

For this pilot scheme, ERDF part-financing of ECU 5 million is envisaged compared to a total public cost of ECU 6,67 million for the part corresponding to Spain and Portugal. The eligible regions in the Member States are as follows: Lisboa e Vale do Tejo, Alentejo and the Algarve in Portugal; Andalusia, Extremadura and Murcia in Spain; all of the Objective 1 regions.

The financing of the part concerning Morocco is not yet settled. Possible part-financing of its participation by the MEDA programme is not yet decided. The Commission is awaiting a better definition of Morocco's participation before taking a final decision on this pilot scheme.

Projects will be approved by the monitoring committee, according to the selection criteria laid down in the programme for the pilot scheme.

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ L 195, 31.7.1993.

(1999/C 297/004)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-2067/98**

**by Mair Morgan (PSE) to the Commission**

(7 July 1998)

*Subject:* Live exports

How does the Commission intend to ensure traders who receive export refunds and who export live cattle from the EU to the Middle East and North Africa treat the animals in a humane way?

Does the Commission have any intention to encourage more external-EU animal exports on the hook rather than on the hoof?

**Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission**

(22 September 1998)

In order to increase the degree of protection to cattle being transported to third countries, at the end of last year the Council adopted a proposal from the Commission, under which the payment of export refunds will be subject to compliance with the provisions on the protection of animals during transport (see Regulation (EC) 2634/97 of 18 December 1997 amending Regulation (EEC) 805/68 on the common organization of the market in beef and veal (<sup>1</sup>)). Implementing rules have since been adopted by the Commission in March 1998 (see Regulation (EC) 615/98 of March 1998 laying down specific detailed rules of application for the export refund arrangements as regards the welfare of live bovine animals during transport (<sup>2</sup>)). Important elements are that each consignment of cattle will be checked when leaving the Community, while at arrival consignments of cattle will be checked on a regular basis or when there are grounds for suspecting particular risks by an independent vet. These rules will apply from 1 September 1998.

The Commission is not currently proposing to adopt any measures to discourage live exports which respect the applicable animal welfare rules. Export of live bovine animals is a traditional trade and as internal prices in the Union are above the third country prices, an export refund is provided. Export refunds have been paid since the beginning of the common market organisation for beef in 1968. In certain third countries there is a specific demand for imports of live animals. If the Union does not offer live animals for sale, other countries will do so and the Community will lose that market.

Export refunds for beef and live animals are fixed at least every three months and published in the Official journal. The export refund paid on beef is differentiated. The rate of refund varies according to destination. The present refund level paid for live animals other than pure-bred breeding animals to the destinations with the highest refunds are ECU 52/100 kg live weight for male cattle and ECU 22,50/100 kg live weight for female cattle, while for fresh meat of male adult bovine animals the refund rate is ECU 110,50/100 kg carcase weight.

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ L 356, 31.12.1997.

(<sup>2</sup>) OJ L 82, 19.3.1998.