consultation will last three months. It will be open to all EU stakeholders. During the consultation, the negotiations continue.

The Commission will consider all responses to the consultation and will determine the EU negotiating position within the institutional framework of the EU common commercial policy of which international investment is part.

EU stakeholders are fully involved. The Commission has already held three public consultations before the launch of the TTIP negotiations and has run a detailed impact assessment of this agreement. It has held stakeholders meetings after each negotiating round.

Finally, 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.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001691/14
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(14. februar 2014)

Om: Forskelsbehandling af medarbejdere under 18 år

Den danske Højesteret afsagde i november 2013 en dom (sag 185/2010), ifølge hvilken det var i orden, at den danske butikskæde Irma A/S aflønnede en medarbejder væsentligt lavere end hans kollegaer, der var over 18 år, og efterfølgende afskedigede vedkommende, da og fordi han fyldte 18 år. Til grund for dommen lagde Højesteret blandt andet, at lavere løn til medarbejdere under 18 år og mulighed for at afskedige disse, når de fylder 18 år, er »i overensstemmelse med mangeårig overenskomstpraksis på butiksområdet. Denne praksis og overenskomsten mellem HK og Irma må anses for begrundet i parternes fælles interesse i at fremme integration af unge under 18 år på arbejdsmarkedet«.

Fagforeningen HK, som repræsenterede den afskedigede medarbejder i sagen, argumenterede for, at såvel aflønningen som afskedigelsen af medarbejderen var i strid med bestemmelserne i beskæftigelsesdirektivets (2000/78/EF) artikel 6, stk. 1. Men Højesteret fandt altså, at aflønningen, afskedigelsen og som sådan forskelsbehandlingen af medarbejderen var et legitimt middel til at opnå målet om at fremme integration af unge under 18 år på arbejdsmarkedet. Højesteret slog i den forbindelse fast, at en sådan forskelsbehandling af unge under 18 år kun er i orden i det omfang, »ansættelsen er omfattet af en kollektiv overenskomst, der indeholder særlige regler om aflønning af unge under 18 år.« Det må antages, at Højesteret her henviser til bestemmelserne i forskelsbehandlingslovens § 5 a, stk. 5.

Kan Kommissionen i den forbindelse svare på, om det er i overensstemmelse med bestemmelserne i beskæftigelsesdirektivet, når medarbejdere under 18 år aflønnes væsentligt lavere end deres kollegaer over 18 år, desuagtet at vedkommende medarbejdere udfører samme arbejde som deres ældre kollegaer? Kan Kommissionen i samme forbindelse svare på, om det er i overensstemmelse med bestemmelserne i beskæftigelsesdirektivet, når medarbejdere fyres alene med reference til det faktum, at de er fyldt 18 år. Kan Kommissionen videre oplyse, om beskæftigelsesdirektivet er implementeret korrekt i Danmark?

Svar afgivet på Viviane Reding
(1. april 2014)

I direktiv 2000/78/EF ([1]) om ligebehandling med hensyn til beskæftigelse forbydes forskelsbehandling på grund af alder inden for beskæftigelse. I henhold til direktives artikel 6 kan forskelsbehandling på grund af alder imidlertid være berettiget i visse situationer. Enhver undtagelse skal være objektivt og rimeligt begrundet i et legitimt formål, herunder beskæftigelses-, arbejdsmarkeds- og erhvervsuddannelsespolitiske mål, og midlerne til opfyldelse af målet skal være hensigtsmæssige og nødvendige. Disse forskelle kan bl.a. omfatte tilvejebringelse af særlige vilkår, herunder betingelser vedrørende aflønning af unge.

Bilag III til den seneste fælles gennemførelsesrapport om direktiv 2000/43/EF og 2000/78/EF ([2]) giver et overblik over bestemmelserne om aldersdiskrimination med hensyn til beskæftigelse og erhverv i medlemsstaterne. Som angivet i bilag III har flere medlemsstater (herunder Danmark) truffet retlige foranstaltninger for at fremme unges adgang til arbejdsmarkedet ved hjælp af et lavere beskyttelsesniveau, herunder tilladelse til lavere lønninger.

Direktivet og EU-Domstolens retspraksis om fortolkning heraf giver medlemsstaterne vide skønsmæssige beføjelser til at identificere midlerne til at opnå målene for deres beskæftigelsespolitik.

Danmark har gennemført direktivet i national lovgivning, og Kommissionen har sikret sig, at den danske gennemførelse er i overensstemmelse med direktivet. Herefter er det op til de nationale domstole at fortolke den nationale lovgivning i konkrete tilfælde under overholdelse af direktivets bestemmelser.

([1]) Rådets direktiv 2000/78/EF af 27. november 2000 om generelle rammebestemmelser om ligebehandling med hensyn til beskæftigelse og erhverv, EUT L 303, s. 16.
([2]) Fælles beretning om anvendelsen af Rådets direktiv 2000/43/EF af 29. juni 2000 om gennemførelse af princippet om ligebehandling af alle uanset race eller etnisk oprindelse (»direktivet om ligebehandling uanset race«) og til Rådets direktiv 2000/78/EF af 27. november 2000 om generelle rammebestemmelser om ligebehandling med hensyn til beskæftigelse og erhverv (»direktivet om ligebehandling med hensyn til beskæftigelse«), COM(2014) 2 final af 17.1.2014. Bilagene kan findes i Kommissionens ledsagende arbejdsdokument, SWD(2014) 5 final af 17.1.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001691/14
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Under-18 employees treated differently

In November 2013 the Danish Supreme Court handed down a judgment (in Case 185/2010) stating that it was acceptable for the Danish retail chain Irma A/S to have paid an employee much less than the person's over-18 colleagues and to have dismissed the person concerned for the very reason that the employee had reached the age of 18. One of the grounds given by the Supreme Court for the judgment was that it had been in keeping with collective agreement practices in the retail sector over many years to pay under-18 workers less and to have the possibility of dismissing them when they had reached the age of 18. According to the Supreme Court, that practice and the collective agreement between the trade union in the retail sector, HK, and Irma A/S can be regarded as justified in the light of their mutual interest in promoting the integration of young people under 18 into the labour market.

HK, which represented the dismissed employee, argued that both the person's pay and the person's dismissal were contrary to Article 6(1) of the Employment Directive (2000/78/EC). The Supreme Court found, however, that the employee's pay and dismissal and the difference in treatment for the person constituted a legitimate way of realising the objective of promoting the integration of young people under 18 into the labour market. In this connection the Supreme Court established that treating young people under 18 differently was acceptable only in so far as the jobs concerned were covered by a collective labour agreement containing special rules on pay for young people under 18. It can be assumed that the Supreme Court made reference to the provisions of Article 5a(5) of the Danish Act on Discrimination.

In this connection, can the Commission say whether paying employees under 18 much less than their over-18 colleagues doing the same work is compatible with the provisions of the Employment Directive? Can the Commission also say whether dismissing employees solely because they have reached the age of 18 is compatible with the provisions of the Employment Directive? Can the Commission further state whether the Employment Directive is being correctly implemented in Denmark?

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

Directive 2000/78/EC ([1]) on Employment Equality prohibits discrimination on grounds of age in employment. However, Article 6 of the directive provides in certain situations a justification for differences of treatment on grounds of age. Any derogation must be objectively and reasonably justified by a legitimate aim, including employment policy, as well as labour market and vocational training objectives, and the means of achieving the aim must be appropriate and necessary. Such differences may include, among others, setting of special conditions, including remuneration conditions for young people.

Annex III of the recent joint implementation report on Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC ([2]) provides an overview on the provisions on age discrimination in employment and occupation in the Member States. As stated in Annex III, several Member States (including Denmark) have adopted legal measures aimed at facilitating access of younger workers to the labour market through a lower degree of protection, including admissibility of lower wages.

The directive and the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union on its interpretation allow for Member States a wide discretion in identifying the means to achieve the aims of their employment policy.

Denmark has transposed the directive into its national law and the Commission has verified the conformity of Danish transposition with the directive. Following this, it is up to the national courts to interpret the national law in a specific case in the light of the directive.

([1]) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, p. 16.
([2]) Joint Report on the application of Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin ('Racial Equality Directive') and of Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation ('Employment Equality Directive'), COM(2014) 2 final of 17.1.2014. Annexes can be found in the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document, SWD(2014) 5 final of 17.1.2014.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001702/14
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(14. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: EU-Kandidatenstatus für Bosnien und Herzegowina

In einem Interview mit der „Kleinen Zeitung“ vom 9.2.2014 äußerte sich Valentin Inzko, der von 2009 bis 2011 das Amt des EU-Sonderbeauftragten für Bosnien-Herzegowina bekleidete, wie folgt: „Man sollte Bosnien rasch den EU-Kandidatenstatus zuerkennen. Das wäre sehr wichtig, damit das Land den Rechtsbestand der EU übernimmt — etwa im Kampf gegen die Korruption“.

1. Teilt die Kommission die Ansicht des vormaligen EU-Sonderbeauftragten Inzko, der nun das Amt des Hohen Repräsentanten der UNO in Bosnien ausübt, wonach Bosnien Herzegowina „rasch der EU-Kandidatenstatus zuerkannt“ werden soll?

2. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass die Probleme in einem Drittland, die trotz des jahrzehntelangen politischen Engagements der EU und zahlreicher Hilfsaktionen nicht gelöst werden konnten, durch die Zuerkennung des EU-Kandidatenstatus rasch gelöst werden können?

3. Stellt für die Kommission auch eine Aufteilung von Bosnien nach ethnischen Grenzen eine Option dar?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(31. März 2014)

Bevor Bosnien und Herzegowina der Status eines Kandidatenlandes zuerkannt werden kann, muss das Land eine Reihe von Schritten unternehmen. So muss Bosnien und Herzegowina die in den Schlussfolgerungen des Rates festgelegten Bedingungen erfüllen, damit das Stabilisierungs- und Assoziierungsabkommen in Kraft treten und ein etwaiger Antrag des Landes auf EU-Mitgliedschaft von den Mitgliedstaaten der EU als überzeugend angesehen werden kann. Zu diesem Zweck ist es nach wie vor dringend erforderlich, dass das Urteil des Europäischen Gerichtshofs für Menschenrechte in der Rechtssache Sejdić-Finci zur Frage der Diskriminierung umgesetzt wird. Nach Vorlage eines überzeugenden Beitrittsantrags würde der Rat die Kommission mit der Ausarbeitung einer Stellungnahme beauftragen. Auf dieser Grundlage könnte der Europäische Rat Bosnien und Herzegowina dann den Kandidatenstatus zuerkennen, sofern diesbezüglich Einstimmigkeit besteht.

Die Aspekte Versöhnung und Achtung der Minderheitenrechte sind zentrale Elemente des EU-Beitrittsprozesses und von entscheidender Bedeutung für die Annäherung Bosnien und Herzegowina an die EU.

Angesichts des politischen Stillstands in dem Land und seiner wirtschaftlichen Probleme hat die Kommission drei neue Initiativen eingeleitet. Die erste Initiative betrifft die Ausweitung des strukturierten Dialogs über den Justizsektor auf weitere Fragen im Bereich der Rechtsstaatlichkeit, wie die Korruptionsbekämpfung und Reformen im Bereich der Grundrechte. Die zweite Initiative dient der Stärkung der wirtschaftlichen Reformen und eine dritte Initiative zielt auf eine beschleunigte Durchführung von Projekten im Rahmen des Instruments für Heranführungshilfe ab.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001702/14
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: EU candidate status for Bosnia and Herzegovina

In an interview published in *Kleine Zeitung* on 9 February 2014, Valentin Inzko, who was the EU Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2009 to 2011, stated that Bosnia should be granted EU candidate status quickly. That would be most important, he said, so that the country could incorporate the EU *acquis*, for instance in combating corruption.

1. Does the Commission agree with former EU Special Representative Inzko, who is now the UN High Representative in Bosnia, that Bosnia should be granted EU candidate status quickly?

2. Is the Commission of the opinion that a third country's problems which have not been solved despite the EU's political involvement over many years, and despite a host of assistance measures, can be solved quickly by granting EU candidate status?

3. Is ethnic partitioning of Bosnia an option for the Commission?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

Several steps need to be taken by Bosnia and Herzegovina before it can be granted candidate status. Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to meet the requirements, as set out by the Council conclusions, so that the Stabilisation and Association Agreement can enter into force and the country's possible application for EU membership could be considered credible by the EU Member States. For this, it remains essential to address the European Court of Human Rights judgment in the Sejdić-Finci case regarding discrimination. If the country submits a credible membership application, the Council would task the Commission to prepare an Opinion. On this basis, the European Council could eventually grant candidate status unanimously.

Reconciliation and respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities lie at the heart of the EU accession process and are crucial in order for Bosnia and Herzegovina to move closer to the EU.

Considering the political standstill and the economic problems the country has been facing, the Commission has launched three new initiatives. The first initiative consists of expanding the Structured Dialogue on Justice to additional rule of law matters, such as anti-corruption policies and reforms in the field of fundamental rights. The second initiative aims at strengthening economic reforms; the third initiative at accelerating the implementation of projects under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-002043/14
an die Kommission
Herbert Dorfmann (PPE)
(20. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Steuer auf Auslandsüberweisungen nach Italien

Laut Maßnahme 2013/151663 der italienischen Agentur der Einnahmen müssen Banken und Finanzintermediäre in Italien seit dem 1. Februar 2014 bei Überweisungen aus dem Ausland an natürliche Personen einen Steuereinbehalt von 20 % vornehmen. Damit will der Staat garantieren, dass im Ausland erwirtschaftete Kapitalerträge oder diesen gleichstellte Einkommen in Italien versteuert werden.

Der Bürger kann dem Zugriff des Staates entkommen, wenn er mittels Eigenerklärung bescheinigt, dass diese Finanzflüsse keine steuerpflichtigen Einkommen aus ausländischen Kapitalerträgen darstellen.

Glaubt die Kommission, dass die neue Regelung mit dem Einheitlichen Europäischen Zahlungsraum vereinbar ist?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(24. März 2014)

Zunächst möchte die Kommission den Damen und Herren Abgeordneten mitteilen, dass die Dienststellen der Kommission unverzüglich damit begonnen haben ([1]), zu prüfen, ob die Nr. 97/2013 (Legge Europea 2013) zur Änderung von Artikel 4.2 der Gesetzesverordnung Nr. 167/90 über die steuerlichen Erklärungspflichten italienischer Steuerpflichtiger mit Investitionen und Finanzaktivitäten im Ausland mit dem EU-Recht vereinbar ist.

Die Rechtsvorschriften sehen die Anwendung einer Quellensteuer durch gebietsansässige Investmentgesellschaften auf Geldeingänge und Kapitalerträge aus ausländischen finanziellen Vermögenswerten italienischer Steuerpflichtiger vor. Gemäß der Auslegung der italienischen Steuerverwaltung ([2]) müssen Steuerpflichtige, die die Entrichtung der Quellensteuer vermeiden wollen, in einer Eigenerklärung bescheinigen, dass die infrage stehenden Finanzflüsse keine steuerpflichtigen Einkünfte aus ausländischen Investitionen oder Finanzaktivitäten darstellen. Die praktische Umsetzung dieser Bestimmungen muss sorgfältig geprüft werden, um zu ermitteln, ob es dadurch möglicherweise zu einer Behinderung bei der Ausübung der Grundfreiheiten im Binnenmarkt, insbesondere zu einer unangemessenen Einschränkung des freien Kapital- und Zahlungsverkehrs kommt.

Allerdings hat die italienische Steuerverwaltung in der Zwischenzeit auf Ersuchen des italienischen Finanzministeriums am 19. Februar 2014 Verwaltungsanweisungen ([3]) erlassen, mit denen die Anwendung der obengenannten Quellensteuer durch italienische Finanzintermediäre bis zum 1. Juli 2014 aufgeschoben wird ([4]). Zeitgleich zur Aussetzung dieser Maßnahme hat die Steuerverwaltung eine Bestimmung zur Aufhebung der infrage stehenden Quellensteuer vorbereitet, die der neuen Regierung zur Prüfung vorgelegt werden soll.

Die Kommission wird die Entwicklungen in dieser Angelegenheit weiterhin aufmerksam verfolgen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I086504
([2]) „Agenzia delle Entrate": Prot. 2013/1516631 vom 18. Dezember 2013 und Rundschreiben 38/E vom 23. Dezember 2013.
([3]) Prot. 2014/24663 — www.agenziaentrate.it
([4]) http://www.tesoro.it/ufficio-stampa/comunicati/2014/comunicato_0046.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001705/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Ritenuta preventiva sui bonifici in Italia e mercato comune

Con la circolare 2013/151663, avente come oggetto «Modalità di attuazione delle disposizioni relative al monitoraggio fiscale contenute nell'articolo 4 del decreto legge 28 giugno 1990, n. 167, convertito in legge, con modificazioni, dalla legge 4 agosto 1990, n. 227, poi ulteriormente modificata dall'articolo 9, comma 1, lettera c), della legge 6 agosto 2013, n. 97», l'Agenzia delle Entrate italiana impone all'intermediario ricevente (normalmente un istituto di credito italiano) di effettuare una ritenuta preventiva, pari al 20 % dell'importo della transazione, su tutti i bonifici diretti verso l'Italia e provenienti da paesi esteri.

L'onere di autocertificare la natura non finanziaria della transazione, ovvero la provenienza della somma ricevuta da attività non soggette a tassazione alla fonte, al fine di evitare la suddetta ritenuta preventiva, resterebbe in capo al beneficiario del bonifico.

Pur ritenendo prioritaria la lotta all'evasione fiscale e al riciclaggio di denaro, vorremmo sottolineare come provvedimenti di questo genere rischino di danneggiare i singoli cittadini che ormai si muovono, studiano o lavorano in Stati membri diversi da quello di origine, nonché le piccole aziende con attività transfrontaliera, le quali si troverebbero davanti a un nuovo onere burocratico.

Può pertanto la Commissione far sapere se è stata informata dal governo italiano o da altre fonti di tale situazione e se ritiene tale provvedimento compatibile con le norme del mercato interno dell'Unione?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001839/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE) e Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(18 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Ritenuta del 20 % sui bonifici dall'estero in Italia — un ostacolo alla libertà di circolazione dei capitali e una discriminazione nella tutela dei consumatori/contribuenti

Dal 1º febbraio le banche italiane possono applicare una ritenuta del 20 % sui bonifici provenienti dall'estero e destinati a persone fisiche, società semplici ed enti non commerciali, secondo quanto previsto dall'articolo 4 del Decreto legislativo (Dl) n. 197/90 modificato dalla legge 97/2013. Le ritenute saranno automatiche e spetterà al contribuente l'onere di dimostrare che le somme non hanno natura di redditi da capitale o redditi derivanti da attività estere di natura finanziaria. Si cederà il 20 % allo Stato se: si percepisce una rendita da soggetti esteri per la cessione di immobili o la concessione di prestiti, si ricevono compensi per fideiussioni o garanzie prestate a soggetti esteri, si è impiegato capitale all'estero sul quale si percepiscono interessi, si introitano plusvalenze per la vendita di immobili o terreni situati all'estero, si sono cedute quote di partecipazione in società con sede all'estero o si introitano canoni di locazione di immobili e terreni situati all'estero.

Considerando:

— lo spirito dei trattati dell'Unione europea (di cui all'articolo 63 del TFUE — sono vietate tutte le restrizioni sui pagamenti tra Stati membri, e tra Stati membri e paesi terzi) e delle convenzioni siglate dall'Italia per evitare la doppia imposizione nonché

— i principi europei per la lotta all'evasione fiscale che vanno in direzione opposta,

si chiede alla Commissione di verificare la compatibilità delle citate disposizioni con la normativa europea, rispetto sia alla libera circolazione dei capitali sia alla tutela dei consumatori, accertando in particolare che non sussista un'ingiusta discriminazione nei confronti dei cittadini che volessero ritrasferire i propri capitali dall'estero.

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001845/14
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Sergio Berlato (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Susy De Martini (ECR), Iva Zanicchi (PPE), Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Lara Comi (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Mario Borghezio (NI), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Franco Bonanini (NI) e Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE)
(18 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Trattenuta automatica bonifici esteri in Italia

Lo scorso primo febbraio, in Italia è entrato in vigore un provvedimento che prevede il prelievo del 20 % dai bonifici in arrivo dall'estero e indirizzati ai conti correnti italiani. La ritenuta d'acconto è automatica, e spetta poi al contribuente dimostrare che le somme non hanno natura di «compenso reddituale» per chiedere la restituzione dell'imposta.

