

TUESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2014
BRUSSELS

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND MONETARY AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY

WITH THE ASSOCIATION OF

THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND TOURISM

AND OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HEARING OF JYRKI KATAINEN

COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE

(Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness)

2-002

IN THE CHAIR: ROBERTO GUALTIERI
Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

(The hearing opened at 10.05

2-003

Chair. > Good morning, colleagues. Ms Ulsvkog, acting Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, Mr Buzek, Chair of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, and I, as Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, would like to welcome Jyrki Katainen, Commissioner-designate for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness to this hearing before our three committees.

The hearing is held jointly in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, which provide that if the portfolio of that Commissioner-designate falls more or less equally within the remit of more than one committee, the Commissioner-designate shall be heard jointly by those committees. Associated committees for this hearing are the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) and the Committee on Regional Development (REGI). As you know, the purpose of this hearing is to allow Parliament to exercise its Treaty-based right to vote on any new Commission College, and in particular to help the committees to evaluate whether the Commissioner-designate is qualified both to be a Member of the College and to carry out the particular duties he has been assigned.

I would like also to remind you that before the hearing the Commissioner-designate had replied in writing to a preparatory questionnaire. The written answers have been distributed to Members in all languages, and in line with the applicable procedure, the candidate submitted a declaration of interest. The Committee on Legal Affairs has indicated that it has no observations on the Commissioner-designate's declaration of interests.

Let me explain the structure of this hearing. The Commissioner-designate will be invited to make an opening oral statement of no longer than 15 minutes and we will also have five minutes at the end of the meeting for a closing statement. After the introduction there will be 45 questions from MEPs, with slots of three minutes each: one minute for the question and two minutes for the answer. I would also like to remind Members that the three-minute slot principle will be strictly applied. Interpretation will be provided in 23 languages so all speakers can use their own language and the debate will be streamed live on Parliament's Internet site.

Finally, let me add in my capacity as Chair of the Economic Affairs Committee some brief introductory remarks. The new Commission will have to achieve ambitious goals. Among these it has to help support economic recovery, to strengthen job creation and to stimulate investment in the real economy, bridging the considerable investment gap that is characterising European economies in the last years. In this respect the package of EUR 300 billion in additional public and private investment announced by the President-designate Juncker will be very relevant and we are looking forward to hearing more details about this plan.

The focus of this package, as stated in your mission letter, will be infrastructure, education, research, innovation. A significant amount should be channelled to our projects that can help get the unemployed back to work in decent jobs. In addition, we should accelerate and broaden the efforts already begun with the Youth Guarantee by promoting concrete actions to progressively upgrade workers' skills.

Finally, the Commission and Parliament have to work together in order to ensure that the EU economic policy coordination is effective and successful and to take into account the social impact of structural reform. In this respect, also following a decision of the coordinators of the Economic Affairs Committee, I have also asked President-elect Juncker for further clarification on the divisional responsibilities amongst the economic team at the Commission, especially in the area of internal and external representation of the Commission. We are looking forward to hearing the answers of President-elect Juncker.

I now give the floor to Marita Ulvskog, on behalf of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.

2-003-500

IN THE CHAIR: MARITA ULVSKOG

Acting Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

2-004

Marita Ulvskog, *tillförordnad ordförande för utskottet för sysselsättning och sociala frågor* – EU:s inre marknad med fri rörlighet är en grundbult i EU-samarbetet. Den har stor potential att ge den tillväxt och sysselsättning som EU så väl behöver. Men ska marknaden fungera effektivt dvs. inte leda till social dumpning, missbruk och illojal konkurrens, då måste EU sätta upp bindande garantier till skydd för löntagarna för arbetstagarnas skull. En gemensam marknad får inte utnyttjas till att pressa deras villkor nedåt eller hota rätten att teckna kollektivavtal.

EU kan aldrig bli en vinnare, aldrig pressa tillbaka massarbetslösheten om medlemsstaterna väljer att konkurrera sinsemellan med lägre löner och sämre arbetsvillkor. En sådan situation omöjliggör inte bara för de fackliga organisationerna att värna arbetstagarnas grundläggande rättigheter; det leder också till att seriösa företag slås ut.

Att konkurrera med lägre löner och sämre villkor leder också till en lägre acceptans bland våra medborgare för det europeiska projektet. Vi får ökad nationalism och ökad populism. Därför, herr Katainen, är den kommissionärspost som ni kandiderar till så viktig och därför är det också så viktigt att ni noterar det första ordet i er titel, nämligen ordet jobb.

2-004-500

IN THE CHAIR: JERZY BUZEK

Chair of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

2-005

Jerzy Buzek, *Chair of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy*. – Thank you, Ms Marita Ulvskog and Mr Roberto Gualtieri, for co-chairing this hearing with me. According to the agenda of the European Parliament, today is the last day of the hearings. It is probably good news for all the Members of the European Parliament. We attended a lot of them. There were very interesting discussions about European problems.

Let me welcome Mr Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate for the new Commission, and welcome all those colleagues from the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, all of you present in this hall – representatives of NGOs, SMEs, industry, the Member States – and all of you watching our hearing, because it is a public hearing – that is very important as we in the European Parliament would like to be transparent – and all those who are watching our hearing on the Internet because it is streamed live on our Internet site.

Let me say a few words. The Industry Committee is competent for research and innovation, industry, entrepreneurship, SMEs, energy, the digital economy, all of them influencing competitiveness. All of them fall within the policy fields that the Vice-President and Commissioner-designate is supposed to steer and coordinate in the future with other Commissioners. There are major challenges to be met in the next five years in all these areas and our colleagues from the Industry Committee (I represent the Industry Committee here on this podium) are keen to find out how the Vice-President and Commissioner-designate intends to do this, to fulfil also our citizens' expectations. I now hand over to Mr Gualtieri, our Co-Chair.

2-006

IN THE CHAIR: ROBERTO GUALTIERI

Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

Chair. – We shall now start with the first round of speakers and the first speaker is Krišj nis Kari š, EPP coordinator on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy.

(Interjection: 'Don't we want to hear the Commissioner-designate first?')

The introductory remarks were very interesting but very quick! I made a mistake. The fifth hearing is beginning to make me tired so, Mr Katainen, sorry, the floor is yours.

2-007

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Honourable Members, I welcome this opportunity to discuss with you how to boost jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness. As the builders of Europe, we have to work together to find our way forward. This is an economic, but also a social, imperative. If confirmed, I look forward to a deep and fruitful cooperation with the European Parliament over the next five years.

To begin, I would like to say more about who I am, then what I plan to do and how I plan to do it. I hope we will then have a wide-ranging exchange of views.

For me, Europe has always meant more than geography. As a student in the early 1990s, Finland's integration into the European Union represented the new future. My country was in the middle of a deep economic crisis. The economy had shrunk by 13% and youth unemployment was 34%. As students, we felt sure that we would never get a proper job. We did not see any hope. We studied as long as possible because university felt safer than being unemployed back in my home town in eastern Finland, where the situation was very bad indeed.

I participated enthusiastically as a foot soldier in the campaign to join the EU. I felt very strongly – as I still feel today – that an integrated Europe is a source of opportunities, freedom and security. I also belong to a generation which had a chance to join an Erasmus programme. This changed my life. My family would never have been able to send me abroad to study with other young Europeans had it not been for Erasmus. I would like to use this opportunity to express my gratitude to those European decision-makers who gave us this programme.

In my professional life Europe has also played a major role. First as Finance Minister and then as Prime Minister, I had to deal with the worst times of the more recent crisis. I was in charge of steering six financial assistance packages through the Finnish Parliament and I can assure you that it was not easy. These packages were not popular and I am well aware too that the adjustment programmes demanded by these packages have required – and still require – many sacrifices from the people in the

countries they seek to support. I put my name to these packages because I thought it was necessary for Finland and for Europe, from both a solidarity point of view and an economic point of view. Since then we have created a foundation of real economic governance which should help avoid such situations in the future, and integration has brought stability.

As Prime Minister of Finland, I led a six-party coalition government in which there were representatives from GUE, Socialists, Greens, Liberals and the EPP. Being Prime Minister does not make you the boss of the other party leaders. How then can this function? Actually, in my experience, it can function very well. First, you must fix the target you want to achieve together with your colleagues. Second, you must know how to lead people. Third, you should be ready to compromise on the measures needed to achieve the target without watering down the ultimate objective and while staying true to your values. I think this experience will be very valuable in the next Commission.

Let me also say something about the values which have always been important to me. I have crystallised my core values into four points: encouragement, civilisation, tolerance and social responsibility. Encouragement means first of all the empowerment of people to fulfil their potential and providing equal opportunities for all. Civilisation means education and research and the building up of true knowledge and understanding through the exchange of ideas. Tolerance means for me respect for the diversity and dignity of all humanity. And social responsibility must apply to all our fellow citizens and to future generations. These four values are my starting point for creating new inclusive and sustainable growth in Europe.

I stepped down as Prime Minister because I wanted to work with my fellow Europeans on our shared future. I am a passionate European. No other place on earth and no other time in human history have provided such a remarkable degree of prosperity, social justice, security and liberty for the overwhelming majority of its people. We should remember that also in difficult moments.

One of the tragedies of this crisis is how it has divided Europeans both within and between Member States. It will take time to heal these divisions. I believe we can build a new European Union which gives people hope for the future and a common sense of purpose.

President-elect Juncker's guidelines state that my first priority as a Commission Vice-President will be to strengthen Europe's competitiveness and to stimulate investment for the purpose of job creation. If I am confirmed, this will be the core of my mission. We have overcome the worst moments of the crisis but unemployment remains unacceptably high, especially among young people. We cannot allow the talent of a generation to go to waste.

This is something which I feel very strongly about. During my time in government we developed a youth guarantee to provide all young people with real opportunities to work or study. This has now been rolled out at EU level and I want all Member States to make full use of this tool.

A fully sustainable social market economy remains our common objective. The reforms we need to make are not an end in themselves. They are a means to sustain our way of life in a fast-changing world.

So what is to be done? We need action on both demand and supply sides as part of the comprehensive and coordinated policy response involving all EU institutions and instruments. First of all, we need to focus on investment, which has fallen by almost 20% since the start of the crisis. I have always believed public investment both at national and at EU level has a critical role to play in kick-starting sustainable growth. We also need private investment to boost demand and ensure our companies can compete, create jobs and improve our living standards.

Many factors are hampering investment: lower demand, overcapacity, financial fragmentation, policy uncertainty, cuts that fell too heavily on investment against the advice of the Commission. Well-regulated financial markets can ensure that investment goes where it is most needed. We should ensure that more diversified sources of finance are available to help European companies grow their business and create jobs.

Monetary policy will of course play a role and the ECB will continue to be crucial in maintaining confidence. We need to open up markets for companies to offer new and better goods and services to consumers. This is true both for our internal market and for markets beyond our frontiers where 90% of future global growth will come from. Reasonable and balanced trade deals can create many new jobs while also protecting our high environmental and social standards.

We will support the roll-out of new technologies. Renewable energy and energy efficiency, to take two examples, are sectors where Europe can be world leader creating new jobs while making a critical contribution to our climate change objectives and to our own energy security. In particular, I want to support SMEs. They are the real life-blood of our economy. We need a deeper and fairer internal market with a strengthened industrial base and a better business environment.

Finally, the most important capital we have is human capital. All Europeans should have the opportunity to maximise their potential through education and training that equips them with the skills they need to thrive in the modern global economy while supporting the most vulnerable. To achieve all this, we must focus our efforts where they are needed most: big on big things, small on small things I want to ensure a pragmatic approach that avoids sterile academic debate and ideological posturing. We need to focus on what works.

Dear colleagues, to be frank, I do not recognise the way I have sometimes been portrayed. Finland is not the Wild West. I am proud of my country, with its strong social safety net, low levels of inequality and a highly regarded education system. I work with Commissioners from 27 other Member States with diverse political opinions and their own national traditions. I have learned a great deal from them and I want to hear your views too. If I am confirmed as Vice-President I will work closely with my colleagues to steer and coordinate and ensure coherence with the political guidelines. The great challenges we face require real teamwork from within and across our institutions to deliver results. As a former Prime Minister of a six-party coalition government this style of working is very familiar to me. A good example will be the investment package.

I look forward to hearing your views even if it is not yet possible to answer all the questions you may have. We need an unprecedented mobilisation of public and private sectors, the Commission, the EIB, the Member States, to pull together the EUR 300 billion package. As important as the quantity will be the quality of the investments. It is productive, real investment that we need. I do not want EUR 300 billion on the table but I want EUR 300 billion of real investments to support jobs and growth over the next three years. Let me be clear, we need a fresh impetus for growth, jobs and investment without creating new debt and for that we will need to mobilise both public and private money in new ways.

You will judge us by our results and hold us to account for delivery. It is your continuous engagement, oversight and scrutiny that gives us democratic legitimacy and ensures our proposals will meet the needs of our citizens, your voters. I look forward to a dialogue with you today, tomorrow and in the years to come.

