

(1999/C 182/183)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3894/98**by Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE) to the Commission**

(4 January 1999)

Subject: Directive 64/433/EEC on trade in fresh meat and Directive 86/469/EEC on the examination of animals and fresh meat for the presence of residues

Does the Commission share the view that the Fresh Meat Directive (64/433/EEC) ⁽¹⁾ needs amending to ensure that equidae may be slaughtered only if they are identifiable and if a passport listing the medicinal products administered to them is provided so that the examination for the presence of residues may be properly carried out?

⁽¹⁾ OJ 121, 29.7.1964, p. 2012.

Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission

(5 February 1999)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-1495/98 by Mr Kindermann ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 31, 5.2.1999, p. 42.

(1999/C 182/184)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3910/98**by Raimo Ilaskivi (PPE) to the Commission**

(4 January 1999)

Subject: Taxation of used cars imported into Finland

After the European Union, on 4 May 1998, had issued the Finnish Government an official warning concerning the taxation of used cars imported into Finland from other Member States, on 27 November 1998 the Finnish Government submitted to the national parliament a bill seeking to alter, albeit in very minor respects, the taxation of the vehicles in question.

In my view, even after this change Finnish tax legislation as it relates to imported used cars will still be in breach of Article 95 of the Treaty on European Union, the repercussions being so severe that in practice this tax will create inequality between used cars imported from any other Member State and those purchased in Finland. The new bill has hardly changed the situation as I described it in my written question to the Commission dated 11 December 1997.

The key provision of the Finnish law on the taxation of cars can be found in Article 7, to which the Commission's also drew attention. This article has been changed in such a way that the tax abatement for used cars imported into Finland would be, as a general rule, 0,6 % per month of use, as against 0,5 % under the terms of the law currently in force. It is quite clear that such a minor change in no way solves the fundamental problem, which is that imported vehicles which are several years old, which are the most sought-after, will remain out of reach for Finnish consumers.

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that our closest neighbour in the European Union, Sweden, abolished this form of tax on cars in 1996. As a result, the import of used vehicles has become a realistic option for private individuals in Sweden.

I should like to point out to the Commission once again that the proper functioning of the internal market is hampered by the fact that the Finnish tax legislation on cars, as amended, is complicated and incorporates many technical details which allow the customs authorities far too much leeway to take decisions based on an interpretation of the law.