Si tratta di un meccanismo molto complesso, che prevede che il prelievo vada in ogni caso effettuato indipendentemente da un incaricato alla riscossione, a meno che il contribuente non attesti, mediante un'autocertificazione resa in forma libera, che i flussi non costituiscono redditi di capitale o redditi diversi derivanti da investimenti all'estero o da attività estere di natura finanziaria. Spetterà poi al contribuente richiedere nel caso all'intermediario la restituzione dell'imposta non dovuta o applicata in misura superiore a quanto dovuto.

Bisogna sottolineare che negli ultimi anni è notevolmente aumentata la mobilità all'interno dell'Unione europea, e molte persone, soprattutto giovani, si stabiliscono frequentemente in altri Paesi europei per fini lavorativi, e qui aprono conti correnti con banche locali, pur continuando a mantenere rapporti di natura finanziaria di vario genere con il proprio paese, non certo per fini di evasione o riciclaggio, ma per semplice necessità.

Alla luce di tutto questo, la Commissione europea non ritiene che la misura presa dall'Italia sia contraria alla libera circolazione dei capitali come stabilito dall'articolo 63 del TFUE?

Se la Commissione ammette questa misura, non la ritiene tuttavia sproporzionata, in quanto il sistema di pagamento tramite bonifico è già facilmente monitorabile ai fini di lotta a evasione e riciclaggio?

Non ritiene infine che un simile provvedimento, che peraltro viaggia in direzione opposta agli auspici di un'area unica di pagamenti in euro (SEPA), possa diminuire paradossalmente il ricorso a strumenti di pagamento tracciabili per favorire un ritorno alla circolazione del contante, con tutte le problematiche del caso?

Risposta congiunta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(24 marzo 2014)

Innanzitutto la Commissione desidera informare l'onorevole parlamentare che i suoi servizi hanno immediatamente ([1]) avviato l'esame di compatibilità con il diritto dell'UE dell'interpretazione data dalle autorità fiscali italiane all'articolo 9 della legge italiana n. 97/2013 (Legge europea 2013) che modifica l'articolo 4, comma 2, del decreto legge 167/90 in materia di obblighi di dichiarazione fiscale per i contribuenti italiani titolari di investimenti e di attività finanziarie all'estero.

La normativa prevede una ritenuta alla fonte da applicare da parte delle imprese di investimento residenti che intervengono nella raccolta di flussi di liquidità e di redditi assoggettabili provenienti da attività finanziarie all'estero detenute da contribuenti italiani. Secondo l'interpretazione dell'Agenzia delle Entrate italiana ([2]), i contribuenti che desiderino evitare la ritenuta alla fonte sono invitati a presentare un'autocertificazione in cui si dichiara che i flussi finanziari in questione non costituiscono redditi assoggettabili provenienti da investimenti o da attività finanziarie all'estero. L'applicazione pratica di tali disposizioni va esaminata attentamente al fine di stabilire se potrebbe ostacolare l'esercizio delle libertà fondamentali nel mercato interno, e, in particolare limitare indebitamente la libera circolazione dei capitali e dei pagamenti.

Nel frattempo, tuttavia, su richiesta del ministero delle Finanze italiano, le autorità fiscali italiane hanno emanato istruzioni amministrative ([3]) il 19 febbraio 2014, rinviando al 1 luglio 2014 l'applicazione, da parte degli intermediari finanziari italiani, di detta ritenuta alla fonte ([4]). Contemporaneamente alla sospensione degli effetti della misura, le autorità fiscali hanno elaborato, per sottoporla a esame del nuovo governo, una disposizione che abroga la ritenuta alla fonte in questione.

La Commissione continuerà a seguire gli sviluppi in materia.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I086504
([2]) «Agenzia delle Entrate»: Prot.2013/1516631 del 18 dicembre 2013 e circolare 38/E del 23 dicembre 2013.
([3]) Prot. 2014/24663 — www.agenziaentrate.it
([4]) http://www.tesoro.it/ufficio-stampa/comunicati/2014/comunicato_0046.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001705/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Preventive withholding on credit transfers in Italy and common market

By virtue of circular 2013/151663, concerning implementing arrangements for the fiscal monitoring provisions set out in Article 4 of Decree-Law No 167 of 28 June 1990, converted into law, with amendments, by Law No 227 of 4 August 1990 and subsequently amended by Article 9(1)(c) of Law No 97 of 6 August 2013, the Italian Revenue Agency is requiring receiving intermediaries (usually Italian credit institutions) to withhold 20% of the amount of the transaction whenever credit transfers are made to Italy from foreign countries.

If they wished to avoid this preventive withholding, the recipients of sums transferred would themselves have to certify the non-financial nature of the transaction or, to put it another way, the origin of the proceeds from activities not taxable at source.

The priority must of course be to stamp out tax evasion and money laundering, but, that notwithstanding, measures of the type concerned here are likely to harm private individuals travelling, studying, or working in Member States other than their home country, as well as small cross-border businesses, to the extent that they have been burdened with more red tape.

Can the Commission therefore say whether it has been informed by the Italian Government or other sources about this situation and whether it considers the measure in question to be compatible with EU single market rules?

Question for written answer E-001839/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE) and Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Retention of 20% from foreign payments to Italy — an obstacle to the free movement of capital and discrimination against the protection of consumers and taxpayers

Since 1 February, Italian banks have been able to withhold 20% from payments from abroad intended for natural persons, simple companies and non-profit organisations, under the provisions of Article 4 of Legislative Decree No 197/90 as amended by Law No 97/2013. Such retentions will be automatic and the taxpayer will be responsible for providing proof that the amounts in question are not income from capital or income from foreign financial activity. The 20% will be retained by the State if: income is received from foreign persons on account of the sale of property or the granting of loans, remuneration is received in relation to securities or guarantees given to third parties abroad, interest is received on capital used abroad, capital gains are generated by the sale of property or land located abroad, participating interests in foreign-based companies are disposed of, or rental income arises from properties and land located abroad.

Considering:

— the spirit of the treaties of the European Union (in particular Article 63 TFEU — which prohibits all restrictions on payments between Member States, and between Member States and third countries) and the conventions signed by Italy to avoid double taxation, as well as

— the European principles on the fight against tax evasion, which are aimed in the opposite direction,

can the Commission verify the compatibility of these measures with European legislation, in respect of both the free movement of capital and consumer protection, and in particular establish whether there is any unfair discrimination against those citizens who wish to repatriate their capital from abroad?

Question for written answer E-001845/14
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Sergio Berlato (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Susy De Martini (ECR), Iva Zanicchi (PPE), Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Lara Comi (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Mario Borghezio (NI), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Franco Bonanini (NI) and Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Automatic retentions from foreign payments to Italy

On 1 February this year, a law came into effect in Italy which provides for a retention of 20% from payments received from abroad intended for current accounts in Italy. This advance tax deduction is automatic, and it is then the responsibility of the taxpayer to prove that the amounts in question do not constitute income and to apply for a refund of the tax.

This is a very complex mechanism, which provides for the retention to be made in every case by an independent collection agent, unless the taxpayer is able to attest, by means of self-certification in free form, that the flows do not constitute income from capital or other income arising from foreign investment or from foreign activities of a financial nature. It is then the responsibility of the taxpayer to claim through the intermediary a refund of tax which is not payable or applied in excess of the amount due.

It should be emphasised that mobility within the European Union has increased significantly in recent years, and many people, particularly young people, often move to other European countries for work, and there open current accounts with local banks, whilst maintaining financial dealings of various kinds with their home country, clearly not for the purposes of evasion or money-laundering, but simply out of need.

In view of all the foregoing, does the European Commission consider that the measure adopted by Italy is contrary to the free movement of capital as laid down by Article 63 TFEU?

If the Commission accepts this measure, does it nevertheless consider it disproportionate, since the system of payment by bank transfer is already easy to monitor in order to prevent evasion and money-laundering?

Finally, does it consider that such a law, which, furthermore, goes against the desired single euro payments area (SEPA), may paradoxically reduce the use of traceable payment instruments in favour of a return to the movement of cash, with all the problems involved?

Question for written answer P-002043/14
to the Commission
Herbert Dorfmann (PPE)
(20 February 2014)

Subject: Tax on sums transferred to Italy

Under the terms of Italian Revenue Agency measure 2013/151663, since 1 February 2014 banks and financial intermediaries in Italy have been required to charge a withholding tax of 20% on sums transferred from abroad to natural persons. The Italian State is seeking to ensure that earnings on foreign investments, or the equivalent sums in income in Italy, do not go untaxed.

This rule can be circumvented if the recipient declares that the moneys in question do not constitute taxable income in the form of earnings on foreign investments.

Does the Commission regard this new arrangement as consistent with the rules governing the single European payment area?

Joint answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

First, the Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the Commission services have immediately ([1]) started examining the compatibility with EC law of the interpretation by the Italian Tax authorities of Article 9 of the Italian European Law n. 97/2013 (Legge Europea 2013) amending Article 4.2 of the Legislative Decree n.167/90 on tax declarative obligations for Italian taxpayers holding investments and financial activities abroad.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I086504

The legislation provides for a withholding tax to be applied by resident investment companies intervening in the collection of cash movements and on qualifying income from foreign financial assets held by Italian taxpayers. As interpreted by the Italian Tax Revenue Agency ([2]), taxpayers wishing to avoid the withholding tax are requested to submit a self-certification stating that the financial flows at issue are not qualifying income from foreign investments or financial activities. The practical implementation of these provisions needs to be assessed carefully in order to establish whether it could hinder the exercise of fundamental freedoms within the internal market, and particularly unduly restrict free movement of capital and payments.

In the meantime, however, at the request of the Italian Ministry of Finance, the Italian tax authorities issued administrative instructions ([3]) on 19 February 2014, postponing until 1 July 2014 the application, by Italian financial intermediaries, of the abovementioned withholding tax ([4]). Simultaneously to the suspension of the effects of the measure, the Tax authorities have prepared for the evaluation of the new Government a provision repealing the withholding tax at issue.

The Commission will continue to follow further developments.

([2]) 'Agenzia delle Entrate': Prot.2013/1516631 of 18 December 2013 and Circular 38/E of 23 December 2013.
([3]) Prot. 2014/24663 — www.agenziaentrate.it
([4]) http://www.tesoro.it/ufficio-stampa/comunicati/2014/comunicato_0046.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001711/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Χάρτης των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων και υπουργικά διατάγματα

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή πώς συνάδει με το ευρωπαϊκό κεκτημένο και με τον Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών των Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ η έκδοση διαταγμάτων από Υπουργικά Συμβούλια χωρών που βρίσκονται σε μνημόνιο, κατ' εντολή της τρόικας, χωρίς να προηγείται έγκριση νομοσχεδίων από τη Βουλή της χώρας και χωρίς διάλογο με την κοινωνία των πολιτών για σοβαρά θέματα που αφορούν, μεταξύ άλλων, μειώσεις μισθών υπαλλήλων, θέματα ιδιωτικοποιήσεων κρατικών οργανισμών, επέκταση εργάσιμου χρόνου και των ωραρίων των καταστημάτων κ.ο.κ.

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Απριλίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το αξιότιμο μέλος στην απάντησή της σχετικά με την ερώτηση E-012772/2013.

Η Ελλάδα ξεκίνησε πριν από λίγα χρόνια μια φιλόδοξη προσπάθεια δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης και φαίνεται ότι πέτυχε πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα το 2013 (που θα πρέπει να επιβεβαιωθεί με βάση τα στοιχεία της διαδικασίας υπερβολικού ελλείμματος που θα δημοσιευθούν τον Απρίλιο του 2014). Η δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση υποβοηθείται από τις εκτεταμένες μεταρρυθμίσεις των συνταξιοδοτικών συστημάτων και των συστημάτων υγειονομικής περίθαλψης και, όσον αφορά τα έσοδα, από την ευρεία μεταρρύθμιση της διοίκησης εσόδων και τις εκτεταμένες φορολογικές μεταρρυθμίσεις. Ο ελληνικός τραπεζικός τομέας ανακεφαλαιοποιήθηκε και έτσι διαφυλάχθηκε η δημοσιονομική σταθερότητα. Φιλόδοξες διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις βρίσκονται τώρα σε εξέλιξη και έχουν ήδη αρχίσει να αποφέρουν καρπούς.

Είναι όμως πολλά ακόμη που πρέπει να γίνουν και οι συζητήσεις στο πλαίσιο της 4ης επανεξέτασης βάσει του 2ου προγράμματος συνεχίζονται. Προς το παρόν, αυτό που έχει σημασία είναι να επικεντρώσει η Ελλάδα όλες τις προσπάθειές της στη έγκαιρη υλοποίηση του προγράμματος. Τα κράτη μέλη της ευρωζώνης θα εξετάσουν το ενδεχόμενο πρόσθετων μέτρων και ενίσχυσης προκειμένου να μειωθεί ακόμη περισσότερο και κατά τρόπο αξιόπιστο και βιώσιμο η αναλογία του χρέους της προς το ΑΕΠ, όταν η Ελλάδα θα έχει πετύχει ετήσιο πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα, υπό τον όρο ότι θα πληρούνται όλες οι προϋποθέσεις του προγράμματος ([1]). Μια επικαιροποιημένη αξιολόγηση της υλοποίησης του προγράμματος πραγματοποιείται τώρα στο πλαίσιο της διεξαγόμενης επανεξέτασης και θα ανακοινωθεί μέσω των σχετικών εγγράφων του προγράμματος μετά την ολοκλήρωση της επανεξέτασης.

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/367646/eurogroup_statement_greece_27_november_2012.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001711/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: The Charter of Fundamental Rights and Ministerial Decrees

How does the Commission manage to reconcile with the Community *acquis* and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union the practice adopted by the Councils of Ministers of countries which are subject to Memoranda of issuing decrees at the behest of the Troika? These decrees relate, *inter alia*, to key issues such as reductions in employees' salaries, the privatisation of state agencies, the extension of working time and shop opening hours, etc. and are adopted without the prior approval of bills by the parliament of the country concerned and without any dialogue with civil society?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-012772/2013.

Greece has undertaken an ambitious fiscal consolidation in recent years and it seems that Greece has achieved the primary budget surplus in 2013 (to be confirmed by the EDP data released in April 2014). Fiscal consolidation is being underpinned by far-reaching reforms of the pension, welfare and health systems and, on the revenue side, the comprehensive reform of the revenue administration and the adoption of far-reaching tax reforms. The Greek banking sector has been recapitalised and financial stability preserved. Ambitious structural reforms are being implemented, and they are already starting to bear fruits.

However, a lot still remains to be done, and discussions in the context of the 4th review under the 2nd programme are still on-going. At this stage, what is important is that Greece concentrates all its efforts on timely implementation of the programme. Euro area Member States will consider further measures and assistance for achieving a further credible and sustainable reduction of Greek debt-to-GDP ratio, when Greece reaches an annual primary surplus, conditional on full implementation of all conditions contained in the programme. ([1]) An updated assessment of the implementation of the programme is being prepared in the context of the on-going review and will be communicated in the related programme documents when the review is concluded.

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/367646/eurogroup_statement_greece_27_november_2012.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001715/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Η Τρόικα παραβιάζει τον Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης

Σύμφωνα με τον γερμανό νομικό εμπειρογνώμονα Andreas Fischer-Lescano, καθηγητή Ευρωπαϊκού Δικαίου και Πολιτικής Επιστήμης στο Πανεπιστήμιο της Βρέμης, τα προγράμματα λιτότητας που υπαγορεύονται από την Τρόικα συνιστούν παραβίαση του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Επίσης, κατά τη γνώμη του, η νομική βάση επί της οποίας τα θεσμικά όργανα της Τρόικας — και ιδίως η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα, η οποία στερείται εντολής — απαιτούν διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις από τις εθνικές κυβερνήσεις, θα πρέπει να τεθεί υπό αμφισβήτηση.

Ο καθηγητής Fischer-Lescano καταλήγει στο ότι τα μέτρα λιτότητας που εφαρμόζονται από την Τρόικα έχουν σοβαρές συνέπειες, ιδίως για τις ευάλωτες ομάδες. Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με τον Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης — νομικό κείμενο στο οποίο υπόκεινται τα κράτη μέλη από το 2009 — είναι δυνατό να ασκηθούν προσφυγές κατά αρκετών μέτρων λιτότητας που κατοχυρώνονται στα μνημόνια συμφωνίας.

Λαμβανομένων υπόψη των ανωτέρω, παρακαλείται η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στο εξής:

Εφόσον θεωρείται ότι η Τρόικα παραβιάζει τον Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, ο οποίος αποτελεί το θεμέλιο της ΕΕ, δεν θα πρέπει να διαλυθεί η Τρόικα;

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

Υπάρχει ευρεία συναίνεση μεταξύ των εταίρων της Τρόικας ότι το υπόδειγμα «τρόικα» λειτουργεί καλά και έχει αποδείξει τη χρησιμότητά του για την αντιμετώπιση των προκλήσεων που αντιμετωπίζουν οι χώρες της ζώνης του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής. Ο κανονισμός 472/2013 για την ενίσχυση της οικονομικής και δημοσιονομικής εποπτείας των κρατών μελών της ζώνης του ευρώ έχει θεσμοθετήσει τη συμμετοχή της τρόικας στα προγράμματα οικονομικής προσαρμογής ενώ, παράλληλα, εξασφαλίζεται πληρέστερη λογοδοσία έναντι του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και των εθνικών κοινοβουλίων.

Η Επιτροπή δίνει ιδιαίτερη βαρύτητα στην τήρηση των αρχών του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, όπως φαίνεται σαφώς στην επικείμενη έκθεση 2013 της Επιτροπής σχετικά με την εφαρμογή του Χάρτη. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο δεν θεωρεί ότι τα μέτρα που θεσπίστηκαν στο πλαίσιο προγραμμάτων οικονομικής προσαρμογής αντίκεινται με τον Χάρτη θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ.

Η τελική ευθύνη για την ολοκλήρωση και την εφαρμογή των όρων οικονομικής πολιτικής που συνδέονται με τα προγράμματα χρηματοδοτικής βοήθειας βαρύνει στις κυβερνήσεις των δικαιούχων κρατών μελών. Εναπόκειται στα κράτη μέλη να εξασφαλίζουν ότι τηρούν τις υποχρεώσεις τους όσον αφορά την τήρηση των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001715/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Troika in breach of Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

According to German legal expert Andreas Fischer-Lescano, professor of European law and politics at the University of Bremen, troika-led austerity programmes are in breach of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Furthermore, he believes that the legal basis upon which the institutions of the troika — and in particular the European Central Bank, which lacks a mandate — demand structural reforms from national governments should be called into question.

Professor Fischer-Lescano concludes that the austerity measures applied by the troika lead to serious consequences, especially for vulnerable groups. Furthermore, under the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, a legal text under which the Member States have been bound since 2009, several austerity measures enshrined in the memorandums of understanding can be fought in courts.

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

Since it is believed that the troika is in breach of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which is the foundation of the EU, should the troika not be dissolved?

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

There is broad agreement among Troika partners that the Troika model is working well and has proved to be very useful for dealing with the challenges facing euro area programme countries. Regulation 472/2013 on the strengthening of economic and budgetary surveillance of euro area Member States have formally endorsed the involvement of the Troika in the economic adjustment programmes, while ensuring a better level of accountability vis-à-vis the European and national parliaments.

The Commission pays great attention to the respect of the principles set in EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, as the forthcoming Commission's 2013 Report on the application of the Charter clearly shows. The European Court of Justice has not found that measures adopted in the framework of economic adjustment programmes are in non-compliance with the EU Charter.

The ultimate responsibility for the fulfilment and implementation of the economic policy conditions attached to financial assistance programmes lies with the beneficiary Member States' governments. It is for the Member States to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights are respected.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001717/14
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 februarie 2014)

Subiect: Regrese în ceea ce privește libertatea de exprimare în Libia

După relatările din decembrie 2013 privind turbulențe în rândul actualelor partide politice din Libia, această țară oferă în prezent noi motive de îngrijorare în ceea ce privește evoluția sa democratică. La 22 ianuarie 2014, parlamentul libian a adoptat un decret prin care sunt interzise acele posturi de televiziune prin satelit care exprimă opinii critice la adresa actualului guvern.

Libia se află încă în proces de consolidare a sistemului său democratic după revoluția din 2011. Decretul semnat recent impune ministerelor de afaceri externe, comunicații și media să adopte toate măsurile necesare pentru a bloca transmisiunile prin satelit ale posturilor „ostile revoluției din 17 februarie și al căror obiectiv îl constituie destabilizarea țării sau crearea de disensiuni între libieni”.