(Applause)

2-008

Krišj nis Kari š (PPE). – Mr Katainen, jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness. These are maybe four words that make all politicians salivate. Everyone is excited, everyone is for. In all of our campaigns we are all for these things but of course the question is how are we actually going to attain these goals.

You mentioned in the introduction, and Jean-Claude Juncker has spoken about, a EUR 300 billion investment package mobilising public and private monies and I have two questions regarding this. I would like you to go a little bit into detail.

What role do you think the public should have in this? What role the private? And second, once we have this investment money, where should it be invested? What should the top priorities be?

Should not the top priority really be, particularly in infrastructure, for both energy and telecoms? What are your views?

2-009

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Your question was about where the money comes from and how it should be used. Let me be clear. We need a fresh impetus for jobs and growth and investment. This means that it is not only a question about liquidity but also about investments, real investments, because it is a precondition of real jobs and my duty is to maximise the number of new jobs. Actually you already mentioned the areas where the money should be used – telecoms sector, transport and things like that.

Even though the Commission is not yet in place, we have been working together with President-elect Juncker in order to look at options to bring fresh public money into the package, at the same time acknowledging that there is no room for higher debt or deficits in Member States. All the details cannot be disclosed yet because the Commissioners have not had a chance to reflect with each other. President-elect Juncker and I have not had the time or opportunity to talk with other colleagues. We need more time to build this package and also we need strong political consensus.

Some instruments may also have some market sensitivities so unfortunately I cannot disclose everything in detail. But, more generally speaking, we have to boost both demand and supply, meaning leveraging the EU budget and increasing the lending capacity of the EIB. Member States should also invest more in future and we need a better single market and financial market in order to boost private investment.

2-010

Maria João Rodrigues (S&D). – We need real change in Europe, so can you make the following clear commitments? First, the top priority should no longer be quick fiscal consolidation but rather investment and job creation. Second commitment: these will require large-scale investment – not only private investment but public investment. Third, we need for this more fiscal room for manoeuvre, but we also need stronger European instruments to support investment, notably a European investment fund. And fourth, the priority reforms should be rather for innovation, education in order to add value and to create more and better jobs in a smarter, greener and inclusive society. Can you agree with these commitments?

2-011

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > At the moment, we have to attack the future, which means that now we have to put the emphasis on investment. Pierre Moscovici said last week, here in his hearing, that we need as much public investment as necessary and as much private investment as possible, and I fully agree with that.

We need, first of all, coordinated European action, minimising the impact on debt and deficit. We need to leverage the EU budget in order to get more out of it, and there I have to work very closely with Kristalina Georgieva. We need to increase the lending capacity of the European Investment Bank (EIB) and also of national promotional banks and other European financial instruments. Together with President-elect Juncker, I also want to encourage the Member States, especially those Member States which have surpluses, to invest more in the future. It is very important not only for their own future but also because, at the same time, they would be stimulating the European economy. Then we need supply-side measures, such as improving the digital and energy single markets and enforcing the Services Directive. This is an elementary part of competitiveness.

Concerning my coordinating role, I have been talking with Pierre Moscovici and Jonathan Hill about what should we start doing right away if we are confirmed by Parliament. We have a plan under which we have identified, for instance, infrastructure projects as well as action that must be taken in relation to the financial markets or, with Pierre specifically, to leveraging EIB funding.

We have identified the measures we want to take. We have asked the other Commissioners to come around the table, and we will distribute the responsibilities. We are coordinating our joint efforts from the very beginning – not like the way it was before, when someone prepared something and then it was brought to the College meeting, but rather from the very beginning. Our package is not yet ready because we have not had a chance to talk about all the details, but we will not take too much time to do that.

2-012

Kay Swinburne (ECR). – Vice-President-designate, following on from Mr Kari’s question, the EUR 300 billion investment plan is probably the most important part of your role as Vice-President. However, I do have concerns that these funds should not be targeting those investments that can be made by the private sector, and need to be specifically targeted at projects and investments that have failed to attract that private sector investment. In the context of the previous pilot that was done on project bonds by the EIB, Parliament asked for a study to be done comparing the cost of finance of the public versus the private role, to ensure that we were not competing on an unfair playing field with the private sector. Can you share with us whether you have a plan on how to deal with this issue of private versus public, going forwards, and explain to us whether you will commit to leveraging these funds from the private sector, where possible? Indeed, how will you assess the outcomes? Will you, as well as assessing the number of jobs, also assess the capital costs of these investments by Europe?

2-013

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Ms Swinburne, I fully agree with what you are saying, that public investments should not crowd out private investments or private money. This is one of our ultimate objectives, because it would not make that much sense to use taxpayers’ money even if there were public money coming into the same project. I do appreciate the work that the European Parliament has done in the previous term in making sure, or wanting to make sure, that all the money from the public side should leverage and be used as a catalyst for private investments.

This is our goal because there are costs; we are lacking in public money, so we have to use it intelligently – for instance the European budget – in order to deliver public money so that more private sector money can come in to support our projects. The market is sometimes very timid when it comes to complex and long-term projects, and that is why public money is needed, because the private sector is not ready to take all the risks in big projects. I know that in the European Investment Bank there is a lot of know-how on where the limits are and how lending capacity can be used in the most effective way. I am looking forward to working with the Members of the European Parliament,

because you have long experience with these kinds of issues and trying to find the best ways to use taxpayers' money and on crowding-in private money.

2-014

Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE). – Mr Katainen, welcome back to this Parliament. In your written answers, you give a lot of weight to the future of the investment package, and I think that many of us agree with you. However, investment for the sake of investment is a mistake. We have examples in the EU of airports without planes, free toll roads without traffic and high speed trains in the middle of nowhere. I have to say that in some Member States, these practices are still going on. How are you going to ensure that the projects selected in the future investment package will have a European interest in terms of added value for European competitiveness and growth? Please give us more concrete answers. If we are to support you we need you to share with us more concrete details.

2-015

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Mr Tremosa, your question was about how we could use public money more effectively, more efficiently and not waste public money on projects which really do not help anybody.

I always want to speak about taxpayers' money because somebody may have a picture that European money is something which comes from a black hole, but actually it comes from our citizens' pockets. That is why it must be used in the most efficient way so that every time when we go abroad and we see an airport or highway which we know has been partially financed by European taxpayers we can be proud of it.

I think the Commission and the EU more generally speaking have learned from the past. There are good examples of bad examples. That is why we always need a thorough impact assessment and cost-benefit analyses before going into big projects. This is only because of fairness towards our taxpayers. Also one of the concrete issues that we are now preparing is that we have to select the projects very carefully and also help the Member States to deliver and to use with public support what they can get from the European side.

So the projects must be very well planned from the very beginning, so it would also help avoid the kinds of mistakes which we have seen, unfortunately, in the past.

2-016

(GUE/NGL). – Katainen, μ μ

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2-017

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > I am not supposed to comment on the ECB's policy even if I wanted to but let us put it this way: I am very satisfied with what the ECB has done.

We need to make sure that Europe is credible even after the situation when the asset quality reviews have been done on the banks and the stress tests afterwards. We need a firewall in order to show the external world that Europe is capable of defending all the unexpected failures of the banks. That is why I would like to make sure that we do not use the money before we need to, whether it is needed somewhere else. Let us hope that we do not need public support from the ESM for the banks or the Member States.

You also mentioned the collateral issue. Let me tell you what happened. I was Minister for Finance in 2011 and we had already accepted and my country was already participating in creating an Irish financial assistance package. I was advocating very strongly in favour of Portugal's financial assistance package.

We had internal elections and some of our opposition – 10 opposition parties, for instance Social Democrats who were representing the Socialist Group – promised the voters that if they became a governmental party they would ask for collateral. That is true.

After the elections we made a compromise in which we did not ask for collateral from Portugal because it was our demand and then we decided that if the ESF were ever used before, then the government would ask for collateral. We thought that the ESF would never have been used again because we knew that the ESM was coming, which has preferred credit stakes.

2-018

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Vice-President-designate, with regard to the European Investment Plan, I would like to ask whether I have got you right that we have to end the mistaken dominance of austerity policy in Europe.

Which sources should fresh public money for investment come from? Or should there be no fresh money from the public sector? How much additional investment from the public sector would you consider necessary?

What role are efficiency technologies going to play for a low carbon transition and green growth in the context of the investment plan?

2-019

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > Mr Bütikofer, your question was about where the public money, fresh public money, could come from; how much fresh public money we need; and also what role the new green technologies will play in job creation.

First of all, I want to be very clear: the EU Member States have regained confidence, and many of the countries which were in a risky position a few years ago are back in the market now. So I would like to make sure that Europe will express its strength in addressing economic policies and will avoid a situation in which the performance of one or two, or three or five, Member States will cause trouble for the others. So we need to continue with a responsible fiscal policy.

At the same time, however, we need more resources for investment. I could imagine that the majority of those resources over the next three to 10 years would come from the private sector but we also need

lots of public sector investment. The additional money for public investments should come through coordinated European action to minimise the public deficit and debt, and also from those countries that are running current account surpluses. Also, the countries not in a surplus position could and should prioritise their public expenditure so that they can invest in research and development, which is the precondition for creating new sectors of the economy, like green technologies.

We also need a better single market in order to encourage green technologies to come into the market and replace old, polluting technologies.

2-020

Patrick O’Flynn (EFDD). – Mr Katainen, you say in your written submission that we need a more responsive, open and inclusive labour market. Do you mean between Member States as well as within them, and how does that sit with UK Prime Minister Cameron’s stated aim of imposing some kind of limitation on free movement as a condition for continuing to support UK membership of the EU?

2-021

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > I think the free movement of people is a core value for Europe. It is one of the founding values of the European Union. I very much want to defend this value. I also very much agree with what President-elect Juncker has said on this issue, and with Marianne Thyssen, who has also very strongly advocated free movement. We just have to make sure that there is no behaviour which violates the good will of the principle of free movement of people. I know that there are some preparations already now going on at working group level, in which officials are trying to identify what are the real problems faced by some of our Member States in this regard.

We cannot afford to lose the confidence of our citizens when we are defending our core values like free movement of people. If there are some negative elements, abusive elements, we just have to correct them and I expect that the United Kingdom will be a good partner in defending our core values also in the future.

2-022

Barbara Kappel (NI). – Herr designierter Kommissar Katainen, die letzten Jahre haben gezeigt, dass Länder mit vergleichsweise hohem Industrieanteil und Bruttoinlandsprodukt die Krise besser überstanden haben als Länder mit geringer industrieller Wertschöpfung. Dennoch sind infolge der Krise dreieinhalb Millionen Arbeitsplätze in Europa verlorengegangen. Die Europäische Kommission hat deshalb im Jahr 2012 die Zielvorgabe formuliert, den Industrieanteil am europäischen BIP bis zum Jahr 2020 auf 20 % zu erhöhen. Der Trend läuft derzeit jedoch in eine andere Richtung. Der BIP-Anteil der verarbeitenden Industrie war im Juni 2013 auf 5,1 % zurückgegangen – nach 16 % im Jahr 2012.

Industriebetriebe lagern Produktionsstätten von Europa aus, wie beispielsweise das österreichische Stahlunternehmen Voestalpine, das Teile der Produktion heuer in die USA verlegte. Am 23./24. Oktober wird der Europäische Rat Beschlüsse für die 2030-Ziele fassen. Vor diesem Hintergrund möchte ich folgende Fragen an Sie stellen:

Erstens: Wie hoch sollte Ihrer Ansicht nach der europäische Reindustrialisierungsgrad im Rahmen der 2030-Ziele bemessen sein?

Zweitens: Welche Maßnahmen werden Sie setzen, um den Reindustrialisierungsgrad nachhaltig abzusichern?

2-023

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > I know very well what you are talking about. I come from a country which has always had an export-driven economy. Our welfare society is based on the revenue that Finland can get from foreign trade, and that is why competitiveness is a welfare society's best friend. A country in which the public share of the economy is more than 50% – for example, 55% – could not afford to run a welfare-based social model without successful industry. That is why I know exactly what you are talking about.

President-elect Juncker said that it would be naive to think we can live only from new services, even though today it is very difficult to find the dividing line between industrial production and services. There are lots of companies which are traditional industrial companies but most of their revenue comes from the services side. So the two things are connected.

I would like to concentrate on research and development because this is one of the ways to create renewal. Traditional industries, too, must reinvent themselves. We have to create a better single market for renewable energies, for instance. We need fair free-trade deals with the other parts of the world. We need social cohesion: we cannot afford to lose a single soul because we need a highly skilled labour force. So competitiveness is a major issue, and we can do things about that at both European and national level.

2-024

Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE). – Señor presidente, señor vicepresidente propuesto, gracias por sus explicaciones.

Yo tengo dos preguntas.

Una se refiere a la coordinación. Es evidente que dos de las cuestiones que más limitan el crecimiento económico son, por una parte, la escasez de crédito en algunos Estados miembros —cuestión que en parte se podría resolver con la Unión de los Mercados de Capitales, que depende del Comisario propuesto Hill— y, por otra parte, la falta de ambición en los planes reformistas por parte de algunos Estados miembros —cuestión que depende más del Comisario propuesto Moscovici—. Por tanto, me gustaría saber cómo planea usted la coordinación con el resto de carteras que no dependen directamente de usted, pero que sí tienen un impacto directo en el crecimiento.

