

5. According to Regulation (EEC) 805/68 of the Council of 27 June 1968 on the common organisation of the market in beef and veal <sup>(1)</sup>, the Commission sets the processing premium at a level or, where appropriate, levels enabling a sufficient number of calves to be withdrawn from production in line with the market requirements. The Commission, as it has already done in the past, will not hesitate to amend the amount of the payment according to the above commitment.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 148, 28.6.1968.

(1999/C 207/050)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-3212/98**

**by Bernd Lange (PSE) to the Commission**

(27 October 1998)

*Subject:* Time taken to reimburse costs incurred in Socrates projects

According to several reports from sponsors of Socrates projects in Germany, it can take more than a year for costs to be reimbursed. As the money concerned initially has to be found by the project sponsors, this long time lag means a heavy financial burden, which may cause smaller sponsors particular difficulty.

How does the Commission intend to speed up the processing of the settlement procedures for Socrates projects so that smaller project sponsors are not placed at a disadvantage?

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

(8 February 1999)

The rules on implementation of the Socrates programme do not require the coordinator to bear the total cost of a project while awaiting transfer of the Commission's grant.

On the contrary, because the Commission does not wish the cost of Socrates projects to constitute an excessive financial burden on beneficiaries, particularly small organisations, it transfers substantial advance payments (amounting to at least 80 %) once a project is up and running. This means that only the balance of the grant has to be transferred at the end of the project, on presentation of evidence of the expenditure incurred.

Payment of the balance follows an assessment of the final activity reports and accounts relating to the project. The Commission takes care to analyse these documents promptly, once they are submitted by the project coordinator, so that the balance can be paid forthwith. A delay as long as that referred to by the Honourable Member constitutes an exception, which can only be a result of special difficulties peculiar to the projects concerned.

(1999/C 207/051)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-3217/98**

**by Alexandros Alavanos (GUE/NGL) to the Commission**

(26 October 1998)

*Subject:* Compensation for redundancies at Piraiki-Patraiki Group

The Piraiki-Patraiki cotton industry group has been in special-status receivership under Greek law since 1992. DR 2 500 000 million are to be paid out to the Group's redundant workers in compensation (Ministry of Development Decision 863 of 14 January 1997).

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is the EU contributing to the payment of this compensation and from which programme?
2. If so, has the Commission checked whether the criteria for payment of compensation have been applied uniformly to all workers?