Human Rights Watch a solicitat guvernului revocarea acestei rezoluții, care poate fi interpretată ca o încălcare a dreptului fundamental la libertatea de exprimare.

În ce mod acordă Comisia sprijin guvernului libian în ceea ce privește înțelegerea și dezvoltarea unui sistem democratic în Libia care ar proteja drepturile fundamentale ale omului ale cetățenilor libieni?

Răspuns dat de Înaltul Reprezentant/doamna vicepreședinte Ashton în numele Comisiei
(31 martie 2014)

UE urmărește îndeaproape aceste evenimente îngrijorătoare care, alături de o creștere a nivelului de amenințare la adresa jurnaliștilor, a personalităților publice, a judecătorilor și a funcționarilor, indică o deteriorare semnificativă a dezbaterii publice libere și dinamice care a urmat revoluției din 17 februarie.

UE colaborează îndeaproape cu alte organizații internaționale precum Reporteri fără frontiere și *Human Rights Watch* pentru a urmări cazurile individuale care implică restricții privind libertatea de exprimare. În paralel, UE sprijină mass-media libiană, prin acordarea de asistență tehnică și furnizarea de programe de consolidare a capacităților, și își îmbunătățește coordonarea cu statele membre, cu alți actori internaționali, cu societatea civilă și cu mass-media pentru a putea reacționa la cazurile de încălcare a drepturilor omului.

În plus, UE intenționează să sprijine capacitatea instituțională a autorităților de stat printr-un mandat de monitorizare a respectării drepturilor omului. În acest sens, delegația UE a stabilit relații strânse cu Consiliul Național pentru libertăți civile și drepturile omului. Reprezentanții acestei instituții au efectuat o vizită la Bruxelles în februarie 2014 și au participat la reuniuni cu reprezentanții Parlamentului European, ai Comisiei Europene și cu Înaltul Reprezentant/doamna vicepreședinte a Comisiei.

Prin dialogul politic purtat cu autoritățile din Libia, UE va continua să promoveze necesitatea îndeplinirii de către Libia a obligațiilor sale naționale și internaționale în ceea ce privește respectarea drepturilor fundamentale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001717/14
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Freedom of speech set-back in Libya

After reported distress among the current political parties in Libya in December 2013, the country is now giving new cause for concern regarding its democratic development. On 22 January 2014, a decree was passed by the Libyan Parliament which bans satellite television stations that are critical of the current government.

Libya is still in the process of strengthening its democratic system after the revolution in 2011. The newly signed decree instructs the ministries of foreign affairs, communications and media to take all necessary action to block satellite transmissions of stations which are 'hostile to the February 17 revolution and whose purpose is the destabilisation of the country or creating divisions among Libyans.'

Human Rights Watch urged the government to revoke this resolution, which can be interpreted as violating the basic right of freedom of speech.

How is the Commission supporting the Libyan Government in understanding and developing a democratic system in Libya that would protect the basic human rights of Libyan citizens?

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

The EU is following closely these worrying developments which, combined with a growing level of threat against journalists, public figures, judges and officials, are indicative of a serious deterioration of the vibrant and free public debate that followed the February 17 Revolution.

The EU is working closely with other international organisations such as Reporters Without Borders and Human Rights Watch on following up individual cases involving limitations on freedom of speech. In parallel, the EU is supporting the Libyan media through technical assistance and capacity building programmes, and improving our coordination with Member States, other international actors, civil society and media outlets to be able to respond to human rights violations.

Moreover, the EU intends to support the institutional capacity of state bodies with a mandate to monitor human right. In this regard, the EU Delegation has established close relations with the National Council for Civil Liberties and Human Rights. Representatives of this institution visited Brussels in February 2014 and held meetings with representatives of the European Parliament, the European Commission and the High Representative/Vice-President.

Through its political dialogue with the authorities the EU will continue to advocate for the need for Libya to comply with its national and international obligations regarding respect for fundamental rights.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001722/14
alla Commissione
Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Salvatore Tatarella (PPE) e Licia Ronzulli (PPE)
(17 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: SGL Carbon — chiusura dello stabilimento di Narni

La SGL Carbon, uno dei più grandi produttori mondiali di prodotti derivati dal carbone, ha negli ultimi anni intrapreso una dura linea di ristrutturazione rivolta agli stabilimenti italiani (Ascoli e Narni).

In seguito alla chiusura, nel 2007, dello stabilimento di Ascoli, nel 2010, dopo un fermo totale dello stabilimento di Narni che ha interessato tutto il 2009, ha avviato nello stesso un piano di mobilità del personale che ha portato a una sensibile riduzione dell'organico.

Adesso, adducendo motivazioni quali problemi di costi, sovraccapacità produttiva e poca competitività del sito di Narni, il board del gruppo ha palesato la possibilità di chiudere tale stabilimento, assumendo un atteggiamento dilatorio e poco chiaro e rifiutandosi, da un lato, di fornire gli approfondimenti richiesti a tale proposito dalle organizzazioni sindacali e territoriali di categoria, nonché dalle autorità locali e nazionali e, dall'altro, di comunicare la sua decisione finale.

Considerando che ad oggi l'Italia è il secondo produttore di acciaio in Europa — dopo la Germania — e che il sistema produttivo non solo italiano ma anche europeo si basa in larga parte su forni elettrici che hanno bisogno dei particolari elettrodi di grafite prodotti nello stabilimento di Narni, la chiusura di tale sito avrebbe delle ricadute estremamente negative.

Oltre a rappresentare, infatti, un duro colpo per l'economia locale facendo venire a mancare un considerevole numero di posti di lavoro e imponendo ingenti costi di bonifica ambientale del sito industriale eventualmente abbandonato, la chiusura dello stabilimento comporterebbe anche serie difficoltà per i mercati e per il tessuto industriale collegati allo stabilimento. Molte aziende italiane ed europee, infatti, hanno impostato le loro rispettive produzioni sugli elettrodi prodotti dallo stabilimento di Narni, e la mancanza di questi sul mercato comporterebbe serie difficoltà di produzione per le stesse nonché un aumento dei prezzi dei materiali circolanti, con serie ricadute sull'import/export e rischi di aumentata dipendenza dalle importazioni provenienti da paesi extra UE.

Alla luce di questo e visti i piani di rilancio e sostegno al settore siderurgico europeo, potrebbe la Commissione europea chiarire:

1. quale sia il suo margine di manovra per far sì che il board dirigenziale del gruppo fornisca risposta alle richieste di approfondimento e dia risposte univoche circa la volontà di chiusura dello stabilimento di Narni;

2. quale sia il suo margine di manovra per far sì che l'azienda non prenda nessuna decisione definitiva senza informarne a tempo debito le istituzioni locali e nazionali;

3. qual è la sua strategia per affrontare simili emergenze che hanno pesanti ricadute in termini economici e sociali sul processo di industrializzazione italiano ed europeo?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

1.-2. Si invita l'on. parlamentare a considerare la risposta della Commissione all'interrogazione E-1476/2014 ([1]).

3. Tra le azioni proposte nel piano d'azione della Commissione ([2]), in caso di chiusura o ridimensionamento significativo di siti siderurgici, la Commissione razionalizzerà l'utilizzo dei pertinenti fondi UE, facendo ricorso a task force dedicate, da creare su richiesta degli Stati membri o dei sindacati. Questo approccio è stato applicato in passato al settore automobilistico. Sino a oggi, non è stata ricevuta nessuna richiesta per il settore siderurgico.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Comunicazione della Commissione «Piano d'azione per una siderurgia europea competitiva e sostenibile» (COM(2013) 407 final dell'11 giugno 2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001722/14
to the Commission
Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Salvatore Tatarella (PPE) and Licia Ronzulli (PPE)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: SGL Carbon — closure of Narni plant

SGL Carbon, one of the world's largest producers of carbon-based products, has in recent years been implementing a harsh restructuring programme targeting its Italian plants (in Ascoli and Narni).

The Ascoli plant was closed down in 2007, and a temporary total shutdown affected the Narni plant for the whole of 2009. A staff mobility plan was launched at the Narni plant in 2010 and has led to a significant reduction in the size of the workforce.

Now, citing reasons such as overheads, excess production capacity and poor competitiveness at the Narni site, the Group's Management Board has announced the possible closure of the plant. Adopting an approach that is both dilatory and lacking in clarity, the Board is refusing either to provide the further information requested by the trade unions, local industry organisations and the local and national authorities, or to communicate its final decision.

Given that Italy has until now been Europe's second largest steel producer — after Germany — and that the production system not only in Italy but in the whole of Europe is largely dependent on electric furnaces that require the particular graphite electrodes manufactured at the Narni plant, closure of the site would have extremely negative implications.

In fact, in addition to being a severe blow to the local economy by leading to significant job losses and the huge cost of reclaiming an industrial site that might be abandoned, closure of the plant would also imply serious difficulties for the markets and industrial fabric linked to it. The output of many Italian and European companies is dependent on the electrodes manufactured at the Narni plant, and their withdrawal from the market could lead to serious production difficulties for these companies. It might also lead to an increase in the price of circulating materials, with serious implications for the import/export market and the risk of increased dependence on imports from countries outside the EU.

In the light of this, and in view of the plans to relaunch and support the European iron and steel industry, could the European Commission clarify the following:

1. what scope does it have to make the Group's Management Board respond to the requests for further information and provide a clear answer as regards its intention to close the Narni plant?

2. What scope does it have to prevent the company from making a final decision without notifying local and national institutions in due time?

3. What is its strategy for tackling emergencies such as this that have heavy economic and social implications for the industrialisation of Italy and Europe?

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

1 and 2. The Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's answer to Question E-1476/2014 ([1]).

3. Among the actions proposed in the Commission Action Plan ([2]), in the case of significant downsizing or closures, the Commission will streamline the use of the relevant EU Funds, using dedicated task forces, to be established at the request of the Member States or trade unions. This approach was applied in the past in the automotive sector. To date, no such request has been received with regard to the steel industry.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Commission Communication 'Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in Europe' (COM(2013) 407 final of 11 June 2013).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001724/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(17 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Sostegno alla produzione di prodotti lattiero-caseari nei paesi in via di sviluppo per migliorare l'alimentazione delle popolazioni

Un recente studio della FAO ha evidenziato come il consumo di latte e di prodotti caseari possa contribuire a migliorare il livello nutrizionale di milioni di persone indigenti in tutto il mondo. Tali prodotti sono infatti una fonte di energia importante, oltre a contenere calcio, vitamine D e proteine che influenzano la salute delle ossa. Sono altresì ricchi di micronutrienti fondamentali per combattere la malnutrizione delle popolazioni più povere, che spesso consumano prevalentemente cereali e carboidrati, soprattutto nel contesto di una dieta poco variegata. Inoltre, è stato evidenziato come il latte e i prodotti caseari possano essere d'aiuto nel prevenire alcuni tipi di tumori, nonché alcune malattie trasmissibili collegate alla dieta come il diabete di tipo 2. Ovviamente, essendo alimenti ricchi di grassi, il consumo di tali prodotti deve essere inserito nel contesto di una dieta equilibrata.

Nonostante gli innegabili benefici, dalla ricerca effettuata risulta che latte e latticini siano ancora troppo costosi per le famiglie più povere.

Considerato che:

— si prevede che nei paesi in via di sviluppo il consumo di tali prodotti aumenterà, entro il 2025, a seguito della crescita della popolazione e dell'aumento dei redditi, ma che tali alimenti rimarranno al di fuori della portata delle famiglie più indigenti;

— il settore lattiero-caseario è la causa di circa il 4 % di tutte le emissioni di gas serra, oltre ad avere un impatto sul suolo e sulle risorse idriche;

— piccole produzioni di prodotti caseari possono essere avviate ottimizzando le risorse locali in un'ottica di sostenibilità, attraverso modesti miglioramenti produttivi e tecnologici;

si chiede alla Commissione se:

1. nel contesto degli aiuti rivolti ai paesi in via di sviluppo, ritiene opportuno investire in programmi che favoriscano la diffusione del consumo di latte e prodotti caseari presso le famiglie indigenti?

2. Considera l'ipotesi di attuare politiche che aiutino le famiglie indigenti ad avviare piccole produzioni casearie?

3. Pensa di incoraggiare gli investimenti nel settore privato che aiutino i piccoli agricoltori a sfruttare la crescente domanda di prodotti lattiero-caseari nei paesi in via di sviluppo?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

L'agricoltura, compreso l'allevamento, è attualmente un settore chiave di intervento in diversi paesi e continuerà a ricevere il sostegno dell'UE nell'ambito del prossimo quadro finanziario pluriennale. Nel settore dell'allevamento, la Commissione concede attualmente sostegno allo sviluppo della catena del valore del settore lattiero-caseario. Le misure attuate in questo settore comprendono il miglioramento delle piccole produzioni, la salute degli animali, un migliore accesso dei cittadini più vulnerabili ai servizi, un valore aggiunto nella catena del valore della produzione lattiero-casearia, il rafforzamento del collegamento dei piccoli imprenditori ai mercati e un maggiore consumo di proteine animali nella dieta. Queste misure comporteranno un notevole miglioramento a livello nutrizionale.

In alcuni paesi, l'UE sostiene direttamente la strategia nazionale di sviluppo del settore lattiero-caseario; in Africa dà sostegno all'attuazione del programma globale di sviluppo agricolo, nell'ambito del quale l'Ufficio interafricano per le risorse animali dell'Unione africana sta formulando programmi, per tutto il continente, sull'allevamento per lo sviluppo sostenibile e la sussistenza in Africa.

L'UE è determinata a collaborare con il settore privato nel settore lattiero-caseario, incoraggiando partenariati pubblici e privati al fine di migliorare i sistemi per la salute animale, l'accesso a servizi di consulenza rurale e ai mercati. Un fattore chiave per raggiungere uno sviluppo sostenibile e inclusivo del settore lattiero-caseario è la creazione di alleanze tra le varie parti interessate a livello locale e nazionale. L'obiettivo è quello di consentire a piccoli produttori lattiero-caseari di sfruttare l'aumento della domanda di latte e prodotti derivati, generando così fonti di reddito e di prosperità.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001724/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Support for milk/dairy production in developing countries to improve the diets of the inhabitants

A recent survey by the FAO has revealed that consumption of milk and dairy products could help to improve the nutritional level of millions of impoverished persons throughout the world. These products are in fact a major energy source and contain calcium, vitamin D and proteins which influence bone health. They are also rich in micronutrients which are fundamental in combating malnutrition in the poorest populations, whose diet frequently consists predominantly of cereals and carbohydrates, primarily as part of a non-varied diet. It has also been demonstrated that milk and dairy products can help in the prevention of certain types of tumour and some diet-related transmissible diseases such as type-2 diabetes. Obviously, these foods are rich in fats and should be consumed as part of a balanced diet.

In spite of their undeniable benefits, the research undertaken has revealed that milk and dairy products are still too costly for the poorest families.

Considering that:

— it is predicted that the consumption of such products in developing countries will increase by 2025 as a result of population growth and rising incomes, but that such food will continue to be beyond the reach of the poorest families;

— the milk/dairy produce sector is the cause of around 4% of all greenhouse gas emissions and also has an impact on soil and water resources;

— small-scale dairy production can be instigated by optimising local resources with a view to sustainability through modest improvements in production and technologies.

The Commission is asked whether:

1. In the context of aid directed at developing countries, it is expedient to invest in programmes to increase milk and dairy produce consumption by impoverished families?

2. It would consider implementing policies to help impoverished families embark on small-scale dairy production?

3. It is planning to encourage investment in the private sector to help small farmers exploit the growing demand for milk and dairy products in developing countries?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

Agriculture, including livestock, currently is a key sector of intervention in various countries and will continue to receive EU support within the next MFF framework. One of the livestock areas the Commission is currently supporting is dairy value chain development. Dairy sector development measures encompass improvement of small-scale production, animal health, brings service delivery closer to the most vulnerable, adds value in the dairy production value chain, reinforces smallholders' linkage to markets and increases animal protein intake. This has a significant impact on improving nutrition.

In some countries, the EU is directly supporting the country's strategy on dairy development. In Africa, the EU supports the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme; within this framework the African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources is formulating continental programmes on Livestock for Sustainable Development and livelihoods in Africa.

The EU is committed to engage with the private sector in the dairy sector. Public and private partnerships are encouraged to improve animal health systems, improving access to rural advisory services and to markets. Establishing multi-stakeholder alliances at local and national level is a key to achieve inclusive and sustainable dairy development. This should result into small dairy farmers being able to capitalise on the growing demand for milk and dairy products, thereby increasing income, wealth and prosperity.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001729/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(17 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Mafia turca

I gruppi criminali della mafia turca sono attivi in tutta l'Europa occidentale, dove le comunità di immigrati turchi risiedono. Le loro attività di livello internazionale riguardano per lo più il traffico di droga, e in particolare di eroina, per la quale collaborano anche con la criminalità bulgara che trasporta la merce verso paesi come l'Italia.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Ha tracciato un quadro di analisi delle realtà dell'infiltrazione della mafia turca in Europa?

2. Quali ritiene siano, oltre alla Germania, gli Stati membri più interessati da questa infiltrazione?

3. Quali misure ha adottato per contrastare la mafia turca e quali sono i risultati finora raggiunti?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

1. Insieme al Consiglio, agli Stati membri e alle competenti agenzie dell'UE, la Commissione intende affrontare il problema dell'infiltrazione della criminalità grave e organizzata, tra cui gruppi criminali della mafia turca, nell'economia legale, attraverso una serie di azioni sia a livello legislativo che operativo. Tali azioni comprendono un ciclo sulla politica dell'UE in materia di criminalità grave e organizzata a livello internazionale (che tratterà a livello trasversale, oltre che del traffico di droga ([1]), anche dell'infiltrazione nell'economia ufficiale), la relazione sulla lotta alla corruzione ([2]), la quarta proposta antiriciclaggio ([3]), le raccomandazioni del quinto ciclo di valutazioni reciproche sulle indagini finanziarie e la criminalità finanziaria ([4]) nonché la proposta di direttiva sulla confisca ([5]) (che entrerà in vigore fra breve dopo l'adozione dei colegislatori).

2. La Commissione non è in possesso di dati su quali Stati membri dell'UE siano interessati dalle attività delle organizzazioni mafiose turche.

3. Le misure menzionate al punto 1 fanno parte dell'intervento dell'UE che comprende anche lo sviluppo della cooperazione tra forze di polizia attraverso la proposta di Europol ([6]), la lotta efficace contro la tratta degli esseri umani, il traffico di droga, di armi da fuoco e di altri beni illeciti nonché le misure per combattere contro la criminalità informatica e garantire una solida gestione delle frontiere esterne.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/137401.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/corruption/docs/acr_2014_it.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52013PC0045.
([4]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2012657%202012%20REV%202.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/intro/docs/20120312/1_en_act_part1_v8_1.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2013/com_2013_0173_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001729/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: The Turkish Mafia

Criminal groups of the Turkish Mafia are active throughout Western Europe, where communities of Turkish immigrants live. Their international activities relate primarily to the trafficking of drugs, in particular heroin, in which they act in conjunction with Bulgarian criminals who transport the goods to countries such as Italy.

In the light of the above, the Commission is asked the following questions:

1. Has the Commission formulated a framework of analysis of the reality of the infiltration of the Turkish Mafia in Europe?

2. Apart from Germany, which Member States does the Commission consider to be most affected by this infiltration?

3. What measures has the Commission taken to counteract the Turkish Mafia and what are the results to date?

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

1. Together with the Council, Member States and relevant EU agencies, the Commission aims to tackle the penetration of the legitimate economy by serious and organised crime, including by criminal groups affiliated to Turkish mafia-type organisations, through a string of actions, both legislative and operational. This includes the EU policy cycle for serious and transnational organised crime (in which penetration of the legitimate economy is a cross-cutting priority along with the fight against drug trafficking ([1])), the anti-corruption report ([2]), the 4th anti-money laundering proposal ([3]), the recommendations of the fifth cycle of mutual evaluation on financial investigation and financial crime ([4]) and the confiscation directive proposal ([5]) (which will shortly enter into force following adoption by the co-legislators).

2. The Commission does not hold data on what EU Member States are affected by the activities of Turkish mafia-type organisations.

3. The measures cited in point 1 are part of the EU's response which also includes the development of police cooperation through the Europol proposal ([6]), an effective fight against trafficking of human beings, drugs, firearms and other illicit goods, measures to tackle cybercrime and ensuring sound management of the external border.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/137401.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organised-crime-and-human-trafficking/corruption/docs/acr_2014_en.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013PC0045:EN:NOT
([4]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2012657%202012%20REV%202
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/intro/docs/20120312/1_en_act_part1_v8_1.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2013/com_2013_0173_en.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001734/14
do Komisji
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(17 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Działania w związku z wprowadzeniem przez Rosję embarga na import wieprzowiny z UE

Pod koniec stycznia Federacja Rosyjska podęła decyzję o wstrzymaniu importu wieprzowiny z całej Unii Europejskiej pod pretekstem wykrycia na Litwie przypadków afrykańskiego pomoru świń.