Y, por otra parte, me gustaría saber qué medidas concretas propone usted para impulsar la competitividad, porque, sin duda alguna, una de las cuestiones que ayudará a fortalecer el crecimiento es mejorar nuestra competitividad.

2-025

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > Your question was about how I coordinate the work with other Commissioners in order to improve competitiveness and economic growth, and defining the elements of competitiveness. I would like to start from the latter question. First of all, investments in education and research. Then we need growth-friendly surroundings, meaning, for instance, a reasonable level of taxation. We carried out tax reforms in my country. Together with GUE, the Socialists, Greens, Liberals and EPP we lowered the corporate tax rate by six percentage points, but at the same time we raised dividend tax. So if you took money out of a company it was heavily taxed, but if you left the money in the company it was lightly taxed, encouraging investment. There are lots of issues. For instance, social cohesion is one elementary part of competitiveness.

Then, about my coordinating role. I have been talking with Pierre and Jonathan about the first moment if we are confirmed by the European Parliament and what we should start doing. We have a plan where we identify the projects, for instance infrastructure projects or things that must be done in the financial market or, together with Pierre, how to leverage the EIB. We identify the measures we want to carry out. We ask the other Commissioners to come around the table and we distribute the responsibilities. We are coordinating our joint efforts from the very beginning – not like previously, when someone prepares something and then it is brought to the College meeting, but from the very beginning. So that is why our package is still not ready, because we have not had the chance to talk about all the details, but it will not take that much time.

2-026

Elisa Ferreira (S&D). – Mr Katainen, more important than your words are your actions, and you are well known, because as Minister of Finance and Prime Minister of Finland, you are one of the strongest advocates of austerity.

You assumed a moralistic stance that sinners have to atone for their sins. You were the first to ask for collateral from troubled Member States – even from Spain – as a pre-condition for any lending. Greece had to borrow to meet your demands. You imposed a hardening of the already harsh austerity foreseen in Portugal in exchange for financial assistance.

You dragged your feet, both in the creation and the broadening of the scope of the SM. In July, here in the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, you advocated that investment and growth would stem automatically from austerity – the only source of trust for investors, as you said – and it was just a matter of time and persistence.

Today you propose an investment stimulus. Why? Precisely where is the money coming from?

2-027

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > We have to reduce debt in order to get growth and we have to produce growth in order to reduce debt. That is what Pierre Moscovici said just last week and I fully agree with him. Countries, and especially the people in many countries, have sacrificed a lot during the last few years, and the governments were between a rock and a hard place when they were defending their credibility and when they were fighting in order to get confidence back. Confidence is a precondition for creating jobs and attracting private investments.

So, as I said, we have now regained confidence. And now we have to, if I may coin a phrase, ‘attack towards the future’, meaning that we have to mobilise all the public resources at European and national level for new investments, in order to get new jobs for ordinary citizens. And also we need to create a more competitive Europe by measures at the European level and national level in order to give our small and medium-sized enterprises more opportunities to serve and sell their products and services.

So for me it is not a black and white question whether we need a responsible fiscal policy or growth. They both support each other. And I would like to try to highlight the issues which unite us rather than those which divide us, because I am sure that our people expect good cooperation from all the political parties in order to find the best solutions, the best practical measures to boost investment, both public and private.

2-028

IN THE CHAIR: MARITA ULVSKOG
Acting Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

2-029

Ulrike Trebesius (ECR). – Sehr geehrter Herr Katainen! Laut Ihren schriftlichen Vorstellungen wollen Sie sich besonders dafür engagieren, die Arbeitslosigkeit innerhalb der Eurozone zu senken, indem Sie die Mobilität der Arbeitnehmer erhöhen wollen. Ich möchte gerne von Ihnen wissen, wie die EU sich zukünftig bei der Migration der häufig gut ausgebildeten und vor allem jungen Menschen aus Süd- und Südost-Europa positionieren wird. Sehen Sie hier nicht eine Gefahr des Brain-Drain für diese Länder? Wie sollen diese Länder ihre Wettbewerbsfähigkeit wiederherstellen? Wie sollen die Länder damit umgehen, die das Ziel dieser Mobilität sind und die diese Arbeitnehmer auf ihrem Arbeitsmarkt integrieren müssen? Wie soll mit den unterschiedlichen Bildungsstandards innerhalb der EU umgegangen werden? In Bezug auf diese unterschiedlichen Schulabschlüsse soll auch hier weiter harmonisiert – sprich gleich gemacht – werden, und ähnlich wie bei der Bologna-Reform sollen die Standards weiter gesenkt werden – ich denke da an die Abschaffung des erfolgreichen deutschen Diploms.

Ich möchte von Ihnen wissen, ob es seitens der EU Pläne gibt, den erfolgreichen deutschen Meisterbrief abzuschaffen?

2-030

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > I have some friends, especially in southern Europe, who have needed to leave their country on a temporary basis because they did not have a job in their own country. In that sense the free movement of people is quite sad: you are forced to leave your own country even if you would like to stay there, but luckily there is an opportunity to find a job in another part of Europe. It is not a black-and-white question, but I understand very well when you say that the brain drain can create problems in the countries that young educated people are leaving.

There is a great need to work at various levels to tackle youth unemployment. The Youth Guarantee, which is very dear to me, is one of the tools, and we can progressively accelerate it here at a European level, but we also have to make sure that the Member States use this tool at national level. It was my government which initially created the Youth Guarantee, and you can imagine that I am really proud of it because it has now been copied to European level. I would like to send my best regards to my former colleagues in the government who worked on the Youth Guarantee.

You also mentioned the opportunity of harmonising education quality, and this is also a very important thing because it is the pre-condition for the education of your own country being accepted in another country and vice-versa. It is one of the concrete tools which we could use as part of a country-specific recommendation.

2-031

Marian Harkin (ALDE). – Vice-President-designate, yesterday's quarterly review of the EU employment and social situation showed that the growth in disposable household income has slowed, and Germany, which is considered by many to be the growth engine for the EU, has had its GDP forecasts revised downwards to 1.4% for 2014 and 2015. Earlier, you spoke of supply and demand, but demand is very sluggish, with no prospects on the horizon for it picking up. The IMF, in the World Economic Outlook, advocates substantially-increased public investment when unemployment is high, as it is now, because it says that the stimulus will be much greater when it comes from borrowing, rather than cutting, taxes. But you seem to be taking a different stance. You spoke this morning about investment without creating new debt. My question is: how can we leverage that public investment without creating new debt? Finally, you spoke about growth and investment, but that is a bit like the chicken and the egg. Which comes first?

2-032

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > You said it is like the question of the chicken and the egg. I think first there must be stability, and for that we need investment; that is where I have understood that growth comes from.

The public money, or additional public money, for investments, can come from various sources. First of all the countries who are running a current account surplus could invest more in their future and by doing so stimulate the EU economy.

We need coordinated European action. We have some experience in how to do this, in order to make sure that public investment will not accumulate deficit and debt, because ever-growing debt would endanger our economic recovery. I do not want to take a risk of jeopardising our economic recovery just because of higher public debt.

Then we can leverage the EU budget, as Kristalina Georgieva said last week here. If we do not use multipliers, if we do not use the European budget better, then we know what we can get, but if we use it much better and in a more effective way then we can get more. And here we need the European Parliament's support very strongly.

I would also like to ask you to be very firm towards the Member States, because we need their help also, and there we could form a common camp, with the Commission and the European Parliament together, in order to convince the Member States that we need more investment, but also better use of the European budget, and finally the increased lending capacity of the EIB and other financial instruments like the EIF or national promotional banks.

2-033

Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL). – Senhor Katainen, fiquei muito comovido com a sua intervenção. Nós em Portugal tivemos um caso semelhante, com o primeiro-ministro na altura, Durão Barroso, a preferir também fugir para a Comissão, deixando Portugal em recessão. De maneira que começo por dizer que compreendo perfeitamente a sua intervenção. Queria, entretanto, chamar a atenção para, enfim, algumas realidades empíricas. Como sabe, e isto é uma realidade empírica verificável, os países com maior despesa pública, e designadamente com maior despesa pública primária, são aqueles que melhor resistiram à crise e são aqueles que, ao mesmo tempo, apresentam melhor índice de distribuição da riqueza e do rendimento. E o senhor sabe daquilo que falo, na medida em que a Finlândia é hoje o país com maior despesa pública primária na União Europeia.

E a questão que coloco é muito simples: é se se mantém inabalável nas suas convicções, ou seja, se vamos continuar a ter um modelo que destrói o Estado social e persiste numa política de concentração da riqueza, ou se não estaremos na altura de inverter caminho e procurar uma outra política que valorize os salários, que, por exemplo, em vez de cortar nos impostos sobre as empresas, como fez na Finlândia, se não estará na altura de, por exemplo, taxar as transações em bolsa.

2-034

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > Mr Viegas, your question was about whether we should we have more stable income distribution and whether we should strengthen or raise salaries instead of cutting corporate taxes, for instance. I am a child of the most inclusive welfare societies in the world and my picture of the world comes from this inheritance. In our society, equality between people is a core value. Also, there is no single party in my country which would oppose the basic idea of a welfare society.

I said earlier that, according to my experiences – which does not mean that everybody shares this picture, but according to my experiences – the strongest partner of inclusive welfare society is global

competitiveness. Because in a country of 500 million inhabitants, in which the public sector plays a more than 50% role in the entire economy, the country could not afford to run one of the best education systems and inclusive social models if the country was not one of the most competitive in the world. So we need money from outside, and I hope that the European social model, the European social market economy, would be based on high-quality jobs, high education, investment in research and development and a flexible, open internal market which gives opportunities for traditional industry, but also to start-ups.

2-035

Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE). – I was very pleased to hear, in your opening statement, a reference to climate and renewables, because we believe that your portfolio has got a serious gap in this perspective, and it does not reflect the fact that the climate, financial and social crises cannot be tackled separately. So the EU 2020 strategy recognises a green transition is crucial, and that a clear sense of direction is important for skills development, for job creation, local job creation and investment confidence. So what arguments, what actions are you going to use to promote that green transition within the Commission, within Council and with social partners so that we actually see some progress on it and not simply some nice words on a bit of paper?

2-036

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > There are lots of issues to be dealt with. Everybody has their own obsessions and one of mine is recyclable and renewable fuels produced by the non-food sector. So this is one of the areas on which I would focus more.

I have to say that I am not too optimistic when looking at green taxation proposals produced by the Commission because the Member States are not that willing to use the best possible, the most effective tools for promoting renewable energies and incentivising the best and cleanest technologies.

But I will work together with Pierre and also with other Commissioners responsible for this area because I myself created emission-based taxation on fuels and the other energy forms and it has started to function from day one. Emissions have been falling. We also applied a similar type of taxation to car taxation.

So this is only one of the issues but of course emission trade systems reform is probably one of the most influential ones and this is on the agenda of the Commission.

2-037

Patrick O’Flynn (EFDD). – Commissioner-designate Hill seemed reluctant to talk about protecting the legitimate interests of the City of London. Do you, as in some senses his boss, acknowledge there is an advantage to the whole Union in having the world’s leading financial centre within its borders, or would you prefer to see a more diverse set of financial services centres within the EU, with other centres such as perhaps Frankfurt being encouraged to grow to limit the dominance of London?

2-038

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > For me the most important thing is that we could diversify our capital market so that the money would go there where it is most needed. For me, it is not a question of geography so much. I am happy if London grows, I am happy if Frankfurt grows, I am happy if Paris grows, as the centres of the financial market. But what we need most is better capital market union, which includes lots of different issues. The basic idea is to let capital flow more freely from country to country and create better financing instruments, especially for SMEs.

The early action we need, if the new Commission can start soon, and if I am confirmed and if Jonathan Hill is confirmed, is to develop standards for high quality securitisation, ensuring that we could use this kind of vehicle to strengthen SMEs' opportunities to get finance.

The second is common and reliable standards for cross-border credit information on SMEs. Again we would like to help SMEs on this. And, thirdly, facilitating the development of the European market for private placement.

So, as I said, for me it is not only geography or the names of the cities, but rather concrete changes and reforms in order to help our businesses get financing in order to create jobs.

2-039

Nicolas Bay (NI). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire désigné, le fonctionnement et les orientations politiques actuelles des institutions européennes montrent que l'Union est aujourd'hui aveuglée par une sorte d'intégrisme libre-échangiste.

Il y a dix-sept ans, en octobre 1997, le traité d'Amsterdam abrogeait l'article 44, paragraphe 2, du traité de Rome, qui prévoyait – je cite – "le développement d'une préférence naturelle entre les États membres". Cette abrogation fut une terrible erreur sur laquelle il est urgent de revenir si nous voulons commencer à redonner un sens à la construction européenne.

Or, dans vos réponses aux questionnaires du Parlement européen, je n'ai trouvé que la poursuite de ces mêmes errements. Ainsi annoncez-vous qu'une de vos priorités sera "de moderniser la législation sur la protection de l'emploi". Ne s'agit-il pas d'une façon pudique de préconiser une précarisation accrue des salariés de notre continent?

