Decree No 96-1133 issued by France on 24 December 1996, which was notified in due time to the Commission and which transposes this Directive, postpones its application to 31 December 2001 with respect to motor vehicles and agricultural and forestry vehicles and equipment which entered into service prior to 1 January 1997.

As regards motor vehicle brake linings, Member States have been required to prohibit the use of asbestos from October 1999 onwards. In the case of other applications, there are substitute materials on the market, and for a number of years automobile-industry suppliers had been developing asbestos-free clutch plates and cylinder head gaskets.

The Commission does not wish to draw up a list of derogations to these measures as they were the subject of lengthy assessments in the relevant working parties and have been in force at Community level since July 1993.


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**(2002/C 147 E/236)**

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-3694/01**

by Adriana Poli Bortone (UEN), Franz Turchi (UEN), José Ribeiro e Castro (UEN) and Isabelle Caullery (UEN) to the Commission

(17 January 2002)

**Subject:** EDF funding to support industrial restructuring

The tragic events of 11 September 2001 in the United States and the ongoing crisis caused by the involvement of many European countries in military operations have hit the airline sector and related industries extremely hard.

In addition to the damage caused by the closure of US air space following the 11 September attacks, this situation has led to a free fall in demand in the airline sector, with disastrous consequences for the financial situation of companies which were already in difficulties.

Although some countries such as the United States and Switzerland have spent large sums of money on propping up their airlines, in Europe the current crisis has further aggravated the already crucial situation on the jobs market, given that many European airlines have announced tens of thousands of redundancies, in addition to the jobs already lost in the United States.

Given the above, would the Commission state whether:

1. EDF funds are available for use in supporting workers affected by industrial restructuring programmes;

2. subject to the amendment of the current rules, which do not cover services companies, appropriations could be allocated on an ad hoc basis to support the conclusion of job security agreements to lessen the impact of the crisis on the thousands of people to be made redundant, inter alia as part of the necessary restructuring and amalgamation of companies in the sector, for which the Commission has itself called?

**Answer given by Mrs Diamantopoulou on behalf of the Commission**

(21 February 2002)

The European Social Fund (ESF) — like the other Structural Funds — can provide important financial support to deal with the employment effects of industrial restructuring. For 2000-2006, around € 60 billion of ESF is available for investment in human resources across the Union. ESF aims to support the European Employment Strategy by promoting a preventive approach to labour market problems in the Union including activities to pre-empt the impact of major redundancies/restructuring.
There is a wide degree of flexibility to use ESF to meet changing labour market needs through: advice and guidance; training for those under threat of unemployment or already unemployed to improve their employability; help to those in work adapt to new ways of working and new skills demands. Support for workers who lose their jobs as a result of major redundancies such as those in civil aviation can be provided within the framework of existing programmes. Although all the Structural Funds must work within the existing framework of Community competition policy, ESF regulations do not discriminate between workers in different industries.

There are no additional Community funds through ESF above the € 60 billion already allocated for the 2000-2006 period. Support to deal with industrial restructuring must be done within existing budgets.

As with all the Structural Funds, the implementation of ESF is decentralised. National and regional authorities take responsibility for the more detailed content of the programmes and have sole responsible for implementation change in ways which best suit their needs and circumstances. Access to ESF is via the relevant national and regional authorities in each Member State. Any discussion about re-focusing activities and funding to meet changing labour market conditions must take place within national and regional partnership arrangements for individual programmes.

(2002/C 147 E/237)  
WRITTEN QUESTION E-3706/01  
by Jonas Sjöstedt (GUE/NGL) to the Commission  
(17 January 2002)

Subject: Salmonella infection in spite of veterinary certificate

In mid-November 2001, 22 tonnes of pork loin from Spain arrived at a cold store in Skåne. All the certificates as to the meat’s salmonella-free status were in order.

However, it turned out that the meat was not salmonella-free. Checks carried out from time to time by the Swedish National Food Administration have always shown some consignments of meat delivered to Sweden to be infected with salmonella in spite of veterinary certificates to the contrary.

What is the Commission doing to ensure that those who issue incorrect veterinary certificates have their licences withdrawn and that action is taken to remedy this problem?

Answer given by Mr Byrne on behalf of the Commission  
(1 March 2002)

In response to the question from the Honourable Member, the Commission would refer to its answer to his written question E-3304/01 (1) which broadly covers the same subject.

In addition, it should be pointed out that under the rules on salmonella applying to consignments of fresh pigmeat intended for Sweden (2), certification is issued to the effect that no salmonella was found when the consignment concerned was analysed in accordance with an established sampling and analysis protocol. This protocol offers a degree of reliability regarded as similar to that under legal provisions at national level. The detection of salmonella when products reach their destination therefore does not necessarily mean that they have been incorrectly certified.