Decyzja ta w istotny sposób uderza w polskich rolników, w tym w szczególności tych z Wielkopolski, gdzie mamy do czynienia z największą koncentracją hodowli świń. Według Wielkopolskiej Izby Rolniczej decyzja o wstrzymaniu importu wieprzowiny z UE stanowi poważny cios nie tylko dla wciąż mało stabilnego polskiego rynku wieprzowiny, lecz także dla długofalowego programu odbudowy produkcji trzody chlewnej. Dla polskich hodowców oznacza to brak zbytu dla ok. 1 mln sztuk tuczników w ciągu roku. Napływające sygnały o spadku cen i ograniczaniu skupu już teraz wymagają zdecydowanych działań.

W związku z wyłączną rolą Unii Europejskiej w sprawach handlowych pragnę zapytać, jakie działania podejmuje Komisja, aby pilnie rozwiązać wskazany problem?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002044/14
do Komisji
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(20 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Embargo Rosji na mięso wieprzowe

Co Komisja zamierza zrobić w związku z nałożonym przez Rosję embargiem na import mięsa wieprzowego z Unii Europejskiej?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(28 marca 2014 r.)

Natychmiast po wprowadzeniu przez Federację Rosyjską bezprecedensowego zakazu wywozu wieprzowiny z Unii Komisja podjęła wszelkie niezbędne działania, aby zagwarantować jego jak najszybsze cofnięcie.

W ciągu ostatnich kilku tygodni udostępniono rosyjskim władzom dużą ilość informacji, które w wystarczającym stopniu potwierdzają, że wywóz z obszarów UE, których nie dotyczą ograniczenia, jakimi objęto określone terytoria na Litwie i w Polsce, jest bezpieczny w odniesieniu do afrykańskiego pomoru świń (regionalizacja).

Ponadto strona unijna przedstawiła propozycje dotyczące zmiany świadectw, które umożliwiłyby wznowienie wywozu, oraz zorganizowała spotkania techniczne w celu przekazania dodatkowych informacji i wyjaśnień.

Na szczeblu Komisji do rosyjskiego Ministra Rolnictwa przesłano pisma, w których nalegano na szybkie zniesienie tego nieproporcjonalnego środka nałożonego na wywóz z UE. W dniu 28 lutego 2014 r. w Moskwie odbyło się z nim spotkanie w tej sprawie.

Federacja Rosyjska wyraziła zgodę na rozpatrzenie wniosku UE dotyczącego regionalizacji. Obecnie odbywają się dodatkowe spotkania o charakterze technicznym, których celem jest uzyskanie zgody Rosji na wznowienie handlu zgodnie z jej zobowiązaniami międzynarodowymi.

Niestety trudno przewidzieć, kiedy zakaz zostanie zniesiony, ponieważ strona rosyjska odmawia przyjęcia wiążącego harmonogramu.

Komisja dokłada wszelkich starań na wszystkich możliwych szczeblach, aby chronić interesy unijnych producentów wieprzowiny ze wszystkich państw członkowskich. Możliwe jest również zastosowanie procedury rozstrzygania sporów Światowej Organizacji Handlu (WTO).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001734/14
to the Commission
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Actions relating to Russia's embargo on EU pork imports

In late January 2014, the Russian Federation took the decision to halt pork imports from the entire European Union using the pretext of the discovery of cases of African swine fever virus in Lithuania.

This decision is a major blow to Polish farmers, particularly those from Wielkopolska, which is the largest centre for pig farming in Poland. According to the Wielkopolska Chamber of Agriculture, the decision to halt pork imports from the EU is a major blow to Poland's still-unstable pork market, as well as to the long-term programme to rebuild pork production. For Polish pig farmers, this means that no market can be found for around one million pigs in the course of a year. News of a drop in price and a reduction in purchases mean that decisive action is now needed.

Given the EU's exclusive competence in trade matters, what steps will the Commission take to bring this matter to a speedy resolution?

Question for written answer E-002044/14
to the Commission
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(20 February 2014)

Subject: Russian pork embargo

What steps does the Commission intend to take regarding the Russian embargo on the import of pork from the European Union?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

As soon as this unprecedented ban on EU pork exports was imposed by the Russian Federation, the Commission has taken all the appropriate steps in order to ensure it be lifted with no delay.

Since several weeks, a large amount of information has been made available to the Russian services, sufficient to guarantee that the exports from EU areas outside the restricted districts in Lithuania and Poland are safe as regards African Swine Fever (regionalisation).

In addition, proposals for modified certificates that would allow exports to resume have been made from our side as well as technical meetings organised to provide additional information and clarifications.

Letters were sent at Commission level to the Russian Minister of Agriculture insisting on a rapid solution to this disproportionate measure imposed on EU exports and a meeting was organised with him on 28 February 2014 in Moscow for this purpose.

The Russian Federation has now agreed to consider the EU proposal for regionalisation and additional technical meetings are taking place with the aim to obtain their agreement in reopening trade in line with their international obligations.

Unfortunately, the time when the ban would be lifted cannot be predicted as the Russian side is refusing to commit on a timetable.

The Commission is doing its utmost at all possible levels in order to protect the interests of the EU pork industry in all Member States. World Trade Organisation's dispute settlement procedures remain an option.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001741/14
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Malta birds derogation

On 4 June 2013 Commissioner Potočnik gave an answer to Mr Zanoni's Written Question E-004289-13 on 'spring quail and turtle dove hunting in Malta and new and repeated infringements of Directive 147/2009/EC (Birds Directive)'. This answer stated that the Commission would carefully analyse the detailed derogation report submitted by the Maltese Government, alongside any other reports submitted by relevant stakeholders, to see whether the derogation was being applied in line with the strict conditions of the EU's Birds Directive.

Has this analysis already been completed by the Commission? If so, what was the Commission's interpretation? Has any further enforcement action resulted from this analysis?

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

The Commission has completed its assessment of the various reports received from the Maltese government and interested stakeholders, including local hunting associations and bird conservation organisations. The results of this assessment showed conflicting views and explanations as regards the outcome of the 2013 spring hunting derogation in Malta and particularly the enforcement measures undertaken. Therefore the Commission sought further information and clarification on the matter from the Maltese authorities during an annual bilateral environmental package meeting held in November 2013.

The Commission is working with Malta to find solutions to existing shortcomings and gaps in the country's application of spring hunting derogations and to identify ways to further improve the spring hunting derogation regime and strengthen enforcement. This process is not yet concluded.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001754/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(17 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Esempi di eccellenza nel settore delle energie rinnovabili

Una recente notizia, riportata da giornali tematici, mette in risalto un interessante esempio fatto di eccellenza e rispetto dell'ambiente nel campo delle rinnovabili.

Ci si riferisce alla Toscana e, più precisamente, ad un consorzio di enti pubblici che hanno provveduto ad «adottare» e salvare un centro d'avanguardia, gioiello della geotermia, dalla minaccia di un suo eventuale smantellamento.

Il complesso tecnologico, con la propria operatività, concretizza le priorità degli obiettivi della nuova programmazione europea, in particolare per quanto riguarda l'obiettivo 20-20-20.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione fornire ulteriori informazioni relative ad eccellenze nel campo delle energie rinnovabili in altri contesti europei?

Quali iniziative specifiche ha intrapreso la Commissione per favorire la socializzazione e lo scambio di esperienze altamente innovative fra contesti tecnologici europei?

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

L'UE mette a disposizione degli Stati membri diversi strumenti per realizzare gli obiettivi in materia di energie rinnovabili per il 2020, stabiliti dalla direttiva sulle energie rinnovabili ([1]). Per il periodo di programmazione 2007-2013 sono stati stanziati 4,7 miliardi di EUR destinati ad azioni strategiche nel settore delle energie rinnovabili. Il sostegno a una transizione verso un'economia a basse emissioni di carbonio, che comprenda il ricorso alle energie rinnovabili, aumenterà ulteriormente per raggiungere almeno 23 miliardi di EUR provenienti dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) nel periodo 2014-2020 e altri stanziamenti potrebbero provenire dal Fondo di coesione.

Il programma INTERREG IVC, finanziato dal FESR, promuove la diffusione dell'eccellenza e delle migliori pratiche nello sviluppo delle energie rinnovabili a livello regionale per mezzo di attività di rete, indagini e visite di studio. Sul sito web INTERREG IVC è disponibile una panoramica aggiornata dei progetti di cooperazione sulle tecnologie applicabili alle fonti di energia rinnovabile: http://www.interreg4c.eu/good-practices/capitalisation/overview11/renewable-energy/

Inoltre, la banca dati dei progetti CORDIS (http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/home_en.html) contiene informazioni su tutti i progetti di ricerca finanziati dall'UE e i relativi risultati, compresi quelli sulle energie rinnovabili.

Infine, nella sua recente comunicazione dal titolo «Tecnologie energetiche e innovazione» ([2]), la Commissione ha proposto di sviluppare una tabella di marcia integrata in cui far confluire i calendari specifici di diversi settori delle tecnologie energetiche. La tabella di marcia integrata conferisce priorità allo sviluppo di soluzioni integrate per far fronte alle esigenze del sistema energetico europeo nei prossimi anni.

([1]) Direttiva 2009/28/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 aprile 2009, sulla promozione dell'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili (GU L 140 del 5.6.2009, pag. 16).
([2]) Comunicazione Tecnologie energetiche e innovazione, COM(2013) 253 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001754/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Examples of excellence in the renewable energy sector

A recent news story reported in specialist journals highlights an interesting example of excellence and respect for the environment in the field of renewables.

It relates to Tuscany and, more specifically, to a consortium of public corporations which have undertaken to 'adopt' and save an avant-garde centre and gem of geothermal energy from the threat of being dismantled.

The technological complex, which operates on its own account, is an embodiment of the priority targets set by the new European programming, especially with regard to the 20-20-20 targets.

Given this background, can the Commission supply further information on excellence in the field of renewable energy in other European contexts?

What specific initiatives has the Commission undertaken to encourage socialisation and the exchange of highly innovative experience of technology between different European contexts?

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

A number of EU instruments are available to help Member States to achieve their 2020 renewable energy targets, laid down in the Renewable Energy Directive ([1]). 4.7 billion EUR was earmarked for renewable energy policy actions in the 2007 — 2013 programming period. Support to the shift towards a low-carbon economy, including renewable energy use, will further increase and may reach at least EUR 23 billion from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in 2014-2020 period and further allocations could also be made from the Cohesion fund.

The Interreg IVC programme, financed through ERDF, promotes spreading excellence and best practice in renewable energy development at regional level through networking activities, surveys and study visits. A recent overview of RES technology cooperation projects is available on the Interreg IVC website: http://www.interreg4c.eu/good-practices/capitalisation/ overview11/ renewable-energy/

Furthermore, the CORDIS project database (http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/home_en.html) contains information on all EU-funded research projects and their results, including the ones on renewable energy.

Finally, in its recent Communication Energy technologies and innovation ([2]), the Commission has proposed the development of an Integrated Roadmap consolidating specific roadmaps of different energy technology sectors. The Integrated Roadmap prioritizes the development of integrated solutions to respond to the needs of the European energy system in the years to come.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, OJ L 140.
([2]) Communication Energy technologies and innovation, COM(2013) 253 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001757/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(17 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Forniture di minerali per l'industria della tecnologia informatica

La corsa all'accaparramento di minerali impiegati nella realizzazione di prodotti dell'informatica concorre, non poche volte, ad ingenerare condizioni sfavorevoli per le popolazioni che vivono in territori ricchi di tali metalli.

Sfruttamento, condizioni di lavoro schiavizzanti, deturpazione del territorio e deterioramento delle basi democratiche del contesto sociopolitico sono alcune delle conseguenze derivanti dall'assenza di una reale regolamentazione per i soggetti che assicurano l'approvvigionamento di metalli tristemente noti, come il coltan e il tantalio.

Recentemente, azioni concrete hanno interessato la politica commerciale di alcuni colossi dell'informatica, che hanno predisposto un codice etico al quale attenersi per vagliare la correttezza dei fornitori.

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

1. Quali sono le misure predisposte dall'UE in relazione alla regolamentazione e controllo delle modalità di acquisizione delle materie prime da parte dell'industria informatica?

2. Quali ulteriori misure ed iniziative, anche di risonanza pubblica, potrebbero essere poste in essere dalla Commissione, per ristabilire prassi commerciali più eque e dignitose?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

Il 5 marzo 2014 la Commissione e l'Alto Rappresentante dell'UE per gli Affari esteri e la Politica di sicurezza hanno proposto un approccio integrato UE ([1]) nella lotta contro i profitti derivanti dal commercio di minerali utilizzati per finanziare conflitti armati. L'approccio si concentra sullo sforzo di facilitare alle società l'approvvigionamento responsabile di stagno, tantalio, tungsteno e oro, incoraggiando l'utilizzazione di canali commerciali legali.

Nell'ambito di questo approccio UE, la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di regolamento ([2]) che crea un sistema UE di autocertificazione per gli importatori di stagno, tantalio, tungsteno e oro che scelgono di importare responsabilmente questi minerali all'interno dell'Unione. L'autocertificazione prevede che gli importatori UE di questi metalli e dei loro minerali esercitino il dovere di diligenza («due diligence») — ad esempio, per evitare di causare danni sul terreno — controllando e gestendo i loro acquisti e vendite in linea con le cinque fasi enunciate nella guida dell'OCSE sul dovere di diligenza. Lo scopo è di agire al livello più efficace della catena di approvvigionamento UE per questi minerali e facilitare il flusso di informazioni relative alla due diligence verso gli utilizzatori finali.

La Commissione propone inoltre una serie di incentivi a sostegno del regolamento per incoraggiare l'approccio di due diligence nei confronti della catena di approvvigionamento da parte delle società UE e di paesi terzi.

([1]) JOIN(2014) 8.
([2]) COM(2014) 111.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001757/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Supplies of minerals to the IT industry

The race to secure minerals for use in the products of information technology often contributes to the establishment of poor conditions for the people living in regions with abundant resources of these metals.

Exploitation, enslaving conditions of work, spoiling of the area and undermining of the democratic fundamentals of society and politics are some of the consequences deriving from the lack of proper regulation of the entities which assure the supply of metals with a sad reputation, such as coltan and tantalum.

The commercial policy of a few IT giants has recently been the subject of some definite action. These companies have established a code of practice to follow when assessing the good standing of suppliers.

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

1. What measures has the EU taken to regulate and control methods of procurement of raw materials by the IT industry?

2. What further measures and initiatives, of public interest and otherwise, might the Commission take to restore fairer and more dignified commercial practices?

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

On 5 March 2014, the Commission and the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy proposed an integrated EU approach ([1]) to stop profits from trade in minerals being used to finance armed conflicts. The focus of the approach is to make it easier for companies to source tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold responsibly and to encourage legitimate trading channels.

As part of the EU approach, the Commission adopted a proposal for a draft Regulation ([2]) setting up an EU system of self-certification for importers of tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold who choose to import responsibly into the Union. Self-certification requires EU importers of these metals and their ores to exercise 'due diligence' — i.e. to avoid causing harm on the ground — by monitoring and administering their purchases and sales in line with the five steps of the OECD Due Diligence Guidance. The aim is to act at the most effective level of the EU supply chain for these minerals and to facilitate the flow of due diligence information down to end users.

In addition, the Commission proposes a series of incentives supporting the regulation to encourage supply chain due diligence by EU companies and beyond.

([1]) JOIN(2014) 8.
([2]) COM(204) 111.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001758/14
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(17 februari 2014)

Betreft: Vernietiging geitenlammeren (opvolging vraag E-4018/09)

Op 26.11.2007 werden 542 geitenlammeren van Nederland naar Spanje geëxporteerd onder exportcertificaat NL.2007.00014812. Deze werden 27.11.2007 geslacht. Uit 30 bloedmonsters die genomen werden voor ecthyma werd op 30.11.2007 bij één getest lam Blauwtong 8 vastgesteld, waarop de hele partij door de veterinaire dienst van Barcelona in beslag werd genomen en vernietigd.

De Commissie concludeert op 17 september 2009:

„Daarom wijst alle bij de Commissie beschikbare informatie erop dat de maatregelen van de Spaanse autoriteiten waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst (…) in dit specifieke geval mogelijk niet aan de Gemeenschapswetgeving op het gebied van BT voldeden en niet wetenschappelijk onderbouwd waren."

Er is tot op heden nog geen enkele schadevergoeding uitbetaald aan de exporteur, ondanks dat deze is aangevraagd bij de nationale rechter.

— Waarom werd de partij geitenlammeren op 27.11.2007 vernietigd, ondanks dat dit in strijd was met de geldende regelgeving en ondanks dat vlees afkomstig van dieren die besmet zijn of zijn geweest met Blauwtong niet schadelijk is bij menselijke consumptie? '

— Heeft Spanje aan de Europese Commissie laten weten dat er niet in lijn met de EU-regelgeving is gehandeld? Zo ja, hoe kan het dat de Spaanse overheid vervolgens weigert een schadevergoeding te betalen?

— Wat zijn de resultaten van het onderzoek die de Europese Commissie van de Spaanse overheid heeft ontvangen zoals aangehaald door de Commissie in haar antwoord op 17 september 2009?

— Is de Europese Commissie van mening dat Spanje aanvullende maatregelen zou moeten treffen om tegemoet te komen aan de schade die is opgelopen door de exporteur?

— Er is op dit moment een nieuwe uitbraak van Blauwtong in Spanje. Handelen de Spaanse autoriteiten op dezelfde wijze als bij deze betreffende zaak of is deze zaak een uniek geval gebleken, veroorzaakt door het niet naleven van de regelgeving?

— Op welke wijze worden de Catalaanse en Spaanse overheid door de Europese Commissie aangespoord tot een oplossing te komen in deze zaak?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(18 maart 2014)

De Commissie verwijst naar haar vorige antwoord op de schriftelijke vraag E-4018/2009 ([1]).

Volgens de informatie waarover de Commissie beschikt, werd de kwestie behandeld door een nationale rechterlijke instantie in Spanje. De Commissie kan niet tussenbeide komen in beslissingen van nationale rechterlijke instanties.

De Commissie is niet bekend met een andere gelijkaardige situatie of een andere schending van de EU-wetgeving inzake deze ziekte, noch in Spanje, noch in een andere lidstaat waar blauwtongbesmetting is vastgesteld.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001758/14
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Destruction of kids (follow-up to Question E-4018/2009)

On 26 November 2007, 542 kids were exported from the Netherlands to Spain under export certificate NL.2007.00014812. They were slaughtered on 27 November 2007. Of 30 blood samples which were taken for ecthyma, one tested positive for bluetongue 8 on 30 November 2007, whereupon Barcelona veterinary service seized the whole consignment and destroyed it.

On 17 September 2009, the Commission concluded: 'Therefore, all the information available to the Commission suggests that the measures taken by the Spanish competent authorities mentioned by the Honourable Member (…) in this particular case might not have been in line with Community legislation on BT and not justified from a scientific point of view.'

To this day, the exporter still has not received any compensation, despite having applied to the domestic court for it.

— Why was the consignment of kids destroyed on 27 November 2011 although this was contrary to the regulations in force and although meat from animals which are, or have been, contaminated with bluetongue is not harmful for human consumption?

— Did Spain inform the Commission that action had been taken which did not accord with European law? If so, how is it possible that the Spanish authorities have since refused to pay compensation?

— What were the inquiry findings which the Commission received from the Spanish authorities as cited by the Commission in its answer of 17 September 2009?

— Does the Commission consider that Spain should take further measures to compensate the exporter for the loss caused?

— At present there is a fresh outbreak of bluetongue in Spain. Are the Spanish authorities proceeding in the same way as in the above case, or was that case merely a one-off caused by failure to comply with the regulations?

— How is the Commission encouraging the Catalan and Spanish authorities to find a solution to the above case?

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

The Commission refers to its previous answer to Written Question E-4018/2009 ([1]).

In accordance with the information available to the Commission, the issue was handled by the national court in Spain. The Commission does not have any competence to interfere with judgments of national courts.