Ma question, Monsieur le Commissaire, est donc la suivante: quitte à s'aligner systématiquement sur les États-Unis, pourquoi ne pas s'inspirer de mesures qui ont fait leurs preuves outre-Atlantique, pourquoi pas un bail *European Act* sur le modèle du bail *American Act* voulu par le président Roosevelt et toujours en vigueur aujourd'hui?

Puisqu'à l'évidence nous ne pourrions pas rivaliser avec la compétitivité salariale de pays comme la Chine, il est temps de changer notre fusil d'épaule et de protéger nous aussi nos industries et nos emplois, menacés par la concurrence extracommunautaire.

2-040

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > I agree with you that we cannot compete with Chinese wage levels. There are even more countries and areas in the world in which the wage level and the level of social protection is much lower than the average in Europe, and we cannot compete with them. In fact, we do not even need to try to compete against them by using the lowest possible wages or lowest possible social standards.

The European social model is based on a completely different prospect. It is based on equal opportunities for all. It is based on a high-skilled labour force, because we need added value. It is based on education and research, again because we need added value.

Europe is full of countries which are so sophisticated that we cannot get enough money by producing in bulk or by competing only at the lowest possible wage level. The social model economy is based on an added value type of thing and there social protection and the sense of security of people and the labour force must be at the right level.

I think that we have more to lose if we do not have a fair deal on trade with the United States. On the contrary, we could gain high quality jobs and economic growth and tax revenues if we had a fair trade deal with the United States.

2-041

David Casa (PPE). – Fil-passat intu at politika ta' awsterità biex nilqg u g all-kri i li kellna fl-Ewropa. Illum vilupp importanti afna li qed titkellem dwaru hu li se jkollna politika dida ta' investiment u allura qed nittama li din il-politika tg aqqad il-gruppi politi i kollha f'dan il-Parlament, u qed nistenna li dan isir immedjatament. Tkellimt dwar investiment ta' tliet mitt biljun euro. Jekk dan il-ba it ji i a ettat, naturalment il-Kummissjoni trid tg idilna x'ser ikunu l-prijoritajiet ta' kif se jintefqu dawn il-fondi. Li nixtieq nisma' ming andek huwa x'inhuma daw k il-prijoritajiet illi se jo olqu tkabbir ekonomiku u kif se no olqu iktar impjiegi fl-Ewropa li tant g andna b onnhom b alissa.

2-042

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > The priorities: we have to focus both in demand and supply, because we need both in order to encourage the private sector to invest. The second: we have to use the public resources as effectively as possible and we have to be ready to find whether it would be possible. I am very sure that we can find some fresh public resources for public investments, because they are necessary to kick-start the economic growth. By using the EU budget more effectively, by using public financial instruments better than before and by encouraging Member States – especially those who are running a current account surplus – to invest in future (especially in R&D and infrastructure), we can get more resources.

I also would like to highlight two priorities from the supply side. The Enforcement of Services Directive is crucial and, looking at the European Parliament's cost of non-Europe map, this tells the truth. This is a paper which tells where we could get the new jobs. Digital single market: 260 billion; single market for consumers and citizens: 235 billion; trans-Atlantic trade agreement: 60 billion; completing financial market: 60 billion. This opportunity means that the Commission needs more coordinated action, coordinated work, and it needs your support. So there are a lot of opportunities, and I am not pessimistic at all. We just have to collect our good ideas and concentrate on what unites us, not what divides us.

2-043

Udo Bullmann (S&D). – Herr designerter Kommissar! Die reale Investitionslücke in der Europäischen Union beträgt 200 Milliarden Euro pro Jahr. Nun sagt Herr Juncker – und Herr Katainen sagt das auch –, wir versprechen ein Investitionsprogramm von 300 Milliarden Euro für die nächsten Jahre. Ich stelle fest, es gibt – in Reaktion darauf – zwei Gruppen von Leuten. Die einen sagen: „Herr Katainen, das ist ein Fake, das ist ein Flopp. Das sagen Sie nur, weil Sie – so wie Herr Juncker – die Bestätigung des Hauses haben wollen, und dann wird das so wenig irgendeine Realität wie der Wachstumspakt von Herrn Barroso.“ Und es gibt die, die sagen: „Wir sind in den Mitgliedstaaten schon dagegen, bevor wir genau wissen, was es ist.“ Diese zwei Gruppen gibt es.

Ich mache Ihnen einen Vorschlag: Sie kommen nach Möglichkeit noch bis Ende des Jahres vor dieses Haus, vor die Ausschüsse, stellen Ihr Paket vor, diskutieren es mit den Kollegen und holen sich ein Votum dieses Hauses für dieses Paket. Sind Sie dazu bereit oder nicht? Sie haben mehrfach das europäische Budget angesprochen. Sie haben unsere Hilfe erfragt. Wir sind bereit, sie zu geben. Wollen Sie dieses Votum? Für mich ist das eine wichtige Frage vor dem *Assessment* der Kommission.

2-044

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Your question was whether I am enthusiastic about job creation only because I want to become a Commissioner. That is not the case. I

have been in politics for many years now, and the reason I am in politics is that I want to change the world. I have been working, in various positions, for a better Europe. Even if my party was leading in the opinion polls I would want to step down as Prime Minister to become a Commissioner in order to create a better Europe.

This has been my intention and I am more than happy to have a chance, if Parliament accepts me, to work directly on investments, competitiveness and jobs. If I am confirmed in post, I would like to organise the work of the team of Commissioners which I am steering so that we can get feedback from Parliament and collect your ideas about what you think the most effective investment package should look like.

We have not done this yet because the new Commission does not yet exist but, depending on your decisions, I would like to organise the work so that various Commissioners, as well as myself, would come to meet Members of Parliament and discuss your views, because you bring different geographical points of view to this discussion. It is very useful to gather all the different ideas.

2-045

Udo Bullmann (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin, ich habe, glaube ich, noch 10 Sekunden. Ich hätte gerne eine Antwort auf meine Frage zum Votum! Wenn es das Geld des Europäischen Parlaments ist, wenn es Budgetgeld ist, dann will ich von dem designierten Kommissar gerne eine Antwort auf meine Frage haben!

2-046

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > If I understood right the question related to the budget – I am sure I understood it right – I would just like to work together with Kristalina Georgieva in order to use our common budget more effectively to leverage public resources towards investment. At the same time, when bringing a fresh impetus and fresh money to investment, we have to use our taxpayers' money more effectively in order to get as many jobs as possible.

2-047

Hans-Olaf Henkel (ECR). – Mr Katainen, your job title features the word ‘competitiveness’. Many years ago, there was a Commissioner in Brussels called Leon Brittan who always asked himself the question ‘how can Europe become competitive?’ and the answer he gave was ‘by competition’. Since the euro has been in crisis, the Commission has advocated the exact opposite of competition. It has advocated harmonisation. Commissioner Andor is pushing for a common unemployment insurance system. Instead of tax competition, the Commission now wants tax harmonisation. President Juncker wants eurobonds, and the European Banking Union is nothing else but a socialisation of national banking risks. That may help stabilise the euro for a while, but I would like to ask you one very simple question: what do you think this harmonisation is doing to the competitiveness of Europe as compared to the rest of the world?

2-048

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Mr Henkel, your question was about harmonisation and whether it helps or not, or whether it creates artificial structures which do not improve competitiveness. Harmonisation, for me, means that there are the same rules and the same conditions. We have to build a level playing field. But harmonisation, at the same time, does not mean that one size fits all. As European decision makers, we have to choose very carefully in which areas we need more harmonisation and in which areas we do not need more harmonisation.

This is also a question of subsidiarity. I think that there are lots of issues in which we need more harmonised policy, such as the single market – the single market of digital content or the single market of energy – and strict implementation of the Services Directive. Those are the measures in which we need more harmonisation. But at the same time there are lots of issues in which it is better

that the local level or national level operates, because this is more effective and will not have harmful side effects for Europe as a whole.

2-049

Dominique Riquet (ALDE). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire désigné, les besoins de financement en infrastructures en Europe ont été estimés par la Commission européenne à mille milliards d'euros pour les prochaines années.

Le budget de l'Union européenne est toutefois limité: il est même structurellement déficitaire en paiements. Le mécanisme pour l'interconnexion de l'Europe a été doté de seulement trente-trois milliards d'euros. La plupart des budgets nationaux sont contraints. Enfin, les capitaux privés, qui sont abondants, ne sont pas orientés par des mesures incitatives vers un investissement dans les infrastructures. De ce fait, tout le monde ici se demande où se trouvent les trois cent milliards de Monsieur Juncker.

J'ai donc deux questions précises à vous poser.

Premièrement, serez-vous favorable à un fonds obligataire européen exclusivement destiné à l'investissement de long terme appuyé sur des actifs, qui serait communautarisé?

Deuxièmement, utiliserez-vous des instruments de régulation pour diriger ou favoriser l'orientation des capitaux privés vers des projets d'investissement public?

2-050

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Your question concerning how to finance the big infrastructure projects, especially in transport, and where the money should come from is the very heart of my future portfolio if I can start working as a Vice-President for Jobs, Growth and Investment and Competitiveness.

Transport is exactly one area which forces us to find ways for new innovative financing opportunities. The principle in my mind is that public investment needs to crowd in as much private money as possible. Three hundred billion is not only liquidity. Part of it is liquidity, but by using other measures like regulatory measures and also this liquidity, we could boost 300 billion real investment. So the Connecting Europe Facility and all the opportunities there – but also project bonds – can be used more effectively than before. We have some good experiences from project bonds, even though there have only been some pilot projects. But I am sure that project bonds would play a bigger role, especially in large infrastructure projects. Also, capital market union and Solvency II could help institutional investors to invest in the real economy better than before. This is also one of the issues on which I have to work together with Jonathan Hill.

2-051

Lynn Boylan (GUE/NGL). – Ireland's unemployment rate remains a persistent problem. A quarter of a million of our citizens have emigrated. If that and the number of people forced into labour activation measures was taken into account, our unemployment rate in Ireland would now stand at 23%. In the last three years, private investment has collapsed and our Department of Enterprise budget has been slashed by EUR 66 million. Back in 2010, Ireland was told in no uncertain terms that the burning of bond holders would not be tolerated, despite the fact that it was these creditors and the ECB's loose monetary policy that led to the banking crisis. At the EU Council Summit in June 2012, the final communique explicitly said that the eurozone had a special duty to Ireland and that the EU bailout mechanism should take responsibility for retrospective recapitalisation. I know, Commissioner-designate, that at the time you said that any legacy debt deal for Ireland would be inappropriate, so my

question to you is this: have you reviewed your position and, if not, can you explain how Ireland can ever publicly invest in job creation when its citizens continue to bear the brunt of saving the euro?

2-052

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > Ms Boylan, your question was about how one can invest in jobs and new growth in Ireland, because Ireland is still doing consolidation measures and the people of Ireland are in a very difficult position. I do understand the situation of many Irish people, and I have to say that Irish people have been a very brave nation, taking on the responsibility of the country's own challenges. Ireland is one of the countries to which I would expect a lot of private investments to come, because of the competitiveness of the country, because of the reputation that it takes care of its own businesses, even though it is very difficult.

That is also one of the reasons why we need a joint European effort. We have to help countries to absorb better structural funds; we have to find new financial instruments to finance big infrastructure projects; and we have to pay attention to research and development. We all – all the Member States – are more or less in a similar situation: that we have to re-invent ourselves. Even the strongest countries cannot say that they will be strong for sure after ten years, because all countries must reform themselves in order to create new growth and new businesses.

2-053

Ernest Urtasun (Verts/ALE). – Señora presidenta, señor Katainen, usted ha sido uno de los máximos defensores de una fórmula fracasada: la austeridad a cualquier precio y las reformas neoliberales.

Antes de ser Comisario, en 2010, estaba en contra de dar más tiempo a Grecia aunque eso le pusiera la soga al cuello a este país, y lo sabía. Lo mismo ocurría con Portugal.

Estaba en contra de los eurobonos, y en su última audiencia como Comisario, en julio, a la que yo asistí, elogió los programas de la Troika, a quien calificó de «abogado de los países acreedores».

Creemos, señor Katainen, que tiene una misión que va en contra de sus propias creencias por lo demostrado hasta ahora, pero lo que tengo que decirle hoy, señor Katainen, es que del plan de inversiones, que es el plan estrella que a usted se le ha encomendado, no nos ha concretado absolutamente nada.

Díganos alguna cosa sobre los fondos públicos. Esos fondos públicos, ¿son los que ya están programados en los presupuestos nacionales y en los presupuestos plurianuales europeos o no? ¿Sí o no? ¿Son nuevos? Y, si son nuevos, ¿de dónde salen?

Denos una idea. Es el plan de inversiones estrella de la Comisión Europea y no nos ha explicado absolutamente nada. Concrete algo, por favor.

2-054

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > Your question was that I was opposing the Greek package and I was opposing the Portugal package, and where the money for the investment should come from.

Let me first make this clear. I was in favour of both Greek packages, unlike some people in my country. I was also, as a finance minister, convincing Finnish people prior to the general elections to accept Portugal's financial assistance package. It was highly unpopular.

As a Prime Minister and Finance Minister together, I have made sure that my country has always participated in those programmes, because of economic reasoning but also because of a solidarity

point of view. But it has not been easy. People in my country who lost their jobs because of the crisis in other parts of Europe were quite rightly asking why we should lend money to the countries who have created the crisis, even though I have lost my job because of the crisis.

And, as a European politician, I do hope that we would try to build bridges between the people. At the same time I understand very well that people are very disappointed in Greece, in Portugal, in Spain, in Ireland. Why did this need to happen?

So I would like to bring people more together than divide. We have to understand different opinions of people in different parts of the EU. But the first public money should come from the Member States, especially (primarily) from those who are running current account surpluses, from leveraging the EIB, the other financial instruments, and better use of the European budget. And also we need a coordinated European effort.

But I just want to end up by saying that I would like to look forward. We need to send encouraging messages to our citizens that we are all in the same boat. Let us stop remembering what has happened in the past and let us focus on a brighter future.

2-055

Marco Valli (EFDD). – Ha parlato di investimenti pubblici e privati, nel piano di 300 miliardi; ha parlato di finanza, però di strumenti finanziari molto delicati, cosa che mi preoccupa molto.

La finanza rappresenta un milione di miliardi, l'economia reale 75 000 miliardi, 15 volte. Siamo parlando di un cancro e di una bolla che dovremmo in qualche modo andare ad isolare, regolamentare. Invece Lei vuole farsela socia, questa bolla. Credete che questi privati siano misericordiosi nei confronti dell'economia reale e della società? La finanza, secondo me, già influenza troppo la politica. Ho paura che gli sforzi e i sacrifici che ci chiede con le riforme diventeranno bonus e dividendi per i privati e vite di inferno e povertà strutturale per i cittadini europei.

Prima di aprire le porte agli investitori privati attraverso la finanza a questi strumenti, non crede sia meglio separare l'attività reale da quella finanziaria?

2-056

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Your question was about how we can create better conditions for ordinary little investors, the people who are using their money to buy shares in companies, and how we could create a fairer financial market, for instance regulating bankers' bonuses and things like that.

I would like to thank Mr Barnier very much for what he has been doing in this field. So now we have to make sure that Member States and the banking industry itself really follow the new set of rules which have been created during the last few years. Implementation of the banking union is also very crucial because this is the way to increase stability in the market. We also have to pay attention to high-quality securitisation so that small and medium-sized companies can get new opportunities to get financing.

There is a lot of private money in Europe but for some reason it does not go where it is most needed. So in order to strengthen welfare and well-being in Europe we need jobs and, as Jean-Claude Juncker said, we have to remember that it is primarily the private sector which creates jobs, not governments or European institutions. So that is why we have to use the policy tools that we have, creating a better single market for SMEs, for traditional industry, in order to get new jobs.

2-057

Françoise Grossetête (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur Katainen, je reviens sur la nouvelle stratégie pour la croissance de la Commission européenne, qui est donc attendue pour 2015.

Comment pourrez-vous garantir que les mesures concrètes contenues dans cette stratégie ne resteront pas lettre morte, mais se traduiront rapidement par des actes forts et concrets? Au-delà des grands projets, il existe en effet un fort potentiel de croissance, qui réside dans la bonne application de la législation actuelle.

Avant de faire de nouvelles propositions, comptez-vous évaluer les effets et le potentiel de la législation déjà en vigueur, entre autres dans le domaine du marché unique?

Sur le grand plan d'investissements de 300 milliards d'euros, beaucoup reste à faire – nous l'avons vu – dans le domaine de l'énergie et du numérique. Quelles mesures comptez-vous prendre pour vous assurer que les États membres et les collectivités locales, qui sont souvent concernées mais qui ont besoin de budgets, soient prêtes pour utiliser ces nouveaux financements?

2-058

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > The growth strategy needs more tools than just the EUR 300 billion growth package because, if we want to defend Europe's social model and to strengthen the social market economy, our growth model must be based on sustainable values.

High quality jobs are a key here. Together with Marianne Thyssen, we need to improve this aspect. We cannot accept social dumping. We have to invest in R&D. We need reforms at national level in order to improve competitiveness and then, as you rightly said, we have to implement the legislation and other instruments that have already been adopted. I want to mention the Services Directive as one example. If we had a properly functioning, properly implemented Services Directive there would be more jobs in Europe.

We have come to a new phase in the European economy, in the sense that we have to shift our focus to investment and to creating something new. Confidence has come back and we have to safeguard that confidence, but then we have to invest using private sector money, creating a better single market – even in the defence sector, but also in energy and in the digital field – and implementing all the other measures we have already decided on. Public sector resources, too, should be used in a more effective way than before.

2-059

Pervenche Berès (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire désigné, je crois que l'Europe ne sera pas une grande France, mais j'ai parfois l'impression que vous pensez qu'elle devrait être une grande Finlande. J'ai parfois aussi l'impression que vous oubliez que même M. Barroso avait considéré que le modèle social européen était un élément de la compétitivité de l'Union européenne.

Lorsque vous nous parlez du retour de la confiance, je ne comprends pas à quoi vous vous référez. Plus de 57% des Européens n'ont pas participé aux dernières élections et je ne considère donc pas – mais peut-être avons-nous un point de désaccord - qu'il s'agit d'un retour de la confiance.

Vous êtes responsable du principal outil de redressement de l'Union européenne, du retour de la confiance, mais ces trois cent milliards, vous ne nous dites pas ce que vous allez en faire! Comment allez-vous le financer si vous voulez lancer des investissements sans recourir à l'endettement? Des marges de manœuvre existent pourtant, si vous voulez bien soutenir, par exemple, la taxation des

transactions financières ou considérer que le cofinancement national des dépenses du Fonds structurel peut être déduit du calcul des déficits.

Enfin – vous êtes devant le Parlement européen –, quel est votre engagement en termes de calendrier et de vote, par ce même Parlement, du plan d'investissement?

2-060

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > There were several aspects to your question, covering the concrete measures in the investment package, whether a transaction tax could be used, and the timing.

I would like to start with the timing. President-elect Juncker has said that there should be a comprehensive investment package identified within the first three months of the existence of the Commission. This is the political guideline I would like to work with if confirmed.

Secondly, I have, according to my understanding, clarified well where the public money would come from for the investment packages. I can repeat: better use of the EIB, better use of other European public financial instruments, better use of national promotional banks and better use of the European budget in order to leverage the public resources and from national budgets, especially from the countries that are running current account surpluses.

Finally, we need a common coordinated European action in order to make sure that our policies will not increase deficit and debt load. I hope you will also understand that I cannot disclose everything at this stage, because President-elect Juncker and I have not had a chance to talk with our future colleagues on the issues. Also some measures may need wide political consensus and they may also have market impact. In order to avoid a negative market impact I would not like to speculate too much about some details.

2-061

Sampo Terho (ECR). – Welcome to our committee, Mr Katainen. We have been talking for almost two hours, but I still feel that we do not actually know much about your action plan. What are you actually going to do? If you want to gain our confidence in your competence, we need some concrete examples of what you are planning to do.

You have told us that you would like to find more innovative solutions and you should use public funds more efficiently and make better use of structural funds, and things like this. Now please, concretely, how will you better use public funds? How will you find more innovative solutions? What are those more innovative solutions? You do not have to give us long examples; just give us a clear list of actions that you support. Please, no more talk about your good intentions. We know that your intentions are good, but we want concrete actions.

2-062

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > Your question was about the concrete actions in the investment package. First of all, I have not had a chance to exchange views yet with the European Parliament. I would like to hear your views. What do you see as the most effective tools?

Secondly, I have not had an opportunity to talk with Jean-Claude Juncker and with my fellow Commissioners, if they get Parliament's support. So not everything can be ready yet. For instance, I have not yet had a chance to talk with Pierre Moscovici about how to use the EIB or how, in concrete terms, to change taxation in order to obtain good results. I hope you will understand that not

everything is ready yet because the new Commission does not exist. But I can give you some examples.

Kristalina Georgieva said last week that she would like to double the amount of grants from their current level, so this is one way in which we can use the European budget more effectively. I support Kristalina in this. With regard to increasing the potential of the Connecting Europe facility and project bonds, these are things on which I would like to focus. In relation to the EIB, I will work closely with President Hoyer to increase the EIB's potential in relation not only to infrastructure but also to youth unemployment and education. This is something completely new: it does not exist at the moment to a sufficient level.

I have to work closely with First Vice-President Timmermans in order to cut red tape. Then there is better coordination with national promotional banks, etcetera, etcetera: the list is too long to cover in two minutes, but I am sure we can continue with the next questions.

2-063

Olli Rehn (ALDE). – Arvoisa komissaariehdokas, Teille on kaavailtu tärkeää tehtävää kilpailukyvästä vastaavana varapuheenjohtajana.

Kestävällä pohjalla oleva energiantuotanto on kilpailukyvä ytimessä. Tänä päivänä Eurooppa on aivan liian riippuvainen fossiilisesta energiasta ja myös energiantuonnista, etenkin Venäjältä. Tähän myös Euroopan parlamentti kiinnitti huomiota korostamalla pari viikkoa sitten, että on tarpeen parantaa merkittävästi Euroopan energiavarmuutta, riippumattomuutta ja kykyä kestää ulkoista poliittista painetta.

Kysynkin, kuinka voisitte komission varapuheenjohtajana käytännössä eteenpäin tätä Euroopan parlamentin ilmaisemaa pyrkimystä parantaa energiavarmuutta ja vähentää tuontiriippuvuutta? Lisäksi, kuinka edistäisitte etenkin biotalouteen nojaavaa uusiutuvan energian tuotantoa? Paljonko karkeasti arvioituna panostaisitte siihen tästä jo kuuluisasta kolmensadan miljardin euron investointiohjelmasta?

Tämä kestävä vihreä talous on hyvin tärkeä kysymys myös aluekehityksen kannalta, eikä vähiten itäisessä Suomessa, jonka me molemmat tunnemme hyvin.

2-064

Jyrki Katainen, komission varapuheenjohtaja- ja jäsen ehdokas. > Kiitokset, edeltäjäni Rehn. Tämä kysymys kosketti sitä, kuinka voidaan parantaa energiaturvallisuutta Euroopassa, ja toisaalta myös puhtaiden energioiden lisääntyvää käyttöä ja tuotantoa, ja kuinka tätä kautta voidaan parantaa kilpailukykyä.

Ensimmäinen konkreettinen väline on energiainvestoinnit eli investoinnit energiayhteyksiin. Mainitsisin tässä nyt kaksi ääripäätä. Ensimmäinen on Iberian niemimaa ja Espanjan ja Portugalin kytkös muuhun Eurooppaan, esimerkiksi Ranskan kautta, ja toinen on sitten Suomen kytkeminen Balticconnector-kaasuputken kautta Baltian maihin ja sitä kautta sitten muuhun Eurooppaan, niin että kumpikaan pääty ei ole energiasaareke. Tämä on ensimmäinen kysymys.

Toinen näkökulma on uusien energiantuontimahdollisuuksien avaaminen, niin että emme olisi niin riippuvaisia vain yhdestä ilmansuunnasta. Toisaalta kaasun kohdalla on tärkeää, että virtaukset voivat kääntyä ja että kaasun tuontireitti voi kääntyä kaasun vientireitiksi, jos asia niin vaatii.

Seuraavaksi on investointi tutkimukseen ja kehitykseen. Uskon erittäin vahvasti puhtaiden teknologioiden mahdollisuuteen kasvattaa taloutta mutta toisaalta myös vähentää kasvihuonepäästöjä ja muita päästöjä sekä lisätä energiatehokkuutta ja sitä kautta kilpailukykyä Euroopan teollisuudessa.

Ja ehkä viimeinen seikka on sisämarkkinat. Meillä on valitettavasti vieläkin hieman protektionistista systä johtuvia kaupan esteitä puhtaiden energioiden ja puhtaiden teknologioiden puolella. Me tarvitsemme yhtenäisempää energiapolitiikkaa, jotta sisämarkkinat toimisivat aidosti sekä itse energiatuotteen kohdalla että myös teknologian kohdalla.

2-065

IN THE CHAIR: JERZY BUZEK

Chair of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

2-066

Paloma López (GUE/NGL). – Señor presidente, señor Katainen, los objetivos de inversión pública para la zona del euro son todavía vagos —no se concreta de dónde se van a obtener los fondos adicionales necesarios para llevarlos a cabo—, mientras que los objetivos de inversión privada no tienen en cuenta las débiles perspectivas de demanda futura, con un Banco Central Europeo todavía demasiado preocupado por el control de precios y no por el empleo.

Tengo tres preguntas.

Primera: ¿Conoce y apoyará el plan para la inversión, el crecimiento sostenible y empleos de calidad de la Confederación Europea de Sindicatos?

Frente al *dumping* social provocado por su carrera a la competitividad entre Estados miembros, ¿cómo va a garantizar que la inversión conduzca a la convergencia productiva entre Estados, dadas las grandes diferencias existentes?