The Commission is not aware of any other similar situation or any failure to comply with EU legislation on this disease neither in Spain nor in any other Member State where bluetongue infection is present.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001769/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(17. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Bewertung von Risiken durch elektromagnetische Felder

Am 2. September 2013 hat die Kommission in ihrer Antwort E-009216/2013 darauf verwiesen, dass der unabhängige Wissenschaftliche Ausschuss SCENIHR im Herbst 2013 eine Aktualisierung seiner Stellungnahme von 2009 über die potenziellen Risiken elektromagnetischer Felder herausgegeben habe.

1. Welche Bereiche wurden in diesem neuen aktualisierten Bericht abgedeckt? Welche Bereiche hat die Kommission angesprochen, als sie von „Bereichen mit bisher großen Wissenslücken" gesprochen hat?

2. Welche neuen Erkenntnisse hat der Ausschuss SCENIHR durch die neue Bewertung erhalten?

3. Welche Folgerungen und Konsequenzen wird die Kommission gegebenenfalls aus den neuen Informationen für die neue energiepolitische Strategie — insbesondere im Bereich der Erneuerung der Energieinfrastruktur — ziehen?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(28. März 2014)

Die neue vorläufige Stellungnahme ([1]) über elektromagnetische Felder und ihre Auswirkungen auf die Gesundheit wurde am 4. Februar 2014 zur öffentlichen Konsultation ([2]) veröffentlicht. Die Konsultation läuft bis zum 16. April 2014. Am 27. März ist in Athen eine öffentliche Anhörung ([3]) geplant, an die sich am 28. März 2014 ein Workshop zu elektromagnetischen Feldern und ihren Auswirkungen auf die Gesundheit anschließt, der in Zusammenarbeit mit der griechischen Präsidentschaft veranstaltet wird.

Mit der neuen vorläufigen Stellungnahme, die alle Frequenzbereiche abdeckt, wird die vorherige Stellungnahme aus dem Jahr 2009 unter Berücksichtigung neu verfügbarer wissenschaftlicher Erkenntnisse aktualisiert. Für einige Bereiche wie die Terahertz-Technik und mittlere Frequenzen stellte der Ausschuss fest, dass es nach wie vor an einschlägigen Studien mangelt, und forderte mehr Forschung.

In Bezug auf extrem niederfrequente Magnetfelder, die von Stromleitungen ausgehen, haben neue Studien einen möglichen Zusammenhang mit einer erhöhten Inzidenz der Alzheimer-Krankheit, auf die in der Stellungnahme von 2009 verwiesen worden war, nicht bestätigt. In Bezug auf infantile Leukämie erlauben die vorliegenden Daten noch immer kein abschließendes Urteil; ein Kausalzusammenhang konnte in den neuen Studien nicht nachgewiesen werden.

Insgesamt ergibt sich aus der neuen vorläufigen Stellungnahme keine Notwendigkeit einer Überarbeitung der derzeitigen EU-Rechtsvorschriften zu elektromagnetischen Feldern ([4]). Dies gilt auch für extrem niederfrequente Magnetfelder, die von Stromleitungen ausgehen. Die Kommission beabsichtigt, die Sache weiterhin zu beobachten und die Forschung zu den möglichen Auswirkungen von Strahlungsexposition auf die Gesundheit zu unterstützen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_o_041.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consultations/public_consultations/scenihr_consultation_19_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/events/ev_20140327_en.htm
([4]) Empfehlung 1999/519/EG des Rates: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1999:199:0059:0070:de:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001769/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Evaluation of risks posed by electromagnetic fields

On 2 September 2013, the Commission indicated in its answer E-009216/2013 that, in autumn 2013, the independent scientific committee SCENIHR had released an update to its opinion of 2009 regarding the potential risks of electromagnetic fields.

1. What areas were given consideration in this new updated report? What areas was the Commission referring to when it spoke of 'areas where important knowledge gaps were identified in the previous opinion'?

2. What new knowledge has the SCENIHR committee acquired from the new evaluation?

3. In relation to the new energy policy strategy, particularly in the area of energy infrastructure renewal, what conclusions will the Commission potentially draw from the new information, and what action might it take as a result of it?

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

The new preliminary opinion ([1]) on electromagnetic fields and potential health effects has been published for public consultation ([2]) on 4 February 2014. The consultation will be open until 16 April 2014. A public hearing ([3]) is scheduled in Athens on 27 March back to back with a workshop on electromagnetic fields and health effects (28 March 2014) organised in collaboration with the Greek Presidency.

The new preliminary opinion covers all frequency ranges and updates the previous opinion (2009) in the light of new available scientific evidence. For some areas such as Terahertz technologies and in the range of intermediate frequency, the Committee still noted a lack of relevant studies and called for more research.

In other fields such as extremely low frequency, magnetic fields originating from power lines, new studies have not confirmed the possible association of extremely low frequency with an increased incidence rate of Alzheimer's disease, which was cited in the 2009 opinion. With regard to childhood leukaemia, the evidence is still inconclusive and no causal mechanism could be demonstrated by the new studies.

Overall, the preliminary opinion has not indicated a need to revise the current EU legislative framework on electromagnetic fields ([4]). This also includes extremely low frequency emitted from power lines. The Commission intends to continue keeping the matter under review and to support research on the possible health effects of exposure to radiation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_o_041.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consultations/public_consultations/scenihr_consultation_19_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/events/ev_20140327_en.htm
([4]) Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1999:199:0059:0070:en:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001774/14
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Non-compliant biofuels and bioliquids

1. What steps is the Commission taking to screen biofuels and bioliquids to ensure that they are not in breach of Article 17 of the renewable energy directive?

2. Can the Commission please confirm whether any consignments of biofuels or bioliquids entering the EU have been found to be non-compliant with Article 17, thereby preventing them from being counted towards Member States' renewable energy targets and from receiving any state support?

3. If any biofuels or bioliquids have been found to be non-compliant, please provide details on the number of consignments, where they came from and in what quantities.

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

1. The Renewable Energy Directive provides that biofuels must comply with the sustainability criteria in order to count towards the renewable energy targets, the fulfilment of national renewable energy obligations or to be eligible for financial support. Following the principle of subsidiarity the Member States are responsible to implement the provisions of the directive. The role of the Commission is to monitor whether the Member States have respected their obligations. In this context the Commission has referred several Member States to court for non-transposition of parts of the directive including the sustainability criteria for biofuels.

2 and 3. It is the responsibility of the Member States to ensure that only sustainable biofuels are supported or taken into account for the renewable energy targets. Data on the amount of biofuels that has been found to be non-compliant with the criteria is not available at the EU level.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001778/14
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Wynagrodzenia dla terrorystów przebywających w izraelskich więzieniach

Jest ogólnie znanym faktem, że Palestyńska Władza Narodowa z dumą przyznaje się do niezgodnego z prawem wydawania ponad 6 % swojego budżetu – otrzymywanego m.in. od UE, gdzie finansowanie terroryzmu jest niezgodne z prawem – na wynagrodzenia dla terrorystów przebywających w izraelskich więzieniach oraz na emerytury dla rodzin zamachowców samobójców. Palestyński minister ds. więźniów Issa Qarake przyznał w telewizji, że wynagrodzenia są bezpośrednio proporcjonalne do wyroku, jaki otrzymał dany terrorysta, oraz do liczby Żydów, którzy zginęli w danym zamachu.

1. Jakich informacji w tej sprawie może udzielić ESDZ?

2. Jaka jest strategia Komisji, aby fundusze UE przestały być wykorzystywane do wypłacania wynagrodzeń terrorystom przebywającym w izraelskich więzieniach? Ze względu na fakt, że ostatnie znane przypadki płacenia za zabijanie Żydów miały miejsce w nazistowskich Niemczech, czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel UE potępia taką praktykę?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(26 marca 2014 r.)

UE jest świadoma, że Autonomia Palestyńska posiada system świadczeń dla więźniów palestyńskich, ich rodzin i byłych więźniów. Program ten nie jest i nigdy nie był finansowany przez UE.

Wszystkie środki przeznaczane przez UE na wynagrodzenia, emerytury i świadczenia socjalne dla Autonomii Palestyńskiej podlegają rygorystycznym procedurom weryfikacji *ex ante* i *ex post*, w tym zwłaszcza kontroli nazwisk beneficjentów w uznanej bazie danych osób notowanych jako mające związek z terroryzmem w jakiejkolwiek formie. Każde nazwisko wykryte podczas takiej kontroli jest automatycznie usuwane z wykazu beneficjentów.

Komisja uprzejmie prosi również szanownego Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią udzieloną na pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie nr E-14320/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001778/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Salaries to terrorists in Israeli prisons

It is a well-known fact that the Palestinian Authority proudly owns up to illegally spending over 6% of its budget — donated by, among others, the EU, where funding terrorism is against the law — on salaries for terrorists in Israeli prisons and pensions for the families of suicide bombers. The Palestinian Prisoner Affairs Minister, Issa Qarake, has admitted on television that the salaries are directly proportional to the terrorists' sentences and the number of Jews they have killed.

1. What information can the EEAS provide concerning this case?

2. What is the Commission's strategy to stop EU funds being used to pay salaries to terrorists in Israeli prisons? As the last known case of paying money for killing Jews was in Nazi Germany, will the EU High Representative condemn this practice?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The EU is aware that the Palestinian Authority has a system of allowances in place for Palestinian prisoners, their families and ex-detainees. This scheme is not and has never been financed by the EU.

All the funds the EU allocates to the Palestinian Authority for salaries, pensions and social allocations, are subject to rigorous *ex ante* and *ex post* verification procedures, notably including a specific check against a recognised data base of individuals listed as having a connection with terrorism of any sort. Any name which is signalled by the check is automatically deleted from the list of beneficiaries.

The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-14320/2013. ([1])

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

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-001779/14
upućeno Komisiji
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(17. veljače 2014.)

Predmet: Opasnost od odjevnih proizvoda kontaminiranih potencijalno opasnim kemikalijama

Istraživanje vodeće svjetske ekološke organizacije Greenpeace provedeno nad 141 proizvodom svjetskih modnih brendova pokazalo je zabrinjavajuće rezultate.

Na dvije trećine testiranih proizvoda pronađeni su nonilfenol etoksilati, četiri su uzorka sadržavala visoke doze toksičnih ftalata, a na nekima su pronađeni kancerogeni amini. Posebice zabrinjava prisutnost opasnih kemikalija na artiklima namijenjenima djeci.

Posljedica je to industrijske obrade tekstila pri kojoj se koristi niz tvari koje mogu imati razoran učinak na ljudsko zdravlje. Radi se o kemikalijama koje, ovisno o vrsti i koncentraciji, mogu izazvati posljedice u rasponu od svrbeža do raka. Zbog neadekvatnih sigurnosnih procedura u tvornicama kemijski kontaminirani proizvodi pronađu put do polica trgovina i ormara europskih građana.

1. Je li Komisija upoznata s ovim istraživanjem i njegovim nalazima?

2. Poduzima li Komisija kakve mjere u ispitivanju prisutnosti potencijalno opasnih kemikalija na odjevnim artiklima u europskim trgovinama?

3. Poduzima li Komisija kakve mjere u zaštiti zdravlja i potrošačkih prava građana vezano uz odjevne proizvode kontaminirane potencijalno opasnim kemikalijama?

Odgovor g. Mimice u ime Komisije
(26. ožujka 2014.)

Komisija je svjesna Greenpeaceovih ispitivanja tekstilnih i kožnih proizvoda, uključujući najnoviju studiju iz 2014., kojima je utvrđena prisutnost opasnih kemikalija poput nonilfenol etoksilata i ftalata. ([1])

U pogledu ograničenja uporabe potencijalno opasnih kemikalija u odjeći i mjera poduzetih u svrhu zaštite potrošača, Komisija upućuje uvaženog zastupnika na svoj odgovor na upit E-00366/2014.

Komisija smatra da trenutačno nisu potrebne dodatne mjere.

([1]) http://www.greenpeace.org/eastasia/publications/reports/toxics/2014/little-story-monsters-closet/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001779/14
to the Commission
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Danger from clothing products contaminated with potentially dangerous chemicals

Research by the world's leading environmental organisation, Greenpeace, conducted on 141 global fashion brand products produced disturbing results.

Nonylphenol ethoxylates were found in two-thirds of the tested products, four samples contained high levels of toxic phthalates, and carcinogenic amines were found in some. The presence of hazardous chemicals in articles intended for children is of particular concern.

This is a result of the industrial treatment of textiles where a range of substances are used that can have a damaging effect on human health. Depending on their type and concentration, these chemicals can cause effects ranging from itching to cancer. Due to inadequate safety procedures in factories, chemically contaminated products find their way to shop shelves and the wardrobes of European citizens.

1. Is the Commission aware of this research and its findings?

2. Is the Commission taking any measures to test for the presence of potentially hazardous chemicals in items of clothing in European shops?

3. Is the Commission taking any measures to protect the health and consumer rights of citizens in relation to clothing products contaminated by potentially dangerous chemicals?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The Commission is aware of the Greenpeace investigations carried out in textiles and leather products that identified hazardous chemicals like nonylphenol ethoxylates and phthalates, including the most recent study from 2014. ([1])

As regards the restrictions on the use of potentially dangerous chemicals in clothing and measures taken to protect consumers, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply to the Question E-00366/2014.

It does not see a need for additional measures at present.

([1]) http://www.greenpeace.org/eastasia/publications/reports/toxics/2014/little-story-monsters-closet/

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-001781/14
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(17. veljače 2014.)

Predmet: Lažno prijavljeni u RH u kontekstu europske demografske statistike

Prema Zakonodavnoj rezoluciji Europskog parlamenta od 22. listopada 2013. o prijedlogu Uredbe Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća o europskoj demografskoj statistici države članice dostavljaju Komisiji (Eurostatu) podatke o svojem stanovništvu s uobičajenim boravištem u referentnom trenutku.

Republika Hrvatska ima problem s tzv. lažno prijavljenim stanovnicima koji žive u susjednim državama, a u Hrvatskoj se prijavljuju zbog socijalnih povlastica ili kako bi bili dio političkog i izbornog inženjeringa. Posljedice oba slučaja su nepravedne: u prvom slučaju manje novca za socijalne povlastice ostaje onima koji doista žive na tlu Republike Hrvatske, a u drugom se na skandalozan i nedemokratski način bira lokalna vlast, između ostalih, i od strane onih državljana koji uopće ne žive na tlu Republike Hrvatske.

Smatra li Komisija da tako lažno stvorena demografska slika Hrvatske šteti našim zajedničkim težnjama za ujednačavanjem kriterija u europskoj statistici kako bismo izbjegli političke manipulacije statistikom? Također bih željela znati koje mehanizme Komisija može preporučiti Republici Hrvatskoj kako bismo na ovom polju došli do pravednog rješenja koje bi bilo u europskom, ali ujedno i u demokratskom duhu.

Odgovor g. Šemete u ime Komisije
(28. ožujka 2014.)

Eurostat stalno nastoji poboljšati kvalitetu objavljenih statističkih podataka. S tim ciljem, Komisija je predstavila prijedlog na temelju kojeg su Europski parlament i Vijeće donijeli Uredbu (EU) br. 1260/2013 o europskoj demografskoj statistici ([1]).

Uredbom (EU) br. 1260/2013 za glasovanje kvalificiranom većinom u Vijeću (članak 4.) propisuje se međunarodno preporučena definicija stanovništva „uobičajenog boravišta" ([2]), a za demografsku statistiku općenito (članak 3.) zemljama je dopuštena fleksibilnost te mogu koristiti svoje nacionalne definicije stanovništva — uglavnom za legalno ili prijavljeno stanovništvo. Osim toga, sve države članice moraju provesti studije izvedivosti o korištenju stroge definicije „uobičajenog boravišta" za članak 3. i Komisiji dostaviti rezultate tri godine nakon stupanja te Uredbe na snagu. Komisija će Europskom parlamentu i Vijeću do kraja 2018. podnijeti izvješće, uključujući sintezu rezultata studija izvedivosti, kao i prijedloge, ako to bude primjereno, za poboljšanje pravnog okvira za statističke podatke o stanovništvu.

([1]) SL L 330, 10.12.2013., str. 39.

([2]) „uobičajeno boravište" znači mjesto na kojem osoba uobičajeno provodi razdoblje dnevnog odmora, bez obzira na privremenu odsutnost za potrebe rekreacije, praznika, posjeta prijateljima i rodbini, posla, liječenja ili vjerskog hodočašća. Samo se sljedeće osobe smatraju osobama s uobičajenim boravištem na određenom geografskom području:
i. one koje su živjele u svojem mjestu uobičajenog boravišta u neprekidnom razdoblju od barem 12 mjeseci prije referentnog trenutka; ili.
ii. one koje su stigle u svoje mjesto uobičajenog boravišta tijekom 12 mjeseci prije referentnog trenutka s namjerom da tamo ostanu barem godinu dana.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001781/14
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Falsely registered persons in Croatia and European statistics on demography

According to the European Parliament legislative resolution of 22 October 2013 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on European statistics on demography, Member States must provide the Commission (Eurostat) with data on their usually resident population at the reference time.

Croatia has a problem with so-called 'falsely registered inhabitants', who live in neighbouring countries but are registered in Croatia in order to obtain social benefits or for the purposes of political and electoral engineering. The consequences of both are unjust: in the first case, less money for social benefits remains for those who actually live in Croatia. In the other case, local authorities are elected in a scandalous and undemocratic manner, inter alia, by citizens who do not even live in Croatia.

Does the Commission consider that such a distorted demographic profile of Croatia damages our joint efforts to unify European statistics criteria to avoid the political manipulation of statistics? I would also like to know which mechanisms the Commission can recommend to Croatia in order to arrive at a just solution in this matter that would be in the European, as well as in a democratic, spirit.

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

Eurostat continuously strives to improve the quality of published statistics. To that end, the Commission presented a proposal which led to the adoption by the European Parliament and the Council of Regulation (EU) No 1260/2013 on European demographic statistics ([1]).

Regulation (EU) No 1260/2013 imposes the internationally recommended population definition of 'usual residence' ([2]) to be used for qualified majority voting in the Council (Article 4) while for demographic statistics in general (Article 3) flexibility is given to countries to use national population definitions — mainly legal or registered population. In addition, all countries have to implement feasibility studies on the use of a strict 'usual residence' definition for Article 3 and to transmit the results to the Commission three years after the entry into force of the regulation. The Commission shall submit a report to EP/Council by the end of 2018 including synthesis of results of feasibility studies as well as proposals, if appropriate, to improve the legal framework for the statistics on population.

([1]) OJ L 330, 10.12.2013, p. 39.

([2]) 'usual residence' means the place where a person normally spends the daily period of rest, regardless of temporary absences for purposes of recreation, holidays, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage. The following persons alone shall be considered to be usual residents of a specific geographical area:

(i) those who have lived in their place of usual residence for a continuous period of at least 12 months before the reference time; or

(ii) those who arrived in their place of usual residence during the 12 months before the reference time with the intention of staying there for at least one year.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001789/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(17 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Modalità di utilizzazione per i medicinali di autosomministrazione

Come previsto anche dalla direttiva 2001/83/CE recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano, quale modificata dalla direttiva 2011/62/UE, lo scopo principale delle norme relative alla produzione, alla distribuzione e all'uso di medicinali deve essere quello di assicurare la tutela della sanità pubblica.

La stessa direttiva prevede che le disposizioni relative alle informazioni da fornire ai pazienti devono garantire un livello elevato di tutela dei consumatori, così da permettere un impiego corretto dei medicinali sulla base di informazioni complete e comprensibili.

Pr i medicinali di autosomministrazione devono essere presenti le modalità di di utilizzazione, ma la normativa prevede che queste vengano redatte nella o nelle lingue ufficiali dello Stato membro in cui il medicinale è immesso in commercio.

Per tali ragioni molti medicinali di autosomministrazione vengono venduti con modalità di utilizzazione redatte nella sola lingua ufficiale dello Stato membro, il che può creare notevoli difficoltà di comprensione e di accessibilità al farmaco per un cittadino di un altro Stato membro.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se ritiene tale possibilità in contraddizione con il principio di tutela della sanità pubblica e con quell'elevato livello di tutela che permetta un impiego corretto dei medicinali sulla base di informazioni complete e comprensibili;

2. se ritiene che, oltre alla possibilità di redigere queste informazioni in lingue diverse, siano necessarie altre forme di incentivo o obbligo al fine di rendere maggiormente comprensibili e accessibili tali informazioni?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(1º aprile 2014)

La normativa dell'UE sui medicinali ([1]) stabilisce che il foglietto illustrativo debba essere redatto e strutturato in modo tale da risultare chiaro e comprensibile, permettendo ai consumatori un uso corretto, all'occorrenza grazie anche all'aiuto di operatori sanitari. Come riferito dall'Onorevole deputato, il foglietto illustrativo deve risultare chiaramente leggibile in una o più lingue ufficiali dello Stato membro nel quale il prodotto è venduto, secondo quanto specificato a livello nazionale. Attualmente si sta valutando la leggibilità del foglietto illustrativo dei medicinali per uso umano nell'ambito della legislazione grazie ad uno studio svolto per conto della Commissione.