Por último, ¿va usted a alentar las mejoras salariales, la lucha contra el fraude fiscal y una tributación progresiva y equitativa o va a seguir manteniendo las políticas de reformas estructurales que tanto daño han causado a nuestras sociedades como, por ejemplo, a España?

2-067

Chair. > We are running 10 minutes late. I would like all of you from three committees of the European Parliament to keep strictly to time so that all 45 Members can put their questions.

2-068

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Your first question was about whether I support the investment package and the public sector's capacity to invest more in job creation, and my answer is yes. I feel this is my duty. I also want to create good opportunities for the private sector to invest in Europe's future. There are lots of fantastic assets in Europe but for some reason we just do not let Europe work as well as it could do.

The second question was how I work against social dumping. Let me be very clear on this. The social market economy means that we have unified rules for everybody. Social dumping has no place in Europe. It is against the principle of the social market economy. The social market economy is just a tool. It is not an end in itself.

But I very much support what President-elect Juncker has said on this issue. He has said that, for instance, the Posting of Workers Directive needs to be strictly implemented, and I will work very closely with Marianne Thyssen who has given her initial indications on how she will approach this

work, both through the new Enforcement Directive and by looking at the directive itself. But we need wide dialogue with all stakeholders on this issue.

2-069

Monika Vana (Verts/ALE). – Sehr geehrter Herr designierter Kommissar! Sie haben sehr viel über die Finanzinstrumente gesprochen, wenig über die Strukturfonds. Aber Investitionspolitik ist ja in erster Linie auch territoriale Kohäsionspolitik, ist Regionalpolitik. Ich denke – egal wie das 300-Milliarden-Paket aussehen wird –, es wird erhebliche Auswirkungen auf die Strukturfonds haben.

Die Gelder der Strukturpolitik sind ja vor allem in Städten und Regionen schon programmiert, beispielsweise für das Erreichen der Europa-2020-Ziele, wie Beschäftigung, Armutsbekämpfung, Klimaschutz, und leisten einen wesentlichen Beitrag zur Bekämpfung der Krise und auch als Gegengewicht zur Austeritätspolitik. Meine Frage ist nun: Können Sie garantieren, dass es eine Investitionssicherheit für diese zugesagten Mittel gibt bzw. mit Blick auf die makroökonomische Konditionalität? Sind Sie auch der Meinung der designierten Kommissarin für Regionalpolitik, dass die makroökonomische Konditionalität – also die etwaige Suspendierung von Strukturfondsmitteln, wenn Defizitkriterien nicht erreicht werden – nur die Ultima Ratio sein kann, die die Kohäsionspolitik unterstützen und nicht strafen soll?

2-070

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > I also come from a region, like everybody: I come from the eastern part of my country, and I was a member of the board dealing with regional funds there. So your question is very familiar to me.

With regard to macroeconomic conditionality in the structural funds, I would like to say that we have to avoid the mistakes of the past. One lesson of the economic crisis is that public investment must take place in a sound macroeconomic framework in order to maximise the impact of the money which is used. That is why we have to make sure that the macroeconomic conditions are right, enabling the European taxpayers' money to be put to use creating jobs.

Regions play a crucial role in the creation of new growth because successful companies always locate somewhere, and they depend on the surroundings in their locations. That is why, for instance, money which is used for skills in a region, and money which is used for vocational education and principal research and R&D, is well used money. It basically means that this money should be channelled to the universities or research centres or vocational schools in the region.

As I have said many times, we have achieved macroeconomic confidence and now we have to focus on growth. This means we have to have a common strategy together with the regions.

2-071

Tiziana Beghin (EFDD). – Signor Commissario designato, ho apprezzato molto le sue parole su crescita e investimenti, mi hanno quasi fatto dimenticare che Lei è lo stesso Katainen che tre anni fa chiese alla Grecia il Partenone in garanzia.

Ha detto che giudicheremo la Commissione dal suo operato; da imprenditrice Le dico che il tempo è un lusso che noi non ci possiamo permettere e le valutazioni devono partire da ciò che è stato fatto fino ad oggi e non sono positive. Per diventare Commissario sono necessari tre requisiti: conoscenza dell'Unione europea, impegno per l'Europa e indipendenza. Lei conosce i trattati signor Katainen? Perché prima ancora degli impegni di bilancio, gli articoli 3 e 4 del trattato sull'Unione affermano chiaramente che l'Unione promuove il benessere dei suoi popoli, il rispetto e la solidarietà tra gli Stati. Come si concilia questo con le sue continue richieste di austerità?

Qual è il suo impegno verso l'Europa unita? Se si vuole salvare questa Unione, è sulla solidarietà che bisogna puntare, esattamente l'opposto di quello che Lei chiede. Mentre milioni di europei perdono il loro posto di lavoro, lei, in quasi quattro mesi, ha guadagnato circa cinquecentomila euro. Crede di fare abbastanza per tenere unita l'Europa? Io non lo so se farà abbastanza, ma di certo guadagna abbastanza.

Infine, l'indipendenza...

(Il Presidente ritira la parola all'oratore.)

2-072

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Your question was whether I am the same Katainen as I used to be, and whether I am representing sustainable values, which are needed in order to increase the level of welfare and, at the same time, take care of job creation.

I am more than happy to correct once more that I have been responsible for taking through six financial assistance packages in the parliament of Finland. You are probably confusing me with your colleagues here who are representing some other parties who were strongly against. I have presented the first and the second packages in the Finnish Parliament, and I can assure you that it was not easy. Here are some of my colleagues who attacked me quite fiercely. It was not easy, but in a sense it was easy because I believed that it was a wise thing to do, from an economic point of view and from a solidarity point of view. So in that sense I am satisfied, even though nobody liked those financial assistance packages.

But coming back to welfare: welfare society is a core objective for us. Market economy is just a tool; market economy does not have values. The politicians must give values to market economy. Now, as I have said several times, we have to focus on the concrete measures which convince the private sector to invest in Europe, and we have to focus on the concrete measures which we could use for using public resources in the most effective way to get new jobs.

2-073

Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE). – We all know that the economic and ecological limits are rather absolute. You just cannot go beyond them. And while we are using 1.5 planets by now, we cannot just pass this to four like we can overrun our budgets. So as I understand it, the main challenge is how to create innovative and socially inclusive growth which is also resource efficient and takes climate challenges into account.

And I would like to hear a bit more about your strategy – how you are going to do it and how you are going to take into account the roles of the Commissioners for the Environment and the Climate and combine the final set.

2-074

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > This is a very fascinating area, because first of all there seem to be some public subsidies which lead to or encourage wrong, unsustainable types of behaviour. I have been working with those 'unhealthy' subsidies at the national level, so it is a question of how much national decision-makers can use better encouraging tools to reduce emissions or boost green growth.

At the European level too we have to look very carefully whether we are using some subsidies which are not sustainable. Resource effectiveness should form part of the European Semester, so we should create the tools to assess the results of resource effectiveness.

Then I would be interested in looking to see whether it is possible to create new innovative financial instruments which could support the sustainable economy or the green economy. Also, I know that DG Finance and DG Environment have created a financial instrument, or at least they have some ideas how to put together financial interests and green economy interests. So I am not that familiar with this particular case, but I am interested in studying more.

2-075

Jutta Steinruck (S&D). – Herr Katainen! Trotz oder gerade wegen der Strukturreformen und Sparmaßnahmen ist das Wachstum in Europa und in der Eurozone nach wie vor gering. Sie sind ja ein prominenter Befürworter der Austeritätspolitik. Ergebnis ist allerdings, dass die Arbeitslosigkeit in Europa ein inakzeptables Maß erreicht hat. 2013 waren mehr als 26 Millionen Europäerinnen und Europäer arbeitslos. Die können nicht einfach sagen: „Vergessen wir die Vergangenheit!“, sondern die brauchen eine gute Zukunft.

Welche konkreten Schritte – und ich bitte Sie, wirklich konkret zu sein, das ist auch für unsere Entscheidung sehr wichtig – wollen Sie unternehmen, um die Beschäftigungsziele der EU-2020-Strategie zu erreichen, die schleppende Umsetzung der Jugendgarantie in den Mitgliedstaaten voranzutreiben und die Qualität der Arbeit in Europa deutlich zu verbessern?

2-076

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > There are a few questions here about fiscal policy orientation, and then about how to promote the Youth Guarantee and high-quality jobs in future. My colleague – or, I hope, future colleague – Pierre Moscovici, said last week that we need to reduce debt in order to have growth, and in order to have growth we need sound fiscal policy. I fully agree with him on this principle. He also said that every euro spent on debt servicing is one euro less to invest in education and healthcare for citizens. I also agree with Pierre on this issue.

Now we have to look in a more focused way at our problems, such as youth unemployment. As I said before, the Youth Guarantee is very dear to me because my government created it and now it is being copied at European level. I really like the idea because it is a targeted measure to look at what people need, and I want to thank my government colleagues here who participated in the project. It is a very targeted measure. Not everybody needs the same medicine but, depending on the young people's needs, apprenticeship could be one of the tools, or vocational education or training or a study place, or whatever.

I want to work in close cooperation with Marianne Thyssen to accelerate this progressively and also make sure that Member States are making full use of the tool. The issue is that we need high-quality jobs: not just any jobs, but high-quality jobs because, again, this is the way we can achieve added value.

2-077

(ECR). – Katainen, μμ

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2-078

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > It is not a question of whether I like your question or not. I think I get your point.

The Greek people have gone through probably the most severe economic crisis ever seen not just in Europe, but also in other parts of the world. I have friends who have gone through the worst. Some of them have lost their jobs and they are asking me the same question as you did: where did the money go? At the same time, some people are asking why we have helped Greece by lending money on a bilateral basis or then guaranteeing the lending. Again, people are asking: where did the money go?

I do hope that the positive signals – which do not necessarily touch the ordinary citizen in Greece, but nevertheless they are positive signals – show that Greece has achieved a primary surplus and the export sector is trying to function and there is economic growth which could continue.

We have to support Greece in order to achieve a brighter future. That is why the investment package, again, is very important. We have to use all the tools, both public and private, in encouraging investors to invest also in Greece. The confidence which is gradually coming back to Greece helps in this process, because otherwise the private sector, at least, would not invest in Greece. But I am sure that the situation will be much better in the years to come than it used to be. I very much understand the difficult situation of ordinary people in Greece.

2-079

Kaja Kallas (ALDE). – Arvoisa komission varapuheenjohtajaehdokka, Teillä on hyvin kunnianhimoinen portfolio: työllisyyskasvu, investoinnit ja kilpailukyky. Nämä neljä sanaa ovat poliittisen ryhmäni eräitä tärkeimpiä painopistealueita.

Kuitenkin kaksi sanaa puuttuu – älykkäät investoinnit ja kestävä kasvu – joten kysymykseni kuuluu: mitä aiotte tehdä, jotta menojen painopisteet keskittyvät älykkäisiin investointeihin, ja mihin toimiin aiotte ryhtyä ei vain kasvun, vaan kestävän kasvun luomiseksi?

2-080

Jyrki Katainen, *komission varapuheenjohtaja- ja jäsenehdokka*. > Teidän kysymyksenne koski sitä, mitä voitaisiin tehdä, jotta resursseja suunnattaisiin enemmän niin sanottuun älykkääseen kasvuun. Ymmärrän kysymyksen, ja voisin todeta, että Carlos Moedas on vastuussa älykkäästä kasvusta. Minä en halua sanoa, kuka on sitten jostakin muusta kasvusta vastuussa, mutta hän on vastuussa tutkimusrahojen käytöstä. Tässä on yksi keskeinen haaste koko komissiolle ja itse asiassa hyvä esimerkki siitä, minkä takia puheenjohtaja Juncker on halunnut rakentaa tällaista koordinoivaa roolia varapuheenjohtajille.

Euroopan tutkimusvarat muodostavat maailman suurimman tutkimusrahoitusinstrumentin. Jos katsoo budjettia, rakennerahasto on noin 80 miljardia. Jos katsoo sitten muita lähteitä, meillä on useamman sadan miljardin tutkimusvarat käytettävissä. Nyt meidän pitää kysyä ja katsoa, palvelevatko ne nimenomaan älykäästä kasvua. Älykkään kasvun joitakin elementtejä ovat esimerkiksi älykkäät liikenne- ja ratkaisut, jotka palvelevat ihmisiä paremmin mutta myös säästävät luonnon voimavaroja. Uusiutuva energia, kierrätettävistä materiaaleista valmistettava polttoaine, ruoaksi sopimattomien raaka-aineiden käyttö biopolttoaineisiin – mainitakseni vain muutamia esimerkkejä siitä, missä on jo

tällä hetkellä paljon eurooppalaista teollisuutta ja osaamista, mutta jota voitaisiin vahvistaa vielä enemmän, jos meidän tutkimusrahamme olisivat mahdollisimman tehokkaassa käytössä.

Eli odotan hyvin paljon siltä yhteistyöltä, jota voin tehdä toisten komission jäsenten kanssa, mukaan lukien Carlos Moedas ja Kristalina Georgieva, jotka itse asiassa hallinnoivat yhtä meidän suurinta kruununjalokiveämme eli maailman suurinta tutkimusresurssia.

2-081

Heinz K. Becker (PPE). – Herr designerter Kommissar! Was wollen Sie konkret dazu beitragen, um die *Social Business Initiative* der Europäischen Union effektiv umzusetzen – im Wissen, dass die europäische Sozialwirtschaft zu einem der wenigen weiterhin steigenden Wirtschaftsbereiche gehört, derzeit 10 % der Gesamtwirtschaft Europas innehat und ein Wachstumspotenzial in der weißen und der grünen Wirtschaft nachweislich auch für neue Arbeitsplätze speziell für junge Menschen anbietet. Wie gedenken Sie die Voraussetzungen zur Neugründung und insbesondere die Finanzierungssicherheit der Sozialwirtschaft zu stärken? Und wie gedenken Sie die schon bisher von drei Kommissaren verantwortete Zuständigkeit für den Faktor sozialer Innovation insgesamt effizient zu akkordieren?

2-082

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Your question was excellent, also from the point of view that it explains exactly why President-elect Juncker wanted to create this coordinating role for Vice-Presidents. You finished your question by saying that there are different Commissioners who are responsible for this issue and in order to avoid the traditional silo-way of thinking we have to coordinate very well who is doing what in order to achieve the final objective.

This European social business initiative is a very interesting and encouraging initiative. I like one of the tools or areas of it, even though there are several areas in this issue. But one especially has caught my interest and it is the country-by-country reporting system for multinationals.

I think this is a very innovative way not to over-regulate but to set standards for how big companies which operate in several countries could publish what they have done in this country, what they get from the country and what they have paid to the country. In my eyes, it represents a responsible social-market economy and is also a very good way to increase confidence that companies are paying taxes to the countries in which they are also making profits.

But this is a very large issue and I have to coordinate with my colleagues very closely for future work.

2-083

Miapetra Kumpula-Natri (S&D). – I will ask two questions in Finnish concerning FTT and then social indicators.

2-084

Arvoisa Katainen, minäkin olen ylpeä suomalaisesta nuorisotakuusta. Siitä en ole ylpeä, että Suomi ei lähtenyt mukaan FTT:hen eli rahoitusmarkkinaveroon. Siihen on kuitenkin komissio ollut halukas löytämään malleja, jotka Euroopalle sopisivat, ja teillä on suuri rahoituksen kokoamisvelvoite, jotta uusi investointipaketti saataisiin aikaiseksi. Tämä on nyt kolmas kerta, kun Teiltä kysytään rahoitusmarkkinaverosta, kertoisitteko jotakin siitä?

Komission jäsen ehdokas Thyssen lupasi omassa kuulemisessaan myös, että sosiaaliset indikaattorit otettaisiin mukaan eurooppalaisiin makrotalouden epätasapainoja koskeviin suosituksiin, jotta katsotaan ihan tosissaan työllisyysvaikutuksia.

Tunnen Teidät hyvin Suomesta. Emme koskaan tehneet samassa hallituksessa budjettiesityksiä ilman, että olisimme tietäneet, miten ne vaikuttavat sosiaaliseen tasa-arvoon ja miten ne vaikuttavat työllisyyteen. Oletteko valmis muuttamaan Euroopan suuntaa ja annatteko saman lupauksen kuin Thyssen?

2-085

Jyrki Katainen, komission varapuheenjohtaja- ja jäsen ehdokas. > Ensinnäkin finanssitransaktioverosta – komissio on tehnyt esityksen valtioille, jotka haluavat tehdä vahvennettua yhteistyötä tässä asiassa, ja komission rooli tällä hetkellä on katsoa sen perään, että vahvennetun yhteistyön piirissä olevien maiden uusi vero ei haittaa niitä maita, jotka eivät ole siinä mukana. Tämä on käytännössä siis nyt jäsenvaltioiden päätöksenteon kysymys. Komissio auttaa jäsenvaltioita sen mukaan kuin jäsenvaltiot haluavat.

Se, minkä takia Suomi ei lähtenyt mukaan, oli se, että me tiesimme, ettei Ruotsi lähde siihen mukaan. Siitä ei varmastikaan tarvitse täällä edes hirveästi taistella, koska meille ainakin kerrottiin, ettei Ruotsi aio lähteä mukaan. Me teimme itse asiassa minun aloitteestani pankkivakaumaksun, joka oli hyvin samankaltainen kuin Ruotsin vakaumusmaksu, mutta siinä oli pankkisektorin mielestä joitakin eroavaisuuksia, mikä valitettavasti johti siihen, että pankit siirsivät tase-eriään pois Suomesta Ruotsiin ja Suomi kärsi taloudellisia tappioita. Eli en halunnut sen saman toistuvan, en ole valmis tekemään yhtään mitään sellaista, jonka johdosta pankkitoimihenkilö menettää työpaikkansa. FTT on erinomainen vero, jos sen voisi periä niin, että sen kaikki maksaisivat.

Toinen on sitten työllisyysindikaattori, joka kannattaa ottaa eurooppalaiseen ohjauksijaksoon mukaan. Mutta meidän kannattaa miettiä hyvin huolella, onko MIP – *Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure* – se oikea, koska siihen halutaan valita indikaattoreita, jotka ennustavat tulevia kriisejä, kriisejä viidenkymmenen vuoden päästä. Jos työttömyys kasvaa tai sosiaalinen eriarvoisuus kasvaa, me tiedämme, että jotakin on vialla jo tänä päivänä, eli ne eivät ennusta kymmenen vuoden päähän, vaan me tiedämme, että se on jo totta tänä päivänä. Mutta tätä täytyy harkita, näitä indikaattoreita muutetaan aina tarpeen mukaan.

2-086

Henna Virkkunen (PPE). – Arvoisa varapuheenjohtaja Katainen, Teille esitetty uusi vastuualue – kasvu, työllisyys, kilpailukyky, investoinnit – on teille ennestään hyvin tuttu. Suomessa Teidät tunnetaan poliitikkona, joka on aina tukenut vahvasti investointeja koulutukseen, tutkimukseen ja tieteeseen. Vihreän kasvun osalta olitte valtionvarainministerinä Suomessa toteuttamassa autoilun vihreää verouudistusta, joka kannusti ihmisiä hankkimaan vähäpäästöisempiä autoja, ja se toimi.

Nyt tehtävänne on nostaa koko Eurooppa uudelleen kasvu-uralle, vahvistaa koordinaatiotehtävän kautta työllisyyttä, kasvua ja kilpailukykyä. Minkä itse näette työn suurimpana haasteena? Missä Euroopan on onnistuttava tulevien kuukausien aikana, jotta kaikkialla saadaan kasvua aikaan?

2-087

Jyrki Katainen, komission varapuheenjohtaja- ja jäsen ehdokas. > Ehkä kaikkein tärkein asia on aloittaa siitä, että meidän tulee pitää huolta vakaudesta, eli että yhtäkään eurooppalaista jäsenvaltiota ei epäillä sen suhteen, että mitenkähän se pärjää. Meidän pitää tehdä kaikkemme, jotta Eurooppa näyttäytyy vahvana ja luottamusta herättävänä maanosana. Taloudellinen vakaus on ensimmäinen kysymys.

Toinen on se, että meidän pitää käyttää julkisia varoja, veronmaksajien varoja, uuden investointiaallon synnyttämiseen sellaisissa kohdissa, jonne yksityinen raha ei ole syystä tai toisesta menossa. Pitäisin edelleenkin hyvin järkevinä kohteina tutkimusta ja kehitystä. Myös yliopistot ovat erittäin tärkeitä.

Vaikka tutkimuksen kautta työllisyystulokset tulevatkin aina viiveellä, uskon silti siihen, että Euroopan talous voi uudistua ainoastaan tutkimuksen kautta.

Kolmas on energia- ja liikennesektori, koska energian hinta, saatavuus ja energiaturvallisuus ovat hyvin keskeinen osa sekä kotitalouksien kokemaa turvallisuutta että myös teollisuuden kokemaa turvallisuutta Eurooppaa kohtaan.

Sitten meillä on koko joukko alueita, joilla valitettavasti ei ole vielä sisämarkkinoita. On aivan käsittämätöntä, ettei Euroopassa ole digitaalisia sisämarkkinoita. Kun eurooppalainen yritys, joka tuottaa digitaalisia palveluita, menee Yhdysvaltoihin, sillä on siellä 280 miljoonan potentiaalisen kuluttajan markkinat ja yksi sääntely. Mutta kun se yrittää toimia Euroopassa, meillä on 28 sääntelyä ja verotusta.

Eli käytännössä kysymys on siitä, että me eurooppalaiset päättäjät emme ole sallineet talouden kasvaa riittävästi. Mutta hyvä puoli tässä on se, että meillä on kaikki työkalut käytettävissämme. Muutetaan lainsäädäntöä niin, että meille tulee paremmat sisämarkkinat energia- ja digitaalipuolelle, ja käytetään julkisia varoja investointeihin niin, että pullonkaulat saadaan poistettua.

2-088

Sergei Stanishev (S&D). – One of President-elect Juncker’s major commitments was on the EUR 300 billion package for investment to create growth and jobs, and you should not be surprised that so many questions have been directed precisely at that issue.

How can you really persuade the MEPs that it is not some kind of mythical plan which will remain on paper, but that it will actually bring fresh resources, both public and private, and using different tools. There is a suspicion that there will simply be a redistribution of the money which already exists.

Secondly, how do you see the timetable for the implementation of this plan?

And, finally, what are the concrete tools you will use, and on which sectors of industry do you want to focus, to promote re-industrialisation? This a major issue for the European Union – for the future of our economy.

2-089

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > In your question you asked what is the timeframe, how we could create real investments – and not only a bunch of paper – and what we could do for the re-industrialisation of Europe. First of all, the timing of how fast the different measures will start bearing fruit depends on the concrete issues, like the digital single market or energy union. Everybody understands that if there are investments in broadband or energy connections, then it will start functioning quite soon and we can see jobs from there. But the final outcome is not to build a broadband or electricity network but to create a better surrounding for growing business, and this timeframe is again a bit different, as it looks to the future.

The fastest vehicles we have are financial instruments like the EIB’s increased lending capacity and better use of the EU budget. I have heard that many are saying that we have to use the EU budget more effectively, that it is only a recycling of existing money, but it is not. If we do not do anything, then we know what we get, but if we change priorities we can get more. There will be fresh public money from this side also, and also I have repeated many times that we need to encourage Member States to prioritise investments, not only because of stimulus, but also because of their own economic future.

2-090

Markus Pieper (PPE). – Herr Katainen! Manchmal hat man im Haus den Eindruck, es muss nur mehr europäisches Geld fließen, und alles wird gut in der Strukturpolitik, in der Landwirtschaft, in anderen Bereichen. Ich finde, man kann auch anderer Meinung sein. Solange das Geld unzureichend abgerufen wird, solange es falsch ausgegeben wird, solange es manchmal sogar missbräuchlich ausgegeben wird, gibt es offensichtlich noch Reserven, die man vernünftig nutzen kann. Insofern war das überzeugend, was Sie gesagt haben: die verfügbaren Potenziale, die wir haben, intelligent verknüpfen, mit Hebelwirkung, mit privatem Kapital. Das war absolut überzeugend, gerade auch für den Bereich Verkehrsinfrastruktur.

Eine Frage: Was können Sie in Ihrer koordinierenden Funktion als Vizepräsident im Bereich Wachstumsrahmenbedingungen für kleine, mittlere Firmen, für den Mittelstand tun?

2-091

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Your first question was how to avoid bad use of public resources for investments. We need really a cost-effective analysis before we start a big project. I think we have learned from the past that money can be used in many different ways: either in effective ways or in not so effective ways.

Part of the challenge is how to give small and medium-sized enterprises the opportunity to participate in public projects, and one good tool could be the public procurement system – a more transparent public procurement system. I find this very crucial, because it could be a very good tool to increase transparency and decrease, for instance, corruption. So it is easy to understand that there are lots of innovative growth-oriented small and medium-sized enterprises around Europe who would be willing and capable of participating in public procurement if they knew that there was fair competition going on. This is one of the issues which we have already been talking about with the Commissioner in charge of the single market, to the effect that this will be one of our focuses and priorities, because why not let new opportunities be used by SMEs?

2-092

Eva Kaili (S&D). – Besides your wishful thinking, could you provide us with specific answers to get our specific votes? Are you satisfied that Greece returned to the markets, besides the 27% of unemployment? The recession, lack of investments and growth, cutting wages did not restore competitiveness in the southern countries. Should we perhaps cut even more? Your beloved austerity is the only way to create growth, from what you say. Is it ethical? Less sacrifices from the poor would not satisfy you?

Even Juncker criticised the Troika and its recipe. Do you disagree with Juncker? Can you seriously commit to exclude further cuts to social security and benefits and more if Mr Moscovici chooses a different policy than you? Will you try to stop him, as the team leader that you said you would be, or accept to help your Commissioners and their initiatives as their coordinator, and without patronising us or the people who come from the southern countries? Would you convince us by being more reliable and more specific?