La normativa dell'Unione consente inoltre che il foglietto illustrativo possa contenere ulteriori informazioni (in aggiunta a quelle prescritte dalla legge) utili ai pazienti, purché queste siano compatibili con il riassunto delle caratteristiche del prodotto e non contengano elementi di carattere promozionale.

Va ricordato infine che il foglietto illustrativo di medicinali autorizzati mediante procedura centralizzata è tradotto in tutte le lingue ufficiali dell'UE e che tutte le traduzioni sono pubblicate sulla pagina web del Registro comunitario dei medicinali per uso umano (allegato IIIB). ([2])

([1]) Direttiva 2001/83/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 novembre 2001, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano (GU L 311 del 28.11.2001, pag. 67).

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/register.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001789/14
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(17 February 2014)

Subject: Methods of use for self-medication products

In accordance with Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, as amended by Directive 2011/62/EU, the essential aim of any rules governing the production, distribution and use of medicinal products must be to safeguard public health.

The same Directive also stipulates that the provisions governing the information supplied to users should provide a high degree of consumer protection, in order that medicinal products may be used correctly on the basis of full and comprehensible information.

The methods of use must be provided for all self-medication products, but the regulation stipulates that such information must be clearly legible in the official language or languages of the Member State where the medicinal product is placed on the market.

Consequently, the methods of use of many self-medication products are only written in the official language of the Member State in which these products are sold, which could potentially make it very difficult for citizens from other Member States to understand how to use the product or even gain access to it.

1. In the Commission's opinion, does this eventuality contradict the principle of safeguarding public health, and mean that the high degree of protection that should be provided in order that medicinal products may be used correctly on the basis of full and comprehensible information is not actually being provided?

2. Apart from the possibility of providing methods of use in different languages, does the Commission believe that other forms of incentives or obligations are needed in order to make this information more understandable and accessible?

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

The EU legislation on medicinal products ([1]) provides that the package leaflet must be written and designed in such a way as to be clear and understandable, enabling users to act appropriately, when necessary with the help of health professionals. As mentioned by the Honourable Member of the European Parliament the package leaflet must be clearly legible in an official language or official languages of the Member State where the medicinal product is placed on the market as specified by the concerned Member State. The readability of the package leaflet of medicinal products for human use is currently being assessed within the current legislative framework, through a study that has been contracted out by the Commission.

The EU legislation also provides that the package leaflet may also include other information than the one legally required which would be useful to the patients under the conditions that they are compatible with the summary of product characteristics and they do not contain element of a promotional nature.

Finally, it can be noted that the package leaflet of centrally authorised products is translated in all official languages of the EU and all linguistic versions are published on the web page of the Community register of medicinal products for human use (Annex IIIB) ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, of 28.11.2001, p. 67.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/register.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001798/14
adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(18 februarie 2014)

Subiect: VP/HR — Statutul legal al regiunii Sahara Occidentală

Statutul legal al regiunii Sahara Occidentală nu este clarificat la nivel internațional. Uniunea Europeană și-a reiterat poziția de mai multe ori, conform căreia sprijină eforturile Secretarului General al ONU pentru atingerea unei soluții politice care să asigure dreptul la autodeterminare a populației din Sahara Occidentală, în conformitate cu principiile Cartei ONU.

Care sunt măsurile pe care Uniunea le întreprinde pentru facilitarea unei decizii care să clarifice la nivel internațional statutul legal al Saharei Occidentale?

Răspuns dat de Înaltul Reprezentant/doamna vicepreședinte Ashton în numele Comisiei
(31 martie 2014)

În anul 1963, Comitetul special al ONU pentru decolonizare a declarat Sahara Occidentală ca fiind un „teritoriu neautonom ce urmează a fi decolonizat”, în conformitate cu Rezoluția 1514 (XV) a Adunării Generale din 14 decembrie 1960. Marocul este administratorul de facto al acestui teritoriu începând din 1976.

UE sprijină eforturile Secretarului General al ONU de a găsi o soluție politică echitabilă, de durată și acceptabilă pentru ambele părți interesate, care să prevadă autodeterminarea populației din Sahara Occidentală în cadrul unor acorduri conforme cu principiile și scopurile enunțate de Carta Organizației Națiunilor Unite.

UE salută eforturile depuse în acest sens de trimisul personal al Secretarului General al ONU pentru Sahara Occidentală, Christopher Ross, precum și cele realizate în cadrul MINURSO (misiunea ONU de menținere a păcii în regiune).

În repetate rânduri, UE (i) și-a exprimat îngrijorarea cu privire la durata conflictului din Sahara Occidentală și la consecințele acestuia asupra securității, a respectării drepturilor omului și a cooperării în regiune; (ii) a abordat aspecte critice ale acestui subiect în cursul reuniunilor organismelor mixte din cadrul Acordului de asociere UE/Maroc și al Acordului de asociere UE/Algeria, (iii) a făcut apel la toate părțile implicate să se abțină de la acte de violență și să respecte drepturile omului; (iv) și-a exprimat susținerea față de Rezoluția 2099 (2013) a Consiliului de Securitate al ONU care „subliniază importanța îmbunătățirii situației drepturilor omului în Sahara Occidentală și în taberele de refugiați din Tindouf” și „salută consolidarea comisiilor pentru drepturile omului din cadrul Consiliului Național care își desfășoară activitatea în Dakhla și Laayoune”.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001798/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Legal status of Western Sahara

The legal status of Western Sahara has not been clarified at international level. The EU has many times reiterated its support for efforts by the UN Secretary-General to reach a political solution guaranteeing the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination in accordance with the principles set out in the UN Charter.

What measures is the EU taking to facilitate a decision clarifying the legal status of Western Sahara at international level?

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

In 1963, the UN Special Committee on Decolonisation declared Western Sahara as a 'non-self-governing territory to be decolonised' in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. Morocco is de facto administrator of this territory since 1976.

The EU supports the UN Secretary-General's efforts to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

The EU welcomes the efforts of the UN SG's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, Christopher Ross and the MINURSO (UN peacekeeping mission).

The EU has repeatedly (i) expressed concern about the long duration of the Western Sahara conflict and the implications for the security, respect of human rights and cooperation in the region; (ii) Addressed critical issues in the meetings of the joint bodies under the EU/Morocco Association Agreement and EU/Algeria Association Agreement, (iii) called on all parties to refrain from violence and to respect human rights; (iv) Expressed support to the UN Security Council Resolution 2099 (2013) which 'stress[es] the importance of improving human rights situation in Western Sahara and the Tindouf camps' and 'welcome[s] the strengthening of the National Council on Human Rights Commissions operating in Dakhla and Laayoune'.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001801/14
an die Kommission
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D) und Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(18. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Bearbeitung von parlamentarischen Anfragen

Angesichts der ausstehenden Antwort auf die parlamentarische Anfrage der MEPs Josef Weidenholzer und Jutta Steinruck vom 4. Dezember 2013 zum Europäischen Jahr 2014 stellen sich folgende Fragen:

1. Welche Umstände haben die Kommission an der fristgerechten Beantwortung der parlamentarischen Anfrage behindert?

2. Ist es üblich, dass die Kommission die Frist zur Beantwortung von parlamentarischen Anfragen überschreitet?

3. Wie viele parlamentarische Anfragen wurden im Jahr 2013 vom Europäischen Parlament an die Kommission gestellt?

4. Wie viele der parlamentarischen Anfragen, die das Europäische Parlament im Jahr 2013 an die Europäische Kommission gestellt hat, konnten fristgerecht beantwortet werden?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(20. März 2014)

Die Antwort der Kommission auf die Anfrage E-013735/2013 wurde am 4.März 2014 übermittelt ([1]).

Die Kommission möchte nochmals betonen, dass sie parlamentarischen Anfragen, die wichtiger Bestandteil der demokratischen Kontrolle durch das Parlament sind, große Aufmerksamkeit schenkt. Sie ist stets bemüht, alle Anfragen innerhalb einer kurzen Frist möglichst umfassend und genau zu beantworten und bedauert, dass bei der Beantwortung der vorgenannten Anfrage Verzögerungen aufgetreten sind.

Die Anzahl der schriftlichen Anfragen ist in den letzten Jahren stark gestiegen. Im Jahr 2013 hat die Kommission mehr als 13 000 schriftliche Anfragen von Mitgliedern des Europäischen Parlaments beantwortet. Zudem enthielt ein Großteil der Anfragen mehrere Unterfragen. Rund 70 % der Anfragen wurden innerhalb von sechs Wochen beantwortet.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001801/14
to the Commission
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D) and Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Handling parliamentary questions

In view of the outstanding answer to the parliamentary question of 4 December 2013 asked by MEPs Josef Weidenholzer and Jutta Steinruck in relation to European Year 2014, would the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What circumstances prevented the Commission from answering the parliamentary question in a timely manner?

2. Is it normal for the Commission to exceed the time limit set for answering parliamentary questions?

3. How many parliamentary questions did the European Parliament ask the Commission in 2013?

4. How many of the parliamentary questions that the European Parliament asked the European Commission in 2013 was it possible to answer in a timely manner?

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

The reply to the Honourable Members' Question E-013735/2013 was transmitted by the Commission on 4 March 2014 ([1]).

The Commission wishes to reiterate that it pays great attention to parliamentary questions, an important element of the democratic scrutiny exercised by Parliament. It seeks to answer all questions as completely and as accurately as possible within a short period of time and therefore regrets the delay that has occurred in replying to the abovementioned question.

The number of written questions has increased considerably during recent years. In 2013, the Commission responded to more than 13 000 written questions from Members of the European Parliament. Moreover, many of these questions included several sub questions. The Commission responded to about 70% of these questions within six weeks.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001802/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Martin (S&D)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Scot detained in Indian prison

On 18 October 2013, while working for the maritime security company Advanfort, UK citizen William (Billy) Irving, along with all 34 others on board the ship MV Seaman Guard Ohio, was arrested in the port of Tuticorin (Tamil Nadu, India) and charged with having entered Indian waters without permission and having entered the Indian Ocean with firearms.

I believe that Mr Irving was a member of the ship's security team and, together with 6 other British men and 14 Estonians, was engaged in security to protect merchant vessels against pirates while travelling through dangerous waters.

These men are still being held in India pending their trial.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the plight of these men, and in a position to report on the matter? Is she able to intervene to secure a fair trial that respects Mr Irving's rights as an EU citizen?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the case of the Estonian and UK security personnel of the ship MV Seaman Guard Ohio arrested in October last year and still awaiting their trial in India.

The case was raised at the Foreign Policy Consultations with India in New Delhi on 24 January. The EEAS Chief Operating Officer Mr David O'Sullivan, who led the EU delegation on that occasion, brought this up with his Indian counterpart, the Secretary Europe West of the Ministry of External Affairs Mr Dinkar Khullar, who promised to look into the matter.

The HR/VP will continue following the case, asking the Indian authorities to give it a fair and legally sound solution as rapidly as possible.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001809/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(18 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Etichettatura VEG per i medicinali

Un articolo pubblicato lo scorso 5 febbraio su una nota rivista britannica di medicina richiede più chiarezza nell'etichettatura dei farmaci in favore dei vegetariani. Secondo i due autori, la maggior parte dei farmaci contiene prodotti di origine animale e non chiarisce se questi siano adatti anche ai vegetariani, che invece esigono una etichettatura ben chiara, in maniera da poter informare i consumatori finali, i medici e i farmacisti. In questo modo, chi è a restrizione dietetica potrà informarsi presso il personale esperto prima di assumere qualsiasi farmaco.

Tra gli ingredienti di questo genere, i principali sono estratti di caglio bovino (contenenti lattosio), gelatine varie provenienti da scarti di vacche, maiali e pesci, magnesio stearato quasi sempre proveniente da bovini, maiali e pecore.

Alla luce di questo articolo, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza di questa problematica?

2. è a conoscenza di iniziative, programmi o atti legislativi adottati in merito negli Stati membri o in altri paesi extra-europei?

3. intende esaminare la questione in maniera più approfondita per valutare vantaggi e svantaggi e una potenziale linea d'azione?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2014)

I requisiti in materia di etichettatura dei prodotti medicinali sono specificati nella legislazione farmaceutica ([1]). L'informazione sul prodotto approvata dalle autorità competenti nel contesto dell'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione di un medicinale (sintesi delle caratteristiche del prodotto, foglio illustrativo, etichetta) contiene le informazioni necessarie per un uso sicuro ed efficace.

Conformemente alla linea guida della Commissione, gli ingredienti/eccipienti aventi un'azione riconosciuta, ad esempio il lattosio, devono figurare sull'etichetta di un prodotto medicinale ([2]). Inoltre, nella domanda di autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio, gli eccipienti di origine umana o animale devono essere notificati ai regolatori ([3]). Sull'etichetta non è tuttavia prescritta la menzione dell'origine di una sostanza. Nella relazione scientifica di valutazione sono reperibili informazioni addizionali, ad esempio l'origine animale degli eccipienti. Le relazioni scientifiche di valutazione per i medicinali, per i quali la Commissione ha rilasciato un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione su scala unionale, sono pubblicate sul sito web dell'Agenzia europea per i medicinali (sono i cosiddetti European Public Assessment Reports, «EPAR», Relazioni pubbliche europee di valutazione) ([4]).

La Commissione sta perfezionando uno studio commissionato all'esterno sulla comprensibilità delle informazioni relative ai prodotti medicinali per i pazienti e gli operatori sanitari. Tuttavia, non vi è un capitolo specifico sull'etichettatura dei medicinali all'indirizzo dei vegetariani. La Commissione non è a conoscenza di iniziative, programmi o strumenti legislativi specifici per quanto concerne l'etichettatura dei medicinali per i vegetariani.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 726/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 31 marzo 2004, che istituisce procedure comunitarie per l'autorizzazione e la sorveglianza dei medicinali per uso umano e veterinario, e che istituisce l'agenzia europea per i medicinali, GU L 136 del 30.4.2004, e successive modifiche; direttiva 2001/83/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 novembre 2001, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano, GU L 311 del 28.11.2001 e successive modifiche.

([2]) Linea guida sugli eccipienti nell'etichettatura e nel foglio illustrativo dei medicinali per uso umano, http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2009/09/WC500003412.pdf

([3]) Linea guida sugli eccipienti nel fascicolo della domanda di autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio di un prodotto medicinale, http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2009/09/WC500003382.pdf

([4]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/landing/epar_search.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d124.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001809/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: VEG labelling for medicines

An article published on 5 February in a well-known British medical journal calls for greater clarity in the labelling of drugs in the interests of vegetarians. According to the two authors, the majority of drugs contain products of animal origin and it is unclear whether they are suitable for vegetarians. Clearer labelling is necessary to ensure that end consumers, physicians and pharmacists are given correct information. This would ensure that persons on restricted diets could obtain information from specialist personnel before taking any drug.

The principal ingredients of this kind include extracts from pigs (containing lactose), various gelatins derived from the carcasses of cows, pigs and fish and magnesium stearate, almost always derived from cattle, pigs and sheep.

In the light of this article, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem?

2. Is the Commission aware of the implementation of relevant initiatives, programmes or legislative acts in member or non-member states?

3. Does the Commission intend to examine this question in greater depth to assess the advantages and disadvantages and formulate a potential line of action?

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

Requirements for labelling of medicinal products are specified in the pharmaceutical legislation ([1]). Product information approved by the competent authorities as part of the marketing authorisation of a medicine (Summary of product characteristics, Package leaflet, Labelling) contains information necessary for its safe and effective use.

According to the Commission's guideline, any ingredient/excipient with a recognised action, e.g. lactose, has to be included on the label of a medicinal product ([2]). In addition, in the marketing authorisation application, excipients of human or animal origin need to be identified to regulators ([3]). However, it is not required to mention the origin of a substance on the labelling. Additional information, such as the animal origin of excipients can be found in the scientific assessment report. The scientific assessment reports for medicinal products for which the Commission has granted EU-wide marketing authorisation, are published on the website of the European Medicines Agency (these are known as European Public Assessment Reports, 'EPAR') ([4]).

The Commission is now finalising an outsourced study on the comprehensibility of the medicinal product's product information to patients and healthcare professionals. However, there is no specific focus on labelling of medicines in the interests of vegetarians. Commission is not aware of special initiatives, programmes or legislative acts with respect of labelling of drugs for vegetarians.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, as amended, Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.

([2]) Guideline on 'Excipients in the label and package leaflet of medicinal products for human use', http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2009/09/WC500003412.pdf

([3]) Guideline on excipients in the dossier for application for marketing authorisation of a medicinal product, http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2009/09/WC500003382.pdf

([4]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/landing/epar_search.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d124

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001813/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(18 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Progetto pilota sanità per bambini in provincia di Bari

L'Azienda sanitaria locale di Bari sta avviando all'interno delle scuole primarie e dell'infanzia nel nostro territorio un nuovo progetto pilota che intende creare una un confronto tra le scuole, le famiglie e le istituzioni pubbliche della sanità, al fine di salvaguardare i più piccoli pensando al loro futuro.

Il progetto interessa i bambini tra i 4 e i 7 anni, i quali saranno sottoposti ad uno screening per monitorare le difficoltà infantili di sviluppo emotivo, motorio, linguistico e comportamentale.

Lo scopo è di creare una serie di interventi comuni che rispondano alle problematiche e alle necessità dei bambini, cercando di capire se si tratta di problemi transitori o necessitanti un intervento specialistico.

Il progetto è impegnato al rispetto della persona e della privacy della famiglia.

Questo percorso potrebbe portare alla risoluzione immediata e alla prevenzione di numerosi disturbi e patologie, migliorando il benessere della persona e comportando un ampio abbattimento dei costi sanitari successivi.

Alla luce di quanto detto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza del progetto;

2. è a conoscenza di progetti simili in Europa;

3. intende valutare l'efficacia del progetto per riproporlo eventualmente come buona pratica a livello europeo?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

La Commissione prende atto del progetto pilota avviato dalle autorità locali di Bari per proteggere la salute dei bambini, progetto di cui non era a conoscenza.

Lo studio 2012 «EuroPoPP-MH» ([1]) finanziato dal programma UE comprendeva descrizioni dei sistemi di salute mentale negli Stati membri. Conformemente a tale studio, il Belgio dispone di un programma per formare gli insegnanti a individuare i problemi di salute mentale. A Lussemburgo gruppi interdisciplinari di medicina scolastica conducono programmi di screening psico-medico-sociale ogni due anni.

I servizi della Commissione hanno trasmesso l'informazione sul progetto pilota di Bari agli esperti che conducono l'azione congiunta sulla salute e sul benessere mentale ([2]), cofinanziato dal programma unionale Salute. Un pacchetto di lavoro nell'ambito di questa azione congiunta è consacrato alla salute mentale nelle scuole e si prefigge di identificare le buone pratiche in collaborazione tra il settore della sanità e quello scolastico al fine di sviluppare raccomandazioni strategiche. L'azione congiunta non è tuttavia in grado di valutare l'efficacia di progetti specifici, come quello di Bari.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/docs/europopp_full_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001813/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Pilot health protection project for children in the province of Bari

The Bari local health authority is launching a new pilot project for local infant and primary schools to encourage cooperation with families and public healthcare institutions in safeguarding the future of the youngest .

The project involves the screening of children aged between 4 and 7 to monitor difficulties regarding their emotional, motor, linguistic and behavioural development.

The objective is to develop a number of joint measures in accordance with children's needs and the problems faced by them, distinguishing between temporary problems and those requiring the services of a specialist.

The project is designed to respect individual and family privacy.

This initiative could help prevent or resolve immediately many disturbances and disorders, thereby improving individual wellbeing and substantially reducing subsequent health costs.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of the project?

2. Does it know of any similar projects in Europe?

3. Will it evaluate the effectiveness of the project, possibly with a view to proposing it as a model for good practice at European level?

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

The Commission takes note of the pilot project, which the local authorities in Bari/Italy have set up to protect the health of children, which it was previously unaware of.

The 2012 'EuroPoPP-MH'-study ([1]) financed by the EU-Programme included descriptions of mental health systems in Member States. According to this study, Belgium has a programme in place to train teachers to detect mental health problems. In Luxembourg, school medical interdisciplinary teams perform medico-psycho-social screening programmes every second year.

The Commission services have forwarded the information about the pilot project in Bari to the experts in the Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-being ([2]), co-financed from the EU-Health Programme. One work package of this Joint Action is dedicated to mental health in schools and seeks to identify good practices in collaboration between the health sector and schools and to develop policy recommendations. The Joint Action is not however in a position to evaluate the effectiveness of specific projects, such as the one in Bari.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/docs/europopp_full_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001815/14
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(18 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Zakaz wędzenia wędlin

Komisja Europejska zamierza od września ograniczyć ilość substancji smolistych wydzielających się podczas tradycyjnego wędzenia wędlin. W tym celu planuje zakazać produkcji wędzenia wędlin. Decyzja ta niekorzystnie odbije się na polskich firmach handlujących mięsem. W szczególności ucierpią na tym małe i średnie przedsiębiorstwa, a tysiące ludzi pracujących w wędzarniach straci pracę. Najgorsze jest jednak to, że ustalanie nowego prawa odbyło się bez uprzedniego poinformowania przedsiębiorców, których poinformowano po fakcie, że to, z czego żyją, od września będzie nielegalne.

W związku z powyższym pragnę zapytać:

1. Dlaczego Komisja pozwoliła na to, by ustalanie zakazu odbyło się bez wcześniejszego poinformowania przedsiębiorców?

2. Czy Komisja rozważyła, że poprzez tę decyzję zabija się kulturę regionalną, jako że tradycyjny – znany od setek lat – sposób wędzenia mięsa stanie się od września nielegalny?

3. Czy Komisja jest świadoma, że jeśli dany zakaz wejdzie w życie, to na rynku znajdą się wyłącznie wędliny „wędzone" chemicznie?

4. Dlaczego Komisja zezwala, aby obywatele Unii Europejskiej palili papierosy zawierające znacznie więcej substancji smolistych, a zabrania produkcji wędzonej wędliny?

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

1., 2. i 3. Komisja pragnie odesłać Szanownego Pana Posła do odpowiedzi na pisemne zapytania E-000044/2014 i E-000082/2014 ([1]).

4. Biorąc pod uwagę odpowiedzi udzielone na pytania 1, 2 i 3, Komisja pragnie podkreślić, że produkcja mięsa wędzonego nie została zakazana i że decyzje w sprawie polityki dotyczącej żywności i tytoniu nie mogą być ze sobą porównywane.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001815/14
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Prohibition on smoking of meat

As of September, the European Commission is intending to reduce the amount of tarry substances emitted during the traditional smoking of meats. To this end, it is planning to prohibit the production of smoked meats. This decision will have a negative impact on Polish businesses trading in meat. Small and medium-sized enterprises will particularly suffer in this respect and thousands or people working in smoking plants will lose their jobs. However, the worst aspect of this is that the new law was adopted without advance warning to businesses, which were informed after the fact that their livelihood would be unlawful from September.

In respect of the above, I wish to ask:

1. Why did the Commission allow the prohibition to be introduced without informing businesses in advance?

2. Has the Commission taken into account that this decision will destroy regional culture, because a centuries-old traditional means of smoking meat will become unlawful from September?

3. Is the Commission aware that if the prohibition enters into force, only chemically 'smoked' meats will be available on the market?

4. Why has the Commission allowed citizens of the European Union to smoke cigarettes containing substantially higher amounts of tarry substances but prohibited the production of smoked meats?

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

1. to 3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-000044/2014 and P-000082/2014 ([1]).

4. Taking into account the answers provided to questions 1, 2 and 3, the Commission wishes to underline that the production of smoked meat has not been prohibited and that policy decisions on food and tobacco cannot be compared.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001824/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(18 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: La nueva reforma del sistema tarifario eléctrico del Gobierno español (IV)

La nueva reforma del sistema tarifario eléctrico del Gobierno español entrará en vigor a partir del próximo 1 de abril. La factura experimentará cambios de precio cada hora según marque el mercado, lo cual hará casi imposible comprobar si la factura se ha hecho correctamente. La casuística es infinita: además de los 1 440 precios que se aplicarán a un solo usuario por su consumo de dos meses (24 horas al día, multiplicado por 60 días, para los que hayan pactado factura mensual), están los periodos de facturación que, para cada usuario, empiezan o terminan en días diferentes. Por otra parte, el precio a cobrar en cada caso dependerá de la potencia que tenga contratada cada uno ([1]). Además, todo el sistema eléctrico español deberá disponer de nuevos contadores de la luz *inteligentes* antes del 31 de diciembre de 2018, es decir, en tres años y diez meses, según indica el Plan de sustitución de equipos a medida ([2]), por el que los usuarios pagarán un 40 % más caro el alquiler del contador.

¿Cree la Comisión que esta reforma es transparente a la vista del consumidor?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión mantiene un seguimiento de los debates que se están llevando a cabo en España sobre las actuales reformas del sector energético y es plenamente consciente de la propuesta de medida descrita. Como la propuesta ha iniciado recientemente los procedimientos de consulta y aprobación en España, no se ha comunicado aún a la Comisión. Una vez superado este trámite, la Comisión estará en condiciones de evaluarla detenidamente. En términos generales, la Comisión ha expresado sus puntos de vista sobre la reforma energética que se está realizando aún en España en sus respuestas a las preguntas E-000093/2014, E-001821/2014 y E-001115/2014 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.economistas.org/Contenido/Consejo/ResumenPrensa/1_2014/11_FEBRERO/12-02-14/2_electric.pdf
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20140217/54400266536/nuevos-contadores-luz.html
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001824/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: New reform of the electricity tariff system by the Spanish Government (IV)

The new reform of the electricity tariff system by the Spanish Government is due to come into force as from 1 April this year. The prices in electricity bills will change every hour according to market fluctuations, which will make it almost impossible to verify if a bill has been calculated correctly. The variables are practically infinite: apart from the 1 440 prices charged to a customer for his/her consumption over two months (24 hours per day multiplied by 60 days for those who have opted for monthly bills), there will be billing periods that start or end on different days for each consumer. In addition, the price to be charged to each consumer will depend on the capacity contracted for ([1]). Furthermore, the whole electricity system in Spain will have to have new 'smart' electricity meters by 31 December 2018, i.e. within three years and ten months, according to the Plan for Replacement of Metering Equipment ([2]), which will mean that consumers will have to pay 40% more for leasing their meters.

Is the Commission of the view that this reform is transparent so far as consumers are concerned?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The Commission follows the current discussions in Spain relating to the ongoing reforms in the energy sector and is broadly aware of the proposal for the described act. As the proposal was recently sent into consultation and approval procedures in Spain, it has not yet notified to the Commission. Once this is done, the Commission will be in the position to assess it in detail. In general terms, the Commission has communicated its views on the still ongoing energy reform in Spain in its responses to questions E-000093/2014, E-001821/2014 and E-001115/2014 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.economistas.org/Contenido/Consejo/ResumenPrensa/1_2014/11_FEBRERO/12-02-14/2_electric.pdf
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20140217/54400266536/nuevos-contadores-luz.html
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001830/14
a la Comisión
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(18 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Evaluación de impacto ambiental del fracking en zonas Natura 2000

El proyecto Cronos de investigación de hidrocarburos afecta a zonas Natura 2000 de las Comunidades Autónomas de Castilla-La Mancha y Castilla y León. Se trata de espacios con figuras de especial protección, como las Parameras de Maranchón, Hoz del Mesa y Aragoncillo (LIC y ZEPA), en Castilla-La Mancha.

El Consejo de Ministros concedió el 26 de abril de 2013 a la empresa Frontera Energy Corporation S.L. un permiso de investigación sobre hidrocarburos por un período de 6 años. En la asociación Desarrollo Verde, una de las que han recurrido la citada autorización, se tienen dudas fundadas de que la empresa encargada de la investigación haya realizado la preceptiva evaluación de impacto ambiental que exige la normativa europea para una actuación de este tipo en zonas Natura 2000.

¿Puede el gobierno de un Estado miembro autorizar actuaciones de este tipo sin que la empresa adjudicataria haya realizado una evaluación de impacto ambiental sobre los territorios de Natura 2000?

¿Considera la Comisión que unos estudios de fractura hidráulica tendrán tan escasa repercusión medioambiental en zonas LIC y ZEPA como para que la administración no someta a evaluación de impacto ambiental tales proyectos?

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

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta que dio a la pregunta escrita P-001090/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+P-2014-001090+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001830/14
to the Commission
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Environmental impact assessment of fracking in Natura 2000 zones

The Cronos hydrocarbon exploration project affects Natura 2000 zones in the Autonomous Communities of Castilla-La Mancha and Castille and Leon. These include areas with special protection, such as the Parameras de Maranchón, Hoz del Mesa and Aragoncillo (SICs and SACs) in Castilla-La Mancha.

On 26 April 2013 the Council of Ministers granted a hydrocarbon exploration licence to the company Frontera Energy Corporation S.L. for a period of 6 years. The members of Desarrollo Verde, one of the associations that has appealed against the granting of this licence, have well-founded doubts that the firm responsible for the exploration has carried out the obligatory environmental impact assessment that is required by EU legislation for activities of this kind in Natura 2000 zones.

Can the government of a Member State authorise activities of this nature even though the company to whom the licence is granted has not carried out an environmental impact assessment of the Natura 2000 zones affected thereby?

Does the Commission consider that certain hydraulic fracturing operations will have such slight environmental repercussion in SIC and SAC zones that the government does not need to submit such projects to environmental impact assessment?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written question P-001090/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+P-2014-001090+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001831/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Medidas para la inclusión de las personas sordas en el programa Erasmus

Según datos de la Unión Europea de Sordos (EUD) en los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea habitan aproximadamente un millón de personas sordas que son usuarias del lenguaje de signos. Teniendo en cuenta que este elevado número de personas aún encuentra numerosos obstáculos para ser tenidos en cuenta en los procesos comunicativos de las instituciones, las instituciones europeas deberían garantizar su acceso pleno a la información y la participación política.

Sin embargo esto no se produce en una forma adecuada y por tanto se está violando la base de una sociedad democrática: la inclusión de todas las personas en los procesos de participación en las instituciones así como en el uso de los servicios e información pública. Existen numerosos servicios que ofrecen información pública que no implementan medidas de inclusión para este colectivo. Esto se produce pese a que la Unión Europea ha ratificado diferentes compromisos internacionales relativos a la inclusión de las personas con discapacidad, como la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad en 2010.

La Unión Europea pretende implementar su compromiso con las personas discapacitadas a través de la Estrategia Europea en materia de Discapacidad 2010-2020, que debería incluir acciones que permitan la plena integración de las personas sordas. Entre estas acciones necesarias dentro del ámbito de la UE, encontramos que el programa Erasmus, dirigido a jóvenes estudiantes, carece de adaptación alguna para las personas sordas usuarias del lenguaje de signos, desde la enseñanza de idiomas hasta la propia inclusión en los diferentes actos públicos que se celebran en dicho programa.

¿Dispone de una evaluación sobre las acciones necesarias para incluir a las personas sordas como plenas usuarias del programa Erasmus?

¿Piensa impulsar que las Universidades objetivo del citado programa Erasmus adapten sus contenidos y programas para facilitar el aprendizaje a personas sordas?

¿Piensa impulsar en las normas del programa Erasmus la obligatoriedad de que exista un intérprete de lenguaje de signos en el aula del país de destino?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

La inclusión de las personas sordas y, más en general, de los estudiantes y docentes con necesidades especiales es un elemento importante del programa Erasmus+, como ya lo fue del antiguo Programa de Aprendizaje Permanente (PAP).

Los Estudiantes de Erasmus+ pueden beneficiarse de los servicios de apoyo que ofrezca su centro de acogida a los estudiantes que, como los sordos o hipoacúsicos, presenten necesidades especiales. Estos servicios pueden incluir la intervención de asistentes para tomar apuntes, intérpretes, comunicadores o vocalizadores, además de otras ayudas.

A las agencias encargadas de la ejecución del programa Erasmus+ a nivel nacional se las anima a que asignen fondos para que las personas con necesidades especiales puedan estudiar o hacer prácticas en otros países, y a que financien medidas específicas en función de las necesidades de los alumnos. Esto permitió que trescientos treinta y seis estudiantes con necesidades especiales pudieran participar en Erasmus durante el curso académico 2010/11 (último año sobre el que se dispone de estadísticas).

Además, se han financiado varios proyectos de cooperación en el marco del antiguo PAP, como el proyecto ExchangeAbility, dirigido a facilitar la realización de estudios en el extranjero a los estudiantes con necesidades especiales (www.esn.org/sites/default/files/ea_handout.pdf).

En el marco del programa Erasmus+, cada uno de los centros de enseñanza superior se compromete, al firmar la Carta Erasmus, a garantizar la igualdad de acceso y de oportunidades para los participantes de todas las procedencias.

Varios «embajadores» de los estudiantes y docentes seleccionados para promover Erasmus+ son personas con necesidades especiales. Sus historias se pueden conocer aquí: http://issuu.com/iservice-europa/docs/eac-erasmus25?e=4998257/2694573

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001831/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Measures to include deaf people in the Erasmus programme

According to data from the European Union of the Deaf (EUD) around one million deaf people who use sign language live in the Member States of the European Union. Bearing in mind that such a large number of people still come across many barriers to being included in institutions' communicative processes, European institutions ought to have a duty to guarantee full access for them to information and political participation.

However, this does not happen properly and as a result the basis of a democratic society, namely the inclusion of everyone in the processes of participation in institutions and in the use of public information and services, is being violated. There are numerous services offering public information that do not implement measures of inclusion for these people, and this occurs despite the fact that the European Union has ratified various international commitments relating to the inclusion of disabled people, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010.

The European Union proposes to implement its commitment to disabled people by means of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, which should include measures to allow full integration of deaf people. Among such necessary measures in the ambit of the European Union it turns out that the Erasmus programme for young students lacks any kind of adaptation for deaf people who use sign language, whether in language teaching or even in the various public acts that take place in the course of the Erasmus programme.

Has the Commission assessed what action may be necessary to include deaf people as full users of the Erasmus programme?

Is it considering taking steps to encourage those universities taking part in the Erasmus programme to adapt their courses and teaching programmes so as to facilitate learning for deaf people?

Is it considering taking steps to make it obligatory in the rules of the Erasmus programme for there to be a sign language interpreter present in the classrooms of the receiving country?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The inclusion of deaf people and, more generally, students and staff with special needs is an important element of the Erasmus+ programme, as it was of the former Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

Erasmus+ students can benefit from the support services their host institution offers to students with special needs, such as deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Support may include: note-takers, interpreters, communicators, lip-speakers, etc.

National Agencies, in charge of implementing the Erasmus+ programme at national level, are encouraged to earmark funds to allow people with special needs to go abroad for study or traineeship to cover specific arrangements depending on the learners' needs. This allowed 336 students with special needs to participate in Erasmus during the academic year 2010-11 (the last year for which statistics are available).

In addition, several cooperation projects have been funded within the framework of the former LLP, such as the ExchangeAbility project, aimed at facilitating study abroad for students with special needs (www.esn.org/sites/default/files/ea_handout.pdf).

Under the Erasmus+ programme, each Higher Education Institution, by signing the Erasmus Charter, commits to ensuring equal access and opportunities to participants from all backgrounds.

Several student and staff Ambassadors selected to promote the Erasmus+ programmes are people with special needs. Their stories can be found at: http://issuu.com/iservice-europa/docs/eac-erasmus25?e=4998257/2694573.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001836/14
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(18 februari 2014)

Betreft: Commissie spreekt particulier spaargeld van burgers aan

Volgens een op 12 februari 2014 door Reuters gepubliceerd artikel ([1]) zal de Commissie de Europese Autoriteit voor verzekeringen en bedrijfspensioenen in de tweede helft van dit jaar om advies vragen „over een mogelijk wetsontwerp om meer persoonlijk pensioenspaargeld te mobiliseren voor langetermijnfinanciering".

1. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat zij werkt aan een dergelijk voorstel?

2. Zo ja, wat is daarvoor de rechtsgrondslag, gezien het feit dat de sociale zekerheid onder de nationale bevoegdheid valt?

3. Is de Commissie het er niet mee eens dat een dergelijk voorstel in strijd zou zijn met het subsidiariteitsbeginsel zoals vastgelegd in artikel 5 van het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(26 maart 2014)

De Commissie kijkt momenteel, met steun van de Europese Autoriteit voor verzekeringen en bedrijfspensioenen (EIOPA), naar verschillende mogelijkheden om op de eengemaakte markt de specifieke kenmerken van individuele pensioenregelingen in aanmerking te nemen. EIOPA heeft op 19 februari 2014 een voorlopig verslag over individuele pensioenen ([2]) ingediend bij de Commissie. Daarin wordt aandacht besteed aan de maatregelen op prudentieel en consumentenbeschermingsgebied die vereist zijn om een eengemaakte markt voor individuele pensioenen op te zetten. De Commissie bestudeert dit verslag zorgvuldig voordat zij over eventuele verdere stappen beslist.

Volgens het subsidiariteitsbeginsel hebben de lidstaten de volledige verantwoordelijkheid voor het organiseren van hun nationale pensioenstelsel, ook wat de rol van individuele pensioenen daarin betreft. Een eventueel Commissie-initiatief op dit gebied zal daaraan niet tornen.

Wat betreft pensioenen als onderdeel van het socialezekerheidsstelsel is artikel 153, lid 4, VWEU er duidelijk over dat de lidstaten de exclusieve bevoegdheid hebben om de fundamentele beginselen van hun socialezekerheidsstelsel vast te stellen en te bepalen op welke wijze de pensioenen zijn georganiseerd. Indien pensioenen echter door financiële instellingen worden verstrekt, zijn de in het VWEU vastgelegde vrijheden van toepassing, alsmede mogelijke secundaire wetgeving van de EU.

([1]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/12/us-eu-banks-savings-idUSBREA1B1ZI20140212.
([2]) https://eiopa.europa.eu/fileadmin/tx_dam/files/publications/reports/EIOPA-BoS-14-029_Towards_an_EU_single_market_for_Personal_Pensions-_An_EIOPA_Preliminary_Report_to_COM.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001836/14
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Commission dips into citizens' personal savings

According to an article published by Reuters ([1]) on 12 February 2014, in the second half of this year the Commission will ask the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority for advice 'on a possible draft law to mobilise more personal pension savings for long-term financing'.

1. Can the Commission confirm that it is working on such a proposal?

2. If so, what would be the legal basis, given that social security is a matter of national competence?

3. Does the Commission not agree that such a proposal would violate the principle of subsidiarity enshrined in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The Commission is currently looking at different ways of addressing the specificities of personal pensions within the single market, with the assistance of the European Authority for Insurance and Occcupational Pensions (EIOPA). EIOPA submitted to the Commission on 19 February 2014 a preliminary report on personal pensions ([2]), considering the prudential and consumer protection measures that would be required to develop a single market for personal pensions. The Commission will carefully consider this report before deciding on any further steps.

Under the principle of subsidiarity, Member States retain full responsibility for the organisation of their national pension systems, including the role of personal pensions. Any possible Commission initiative on personal pensions would not call this prerogative into question.

As regards pension as part of the social security system, it is clear from Article 153(4) TFEU that Member States have the exclusive competence as regards the fundamental principles of their social security systems and the way in which pensions are organised. However, if pensions are provided by financial institutions, the freedoms enshrined in the TFEU and any possible EU secondary legislation applies.

([1]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/12/us-eu-banks-savings-idUSBREA1B1ZI20140212
([2]) https://eiopa.europa.eu/fileadmin/tx_dam/files/publications/reports/EIOPA-BoS-14-029_Towards_an_EU_single_market_for_Personal_Pensions-_An_EIOPA_Preliminary_Report_to_COM.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001843/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(18 ta' Frar 2014)

Suġġett: It-tipjip u s-saħħa mentali

Riċerka ppubblikata fil-*British Medical Journal* turi li l-qtugħ tat-tipjip jista' jkun effettiv fil-ġlieda kontra d-depressjoni u l-ansjetà daqs it-teħid tal-mediċini kontra d-depressjoni. Skont ir-riċerkaturi, professjonisti fil-kura tas-saħħa li kienu jsibuha bi tqila joffru pariri biex jaqtgħu t-tipjip lil nies b'disturbi fis-saħħa mentali minħabba l-biża' li jġagħluhom iħossuhom agħar, issa, skont dawn is-sejbiet, għandhom jiġu mħeġġa biex jagħtu dan it-tip ta' parir.

1. X'inhi r-reazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni għal dawn is-sejbiet?

2. Il-Kummissjoni sa liema punt qiegħda tippjana, fl-istrateġiji tagħha dwar is-saħħa mentali, biex tħeġġeġ lin-nies jaqtgħu t-tipjip?