2-093

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > There were several questions, and one which nobody has yet answered, namely whether I will interfere with Pierre Moscovici's decision if he wants to change the fiscal policy line.

You say that I have said austerity is the only way to create growth. First of all, I have never said this: it is against my belief. I do not know why somebody claims that I have said it. I am 100% sure that I have never said that austerity is the only way to create jobs. What I believe is that public financing

needs to be sound in order to defend the welfare society, and, as Jean-Claude Juncker has said, we cannot build our welfare society on ever-growing debt. I fully agree with what Pierre Moscovici said, that every euro spent in debt servicing is a euro taken away from people.

We need both a credible path towards a better future in terms of fiscal balance and, at the same time, more concrete investment, both public and private, in the future in order to create new jobs. My cooperation with Pierre will be concentrated on growth-related issues. I will no longer be responsible, when I come to Parliament, for fiscal policy. Another Vice-President, Commissioner-designate Valdis Dombrovskis, will be working in close cooperation with Pierre on economic governance-related matters. I will concentrate with Pierre on creating jobs, and I think we have a much better and more forward-looking portfolio than perhaps some other Commissioners.

2-094

Elisabeth Morin-Chartier (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire désigné, dans votre expérience de Premier ministre, vous vous êtes considérablement investi dans la lutte contre le chômage des jeunes. Cela vous donne une véritable légitimité pour convaincre les États membres de s'engager dans cette lutte contre le chômage des jeunes. Nous avons voté des politiques, les moyens sont là.

Comment pourriez-vous, en tant que commissaire chargé de cette politique, résoudre cette quadrature du cercle, en se focalisant à la fois sur les nouvelles compétences liées aux nouveaux emplois – dont vous nous parlez – tout en luttant contre les sorties sans qualification? Les sorties sans qualification, c'est le chômage assuré pour les jeunes. Pouvez-vous nous dire ce que vous en pensez?

2-095

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > The Youth Guarantee is a fantastic tool. I have studied a little bit what has been done in Austria because the apprenticeship model functions very well and if I was still in Finnish politics this is something that I would like to copy to Finland. But we can copy it to different parts of Europe because it functions well.

This is just one example. Let me tell you one other example, because we have not been talking about women's role in the labour market that much. This is one of the unconsidered issues in Europe. We should encourage women to participate in the labour market more. For me it is a question of equality, but also it is a source of economic growth.

Another point is that we have to pay more attention to disabled people's right to work, because work to my mind has more values than just earning money. I am sure that for many of us work represents the way to take care of your life, a way to be creative, a way to build a happy life, and disabled people have this same right.

When I was Finance Minister we launched an EUR 80 million programme which encouraged employers to hire disabled people; it functions very well and it has been very much appreciated by people who have participated in this programme. So there are issues on which we can learn from each other, and now when we try to coordinate our work more closely I think it is also very useful for the Commission to copy the best practices.

2-096

Constanze Krehl (S&D). – Herr Vorsitzender! Herr Katainen, Sie werden auch zukünftig für die Koordinierung der europäischen Kohäsionspolitik und der europäischen Forschungspolitik zuständig sein. Welche konkreten Maßnahmen sehen Sie vor, um eine höchstmögliche Synergie zwischen diesen beiden Politiken zu erreichen? Was wollen Sie tun, um die Regionen zu unterstützen, ihre *smart specialisation* zu entwickeln und umzusetzen?

Auch ich komme noch einmal auf dieses 300-Milliarden-Investitionsprogramm zurück. Haben Sie vor, Gelder der Regionalpolitik umzuwidmen – Gelder, die wir ja gerade erst den Regionen zur Verfügung gestellt haben, unter neuer Zielsetzung bereitzustellen –, um diese dann im Investitionsprogramm der Kommission einzusetzen?

2-097

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner designate*. > We have been talking – even though the new Commission does not exist yet – with Kristalina about the research funding within the European budget. In the Horizon programme, there is lots of money – if I remember correctly, 80 billion for research – but there are also – she showed me – something like 15 different budget lines in order to support research in small and medium-sized businesses or elsewhere. At the same time we are using money through structural funds for research.

So Kristalina is much better in this particular point than I am, but I very much believe what she told me: that we just have to look very carefully, together with the Commissioner in charge of structural funds and Kristalina and myself, how we could merge all the budget lines, or if there is a need to merge budget lines in order to get better results. I would also bring the EIB into this consideration or some other financial instruments. So we could easily get better results by putting together CEF resources, structural funds and Horizon, and maybe some private money from the private sector. So this is exactly one of the key issues in which we have to coordinate very closely.

2-098

Werner Langen (PPE). – Vielen Dank, Herr Katainen! Ich möchte mich Elisa Ferreira anschließen. Man sollte Sie vor allen Dingen an Ihren Taten messen. Da kann Finnland mithalten. Finnland ist ein modernes, leistungsfähiges Land mit niedriger Verschuldung, hohen Investitionen, leistungsfähiger Industrie, die Frauenrechte sind verwirklicht, es gibt gleiche Löhne für Mann und Frau. Es müsste eigentlich das Idealland der Linken sein. Und trotzdem wird man von Ihnen verlangen, dass Sie hier Rezepte vorlegen, „wie die eierlegende Wollmilchsau“ – so heißt das auf Deutsch.

Ich habe eine Frage. Da die öffentliche Verschuldung, wie die Märkte zeigen, an eine Grenze gestoßen ist, wir möglicherweise die Mittel effizienter anlegen müssen und auch Strukturreformen durchführen müssen, ist die entscheidende Frage: Wird es gelingen, privates Kapital für die öffentlichen Investitionen für Wachstum zu mobilisieren, statt dass sie in Hedge Fonds in Luxemburg, Singapur oder irgendwo sonst auf der Welt verschmoren? Welche Ideen haben Sie?

2-099

Jyrki Katainen, *Vice-President and Commissioner-designate*. > You say that the most important thing is to get more money into real investment rather than bank accounts. This tells us strongly that it is not a question only about liquidity, or that we are not primarily lacking money, but that what we are lacking is public and private investment in the real economy. Here, we have to say very clearly that we lack supply and demand.

As Prime Minister of a coalition government in which there were parties from the GUE, Socialist, Green, Liberal and PPE groups, I know something about cooperation. I know, for instance that if you start provoking companies with whom you should work, it does not help. We fought this issue quite fiercely within the government during its first year, but then we stopped because every time you started a fight it took many hours to resolve the problem.

I would like to make a contribution to building a common understanding, so that Mr Lange and Ms Ferreira and I can find things which unite us. There are probably issues which divide us but I am

sure there are at least 10 issues which could unite us. Let us focus on them. If we have lots of time we can argue later on, but let us concentrate on the issues which could create something new.

2-100

Jens Nilsson (S&D). – Tack så mycket. Jag sitter rakt fram längst bak och har röda hängslen, så du ser vem det är. Jag återkommer till en fråga som har varit på tapeten idag och som både Juncker och Šef ovi har fått tidigare under veckan och som handlar om social dumpning, men min fråga handlar om transportsektorn. Ingen fråga var så debatterad under valrörelsen, inte minst i Skandinavien, som frågan om den osunda konkurrens och sociala dumpning som vi ser inom vägtransportsektorn.

Så jag ställer en liknande fråga till dig som jag har ställt tidigare. Du är vice ordförande med ansvar för att också koordinera transportpolitiken, och jag har lyssnat till företrädare för kommissionen som inte vill höra den här frågan, som blundar eller har skyggglappar. Därför så blir ditt svar viktigt: Hur kommer du att göra för att prioritera, och för att bekämpa social dumping inom vägtransportsektorn?

2-101

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > This is a very important question. I think you have longer experience in this field than I have, but the principle must be that, if and when we have European-wide investments in transport, our commitment is to create some added value to all Europe, connect people and markets better than before. One of the preconditions of using European resources must be that the investment fulfils all the criteria needed in a social market economy, and social dumping cannot be part of this.

If you have good cases of this kind of behaviour, I am more than happy to hear more, because we have to develop our tools so that we can recognise better the unhealthy features of big investments. If there is social dumping elements or other unhealthy grey economy elements, we must be flexible enough to take them out. I would like to hear more of your views later on.

2-102

Burkhard Balz (PPE). – Herr Katainen, schön Sie bei einer Anhörung wiederzusehen. Ich möchte Ihnen drei kurze Fragen stellen.

Erstens: Zum Europäischen Semester, insbesondere zur Ausarbeitung der länderspezifischen Empfehlung. Als Vizepräsident werden Sie ja für Wettbewerbsfähigkeit zuständig sein. Wie wollen Sie sicherstellen, dass die Stärkung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit in den länderspezifischen Empfehlungen eine wesentliche Rolle erhält?

Zweitens: Wir begrüßen Ihre klare Ansage, dass es mehr Investitionen für Wachstum und Wettbewerbsfähigkeit geben soll. Jedes Investment birgt aber auch Risiken – mal höhere, mal niedrigere. Wie wollen Sie diese Investmentrisiken adressieren?

Zu guter Letzt: Sie haben sich mehrfach dazu bekannt, dass Sie eng mit dem Europäischen Parlament zusammenarbeiten möchten. Wie garantieren Sie beim Investitionspaket die Mitentscheidung des Europäischen Parlaments, und wie sieht es mit der Entscheidung zu konkreten Projekten aus?

2-103

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Your first question was about country-specific recommendations. Parliament, if I remember right, has analysed that around 18% of CSRs have been implemented. I have seen more pessimistic and more optimistic figures but nevertheless they have functioned partially, not as well as possible.

I would need your help in this because you also have influence with the governments in your home countries. I will do my best to strengthen the importance of country-specific recommendations

because they are a very flexible tool to reach the areas in which we cannot use legislative power. As we have seen, CSRs have become a more integral part of the European Semester, so their importance is growing very quickly.

How to decrease the risk of big investments? If there is private sector involvement, there must be a risk, but risk must be shared fairly, not so that the risk is only on the shoulder of the public sector and the revenues only fall into the basket of the private sector. If we have a joint venture, the risk must also be shared and that is why we have public tools to reduce the level of risk because, especially in infrastructure investments, the private money is not always willing to take the amount of risk that the size of the project would entail. And that is why we have to use public resources to stabilise the situation, but it must be balanced.

2-104

Chair. > I would like to thank colleagues from the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, and also from the Committee on Transport and Tourism and the Committee on Regional Development, for their questions. Thank you also Vice-President and Commissioner-designate for your answers. We now have the closing statement from the Vice-President and Commissioner-designate.

2-105

Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President and Commissioner-designate. > Thank you very much, colleagues, for this exchange of views. This is the first time I have had a chance to reflect the ideas about how the investment, growth and job creation package should look.

If my appointment is approved, I would like to continue discussing the priorities for each of you or each of your committees: what should the priorities be when looking at the investment programme; how would you see the current budget being used in a better way; and what are the financial instruments you would most like to use?

If I am confirmed in post, I will also need your help in pushing through legislative initiatives, especially concerning single market issues. There are lots of issues which have been opposed by the Member States for years but I am sure that the time is now right for more ambitious efforts to create a better single market – in other words, to give opportunities to small and medium-sized businesses to offer their services and products.

As I said just a few minutes ago, I would like to concentrate my efforts on real investments and real cooperation. I understand that in political life – although I am not a politician any more, I used to be one but I am a civil servant at the moment – there are sometimes conflicts because of differences in views and values, but what I have also learned from my past is that people do not like it when politicians fight. At least, the feedback to me as Finance Minister and as Prime Minister was: ‘Why do you not concentrate on the issues on which you can agree?’

Ms Steinruck made the point that confidence has not come to ordinary people. I fully agree. What if we started to create an atmosphere in which we find more issues about which to agree than to disagree? And we could use this opportunity and this spirit for boosting growth and investment. I am sure that we can do it.

I would like to thank the honourable Members once again for this good exchange of views. I wish you a very pleasant rest of the week. I also want to thank the interpreters: I am quite a fast speaker so

thank you very much for helping us. I want to thank the Chairs and all the members of the secretariat for this opportunity today. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

2-106

Chair. > I now ask Co-Chair Gualtieri to take the floor for a final remark.

2-107

Roberto Gualtieri, *Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs.* – Just a very few words to thank Vice-President and Commissioner-designate Katainen for this interesting hearing, and my thanks also to all the members of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and members of other committees for their contribution to this debate. I would say to Economic Affairs Committee members that we have to run to the second additional hearing of Lord Hill so I shall stop here and give the floor to Ms Marita Ulvskog.

2-108

Marita Ulvskog, *Acting Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.* – I would like to thank you all for the questions and I want to thank Mr Katainen also. It has been a tough few hours; these hearing are tough but that way you get the best result. So thank you very much for this hearing and this is not the last one.

2-109

Chair. – My thanks to our Co-Chairs and also to all of you, Members of the European Parliament. I have some important information. The hearing of Mr Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President and Commissioner-designate, will take place at 14.30 at a meeting of the Conference of Presidents. It is open to all of us so we should be present there. The coordinators of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy will meet at 13.30. The joint evaluation meeting between the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs will take place at 18.00, and there will be another meeting for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety at 19.00. I thank European public opinion for watching us and for being together with us.

(The hearing closed at 13.10)