3. L-UE kif se żżid l-għarfien dwar l-impatt dannuż li għandu t-tabakk fuq is-saħħa mentali tan-nies?

4. Il-Kummissjoni se tinvesti fi programmi ta' riċerka dwar ir-relazzjoni bejn it-tipjip u s-saħħa mentali?

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

Is-sejbiet tal-istudju ([1]) fil-*British Medical Journal* jappoġġjaw il-politika tal-Kummissjoni kontra t-tipjip, peress li dan jenfasizza li minbarra l-benefiċċji tas-saħħa fiżika li huma diġà magħrufa, il-waqfien mit-tipjip iwassal ukoll għal benefiċċji psikoloġiċi.

Is-servizzi tal-Kummissjoni infurmaw lill-konsorzju li jmexxi l-Azzjoni Konġunta għas-Saħħa Mentali u l-Benesseri ([2]) dwar l-istudju u s-sejbiet tiegħu. L-Azzjoni Konġunta hija kollaborazzjoni strutturata li tinvolvi 25 Stat Membru, kofinanzjata mill-Programm tal-UE dwar is-Saħħa, li għandu l-għan li jiżviluppa qafas komuni għall-azzjoni dwar is-saħħa mentali fl-Istati Membri.

F'dawn l-aħħar snin, il-Kummissjoni Ewropea żviluppat għadd ta' kampanji kontra t-tabakk li jfittxu li jindirizzaw il-piż tal-konsum tat-tabakk madwar l-Ewropa. Il-kampanja reċenti "Dawk li qatgħu t-tipjip ma jżommhom xejn" appoġġjat il-waqfien mit-tipjip billi ffokat fuq il-benefiċċji pożittivi li wieħed jieqaf ipejjep.

Taħt is-Seba' Programm Kwadru għar-Riċerka u l-Iżvilupp Teknoloġiku (FP7, 2007-2013), il-proġett PTSD AND SMOKING ([3]) investiga l-mekkaniżmi psikokomportamentali bażiċi fir-relazzjoni bejn l-istress trawmatiku u l-waqfien mit-tipjip. Sar investiment ta' EUR 12-il miljun fil-FP7 dwar is-suġġett ġenerali tad-dipendenza u s-saħħa mentali, li kiseb riżultati li jistgħu jkunu rilevanti wkoll għad-dipendenza mit-tabakk.

Orizzont 2020 — Il-Programm Qafas għar-Riċerka u l-Innovazzjoni ([4]) (2014-2020), permezz tal-isfida soċjali "Saħħa, bidla demografika u benesseri" jista' jipprovdi iktar opportunitajiet biex jappoġġja r-riċerka f'dan il-qasam. L-informazzjoni dwar l-opportunitajiet attwali ta' finanzjament jistgħu jinkisbu mill-Portal tal-Parteċipant tar-Riċerka u l-Innovazzjoni tal-KE ([5]).

([1]) Gemma Taylor et al: Change in mental health after smoking cessation: systematic review and meta-analysis (Tibdil fis-saħħa mentali wara waqfien mit-tipjip: reviżjoni sistematika u metaanaliżi), fi: BMJ2014, 348:g1151.
([2]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/result/report/rcn/61211_en.html
([4]) COM(2011) 808 final, COM(2011) 811 final.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001843/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Smoking and mental health

Research published in the *British Medical Journal* shows that quitting smoking can be just as effective in tackling depression and anxiety as taking antidepressants. According to the researchers, healthcare professionals who have been reluctant to offer stop-smoking advice to people with mental health disorders for fear of making them worse should now be encouraged by these findings to offer such advice.

1. What is the Commission's reaction to these findings?

2. To what extent is the Commission planning to focus, in its mental health strategies, on encouraging people to stop smoking?

3. How will the EU increase awareness of the damaging impact of tobacco on people's mental health?

4. Will the Commission invest in research programmes on the relationship between smoking and mental health?

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

The findings of the study ([1]) in the British Medical Journal support the Commission's policy against smoking, as it points out that smoking cessation also leads to psychological benefits, further to the other known benefits to physical health.

The Commission services have informed the consortium leading the Joint Action Mental Health and Well-being ([2]) about the study and its findings. The Joint Action is a structured collaboration involving 25 Member States, co-financed from the EU-Health Programme, which has the objective to develop a common framework of action on mental health in the Member States.

In the past years a number of anti-tobacco campaigns have been developed by the European Commission that seek to address the burden of tobacco-consumption across Europe. The latest campaign 'Ex-Smokers are Unstoppable' supported smoking cessation by focusing on the positive benefits of becoming and remaining an ex-smoker.

Under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), the project PTSD AND SMOKING ([3]) investigated psycho-behavioural mechanisms underlying the relation between traumatic stress and smoking cessation. On the general topic of addiction and mental health, EUR 12 million have been invested throughout FP7, generating results that could also be relevant to addiction to tobacco.

Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation ([4]) (2014-2020), through its 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge may provide further opportunities to support research in this area. Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained at the EC Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([5]).

([1]) Gemma Taylor et al: Change in mental health after smoking cessation: systematic review and meta-analysis, in: BMJ2014, 348:g1151.
([2]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/result/report/rcn/61211_fr.html
([4]) COM(2011) 808 final, COM(2011) 811 final.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001862/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(18 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: La contaminación del pescado por mercurio aumentó «sustancialmente» en 2013 en la EU

Según denuncia Ecologistas en Acción, la contaminación del pescado por mercurio aumentó «sustancialmente» en 2013 en la EU ([1]) a la vista de las 96 notificaciones registradas a nivel europeo frente a las 68 del año anterior. De estas, 48 tienen su origen en el Estado español, que es el principal exportador de pescado a nivel comunitario. Se detectaron valores de hasta 5,6 miligramos de mercurio por kilo en rodajas congeladas de marrajo (*Isurus oxyrinchus*), lo que supera con creces el nivel máximo permitido por la normativa comunitaria, entre 0,5 y 1 miligramo de mercurio por kilogramo en productos pesqueros. Una vez depositado en un entorno acuático, el mercurio se transforma en metilmercurio, una potente neurotoxina que se acumula tanto en los peces como en los animales y los humanos que los consumen, lo que puede dañar permanentemente el cerebro y los riñones. Además, el mercurio puede transmitirse de la madre al feto en desarrollo y provocarle daño cerebral, merma intelectual o retraso mental. Ante el riesgo comprobado, España y el resto de los 94 países firmantes del Convenio de Minamata sobre el Mercurio deberían ratificarlo lo antes posible. Este tratado establece para todos los países obligaciones relativas a la minería primaria, a la eliminación progresiva de ciertos usos y productos (pilas, termómetros, etc.), al comercio, a las emisiones y a la eliminación de los residuos.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de estos hechos?

¿Qué medidas tiene previsto adoptar la Comisión para proteger a los consumidores europeos de pescado?

¿Tiene previsto la Comisión recomendar a los Estados miembros que firmen el Convenio de Minamata sobre mercurio y asesorar y prestar apoyo a los países para que adopten medidas en este sentido, como ya está haciendo la Organización Mundial de la Salud?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión está al corriente de la información suministrada. Los niveles máximos están establecidos en la legislación de la UE ([2]). La acumulación de metilmercurio en determinadas especies de peces es conocida y es la base de un nivel máximo más elevado para estas especies. En el sitio web de la Comisión ([3]) puede consultarse una nota informativa relativa al metilmercurio en los peces y los productos de la pesca en la que se explica el mayor riesgo que supone el consumo de estas especies; también incluye consejos de consumo relacionados.

Con objeto de evaluar los riesgos de una mayor ingesta de mercurio con respecto de los efectos beneficiosos derivados del consumo de pescado, la Comisión ha pedido a la Autoridad Europea de Salud Alimentaria que emita un dictamen sobre los riesgos y los beneficios del consumo de pescado por lo que se refiere al metilmercurio. En función de las conclusiones del mencionado dictamen, se revisarán los niveles máximos actuales, así como los consejos de consumo.

A fin de reducir los niveles de contaminación por mercurio en el medio ambiente a escala global, la UE apoyó activamente el proceso de negociación cuyo resultado fue el Convenio de Minamata sobre el Mercurio. La UE y la mayoría de sus Estados miembros ya son signatarios del mismo, y es muy probable que otros Estados miembros sigan el ejemplo en breve. Actualmente la Comisión está preparando la ratificación del Convenio, con objeto de garantizar que entre en vigor lo antes posible.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/natural/20140131/54400700944/contaminacion-pescado-mercurio-aumento-sustancialmente-2013-ue.html
([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1881/2006 de la Comisión, de 19 de diciembre de 2006, por el que se fija el contenido máximo de determinados contaminantes en los productos alimenticios (DO L 364 de 20.12.2006, p. 5).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/contaminants/information_note_mercury-fish_21-04-2008.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001862/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Mercury contamination in fish increased 'substantially' in 2013 in the EU

According to Ecologists in Action, mercury contamination in fish increased 'substantially' in 2013 in the EU ([1]) , with the number of reported cases increasing from 68 in 2012 to 96 in 2013. Of these 96 cases, 48 were reported in Spain, the EU's main exporter of fish. Values of up to 5.6 milligrams of mercury per kilo were detected in frozen portions of shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*). This level of contamination far exceeds the maximum level permitted by Community law, which is between 0.5 and 1 milligrams of mercury per kilogram in fishery products. Once mercury has entered an aquatic environment, it is converted into methylmercury, a potent neurotoxin which accumulates in fish, and then in the humans and animals who eat them. The substance can cause permanent damage to the brain and kidneys. Mercury can also be transmitted from mother to fetus and cause brain damage, reduced intellectual capacity and learning disabilities. In view of these serious risks, the Minamata Convention on Mercury should be ratified by Spain and the other 94 signatory countries as soon as possible. This treaty sets out obligations for all countries regarding primary mercury mining, the phasing-out of certain processes involving mercury and products which contain it (batteries, thermometers, etc.), trade, emissions and waste disposal.

Is the Commission aware of the above?

What measures does the Commission plan to adopt in order to protect European fish consumers?

Will the Commission encourage Member States to sign the Minamata Convention on Mercury and provide information and support to help them take the necessary measures for its implementation, as the World Health Organisation is already doing?

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

The Commission is aware of the provided information. Maximum levels have been set in EU legislation ([2]). The accumulation of methylmercury in certain fish species is known and is the basis of a higher maximum level for these species. An information note concerning methylmercury in fish and fishery products explaining the increased risk of consuming such species and related consumption advice is available on the Commission website ([3]).

In order to balance the risks of an increased intake of mercury against the beneficial effects of consuming fish, the Commission has requested the European Food Safety Authority to deliver an opinion on the risks and benefits of fish consumption as regards methylmercury. Depending on the conclusions of this opinion, the existing maximum levels and consumption advice might be reviewed.

In view of reducing the levels of mercury pollution in the environment on a worldwide scale, the EU actively supported the negotiation process resulting in the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The EU and the majority of its Member States are already signatories and other Member States are likely to follow soon. The Commission is now preparing the Convention's ratification, in view of ensuring its entry into force as early as possible.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/natural/20140131/54400700944/contaminacion-pescado-mercurio-aumento-sustancialmente-2013-ue.html
([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs (OJ L 364, 20.12.2006, p. 5).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/contaminants/information_note_mercury-fish_21-04-2008.pdf

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-001868/14
komissiolle
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(18. helmikuuta 2014)

Aihe: Valmisteverodirektiivin muutokset: verovapaiden myymälöiden salliminen maa-asemilla

Neuvoston direktiivi valmisteveroja koskevasta yleisestä järjestelmästä ja direktiivin 92/12/ETY kumoamisesta (ns. valmisteverotusdirektiivi) (2008/118/EY) sallii verovapaat myymälät vain lentoasemille ja satamiin, joissa sijaitsevilla liikkeillä on lupa myydä tuotteita verovapaasti EU:n alueelta poistuville matkailijoille.

Komission on ollut määrä tarkistaa valmisteverotusdirektiivi ja ehdottaa uusia tai tarkistettuja direktiivejä.

Euroopan unionin ja kolmansien maiden välinen liikenne on kasvanut huomattavasti, minkä vuoksi myös maa-asemien merkitys on korostunut. Verovapaan myynnin mahdollistamisella nykyisten lentokenttien ja satamien lisäksi myös kolmansien alueiden tai kolmansien maiden ja unionin rajalla olevilla maa-asemilla olisi sekä Euroopan unionin raja-alueita työllistävä että kuluttajaa palveleva vaikutus.

1. Milloin komissio aikoo antaa ehdotuksia direktiivistä?

2. Onko komissio harkinnut muuttavansa valmisteverotusdirektiiviä siten, että se antaisi jäsenvaltioille mahdollisuuden vapauttaa valmisteverosta verovapaiden myymälöiden luovuttamat valmisteveron alaiset tavarat, jotka maa-asemilla kolmannelle alueelle tai kolmanteen maahan matkustava matkustaja kuljettaa henkilökohtaisissa matkatavaroissaan?

3. Mitä komission arvion mukaan seuraisi siitä, että jäsenvaltiot soveltaisivat valmisteveron vapauttamista myös maa-asemilla, kuten Suomen ja Venäjän välisillä maa-asemilla?

Algirdas Šemetan komission puolesta antama vastaus
(27. maaliskuuta 2014)

1. Tässä vaiheessa komissio ei aio tehdä tätä aihetta koskevia uusia ehdotuksia.

2.–3. Maailman tullijärjestö, jonka jäseniä unioni ja kaikki jäsenvaltiot ovat, suosittelee, että verovapaita myymälöitä ei sallittaisi maantie- tai rautatieliikenteen rajanylityspaikoilla, koska ne aiheuttavat vakavan sääntöjenvastaisen tuonnin riskin ([1]). Tämä suositus on pantu täytäntöön direktiivillä 2008/118/EY ([2]). Sen vuoksi komissio ei näe mitään syytä aloittaa uudelleen asian käsittelyä eikä suunnittele kyseisen direktiivin muuttamista verovapaiden myymälöiden sallimiseksi maa-asemilla.

([1]) http://www.wcoomd.org/en/about-us/legal-instruments/recommendations/pf_recommendations/pfrecomm22taxfreeshops.aspx
([2]) Neuvoston direktiivi 2008/118/EY, annettu 16 päivänä joulukuuta 2008, valmisteveroja koskevasta yleisestä järjestelmästä ja direktiivin 92/12/ETY kumoamisesta (EUVL L 9, 14.1.2009, s. 12).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001868/14
to the Commission
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Amendments to the Excise Duty Directive: allowing tax-free shops at surface transport stations

Under Council Directive 2008/118/EU concerning the general arrangements for excise duty and repealing Directive 92/12/EEC (that is to say, the Excise Duty Directive), tax-free shops may operate only at air- and seaports, where they may sell goods free of tax to persons travelling out of the EU.

The Commission was supposed to revise the Excise Duty Directive and propose new or amended directives.

Traffic between the EU and non-EU countries has grown significantly, and surface transport stations have become correspondingly more important. If, as well as at airports and seaports, as is the case at present, tax-free sales were possible at crossing-points on land borders between the EU and non-EU territories or countries, this would have an impact both on employment in EU border areas and in terms of services to consumers.

1. When does the Commission intend to produce proposals for directives?

2. Has the Commission considered amending the Excise Duty Directive so as to enable Member States to apply exemption from excise duty to goods supplied by tax-free shops to be carried in the personal luggage of passengers travelling via surface transport stations to a non-EU territory or country?

3. What, in the Commission's estimation, would be the result if Member States were to apply excise duty exemption at surface transport stations, for instance on routes between Finland and Russia?

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

1. For the time being, the Commission does not intend to present any new proposals concerning this subject.

2 and 3. The World Customs Organisation, of which the Union and all Member States are members, recommends that 'Tax-free' shops should not be permitted at road or rail border points because they give rise to a grave risk of fraudulent importation ([1]). Directive 2008/118/EC ([2]) has implemented this recommendation. The Commission therefore sees no need to reopen this issue and is not considering amending the directive to allow for tax-free shops at surface transport stations.

([1]) http://www.wcoomd.org/en/about-us/legal-instruments/recommendations/pf_recommendations/pfrecomm22taxfreeshops.aspx
([2]) Council Directive 2008/118/EC of 16 December 2008 concerning the general arrangements for excise duty and repealing Directive 92/12/EEC, OJ L 9, 14.1.2009, p. 12.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001870/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Trasvase río Siurana (Cataluña)

El río Siurana (Cataluña), en su paso por los municipios de Poboleda, Torroja y Gratallops hasta Garcia sufre durante todo el año, y de manera fija al inicio del verano, un trasvase de agua hacia el pantano de Riudecanyes.

Los ríos de la zona mediterránea acostumbran a ser estacionales, con crecidas del caudal durante los meses de lluvias y reducción del mismo en verano.

Este trasvase ocasiona una reducción del caudal del río Siurana muy por debajo del caudal ecológico, hecho que provoca la muerte de especies y la destrucción del buen estado ecológico de los ecosistemas fluviales.

Se sospecha que uno de los usos que se hace del agua trasvasada en Riudecanyes es llenar las piscinas durante la época de verano y desviar el agua hacia el municipio de Reus y hacia la industria de Tarragona.

La Directiva Marco del Agua (2000/60/CE) tiene entre sus objetivos la promoción del uso sostenible del agua, la protección del medio ambiente, la mejora de la situación de los ecosistemas acuáticos y la atenuación de los efectos de las inundaciones y de las sequías, todo con el objetivo final de alcanzar el buen estado ecológico y químico de todas las aguas comunitarias para 2015.

Teniendo en cuenta todo esto,

1. ¿Conocía la Comisión el trasvase periódico que se realiza en el río Siurana y el impacto que este supone para los ecosistemas fluviales?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que este trasvase supone una infracción de la normativa europea citada anteriormente por no asegurar el buen estado ecológico del ecosistema fluvial del río Siurana?

3. ¿Piensa actuar la Comisión para asegurar el cumplimiento de la normativa comunitaria?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

La Directiva marco del agua ([1]) tiene por objeto alcanzar un buen estado de las masas de agua para 2015. Los instrumentos principales para aplicar la Directiva son los planes hidrológicos de cuenca y los programas de medidas. El plan hidrológico de cuenca correspondiente a la cuenca fluvial del Ebro, en la que se halla el río Siurana, lo aprobó el Gobierno español el 28 de febrero de 2014. En él, además de mencionar el trasvase del río Siurana al pantano de Riudecanyes, se aporta información sobre el estado de las masas de agua y se enumeran diversas medidas para lograr los objetivos medioambientales de la Directiva. Según este plan, se espera que las masas de agua del río Siurana alcancen un buen estado para 2015.

Basándose en la información disponible, la Comisión no observa contravención alguna de las obligaciones que impone la Directiva marco del agua.

([1]) Directiva 2000/60/CE (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001870/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Diversion of water from the River Siurana (Catalonia)

Throughout the year, and especially at the start of the summer, the River Siurana has its waters diverted to the Riudecanyes reservoir on its passage through the municipalities of Poboleda, Torroja, Gratallops and finally Garcia.

Rivers in the Mediterranean region tend to be seasonal, with increased flow during the rainy months and less water during the summer.

This diversion reduces the flow of the River Siurana to a level significantly below its ecological flow, causing the death of species and destroying its ecologically healthy river ecosystem.

It is suspected that the water diverted to Riudecanyes is used, among other things, to fill swimming pools in the summer and provide water to the municipality of Reus and to industries in Tarragona.

The aims of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) include encouraging the sustainable use of water, protecting the environment, improving the state of aquatic ecosystems and reducing the impact of floods and droughts, with the overall objective of achieving a good ecological and chemical status for all Community waters by 2015.

1. Is the Commission aware of the periodic diversion of water from the River Siurana and the impact of this on the river's ecosystems?

2. Does the Commission consider this diversion to be an infringement of the abovementioned European directive, given that it fails to safeguard the good ecological status of the River Siurana's river ecosystem?

3. Will the Commission take action to ensure compliance with Community law?

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

The Water Framework Directive ([1]) aims at achieving good status of water bodies by 2015. The main tools to implement the directive are the river basin management plans and the programmes of measures. The river basin management plan for the Ebro river basin district, where river Siurana is located, has been adopted by the Spanish Government on 28 February 2014. The plan refers to the diversion from river Siurana to the Riudecanyes reservoir. It includes information on the status of the water bodies and a number of measures to achieve the environmental objectives of the directive. According to the plan the water bodies in river Siurana are expected to achieve good status by 2015.

On the basis of the available information the Commission is not able to identify any possible breach of the Water Framework Directive obligations.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.