

Answer given by Mr Lamy on behalf of the Commission

(19 March 2001)

1. The weighted average tariffs for non-agricultural products in 1998 were as follows:

(%)

	Community	Japan	United States
On all items	3 872	1 979	3 436
On dutiable items	5 191	6 569	4 828

Source: World trade organisation (WTO) Integrated Database.

2. The information required to answer the second part of the question is not available.

(2001/C 235 E/211)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0338/01**by Christopher Huhne (ELDR) to the Commission**

(13 February 2001)

Subject: Commodity prices

Further to Mr Fischler's answer to Written Question E-2730/00 ⁽¹⁾ on 11 October, will the Commission explain why there are not more up-to-date figures for what should be market information available to the regulators of these markets?

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 113 E, 18.4.2001, p. 159.

Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission

(16 March 2001)

In his Written Question E-2730/00, the Honourable Member asked for the Commission's estimate of the percentage difference between the prices of the five most significant farm products within the Community at the end of each year for the last five years and the prices for the same commodities quoted on the world markets. In the answer provided to this question, reference was given to price information extracted from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Producer Support Estimate data base (a data base established by the OECD Secretariat on the basis of a commonly agreed methodology within the OECD countries) for the 1995-1998 period.

For the management of the common market organisations, the Commission relies on specific and updated information on prices both on internal markets and on world markets. This information may vary every day or every week depending on, among other factors, the specific market, the product specification, its final use and country of origin. It is available to market regulators, including officials in Member States, through the regular management committees.

(2001/C 235 E/212)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0339/01**by Marielle De Sarnez (PPE-DE) to the Commission**

(13 February 2001)

Subject: World summit for children in September 2001

At a meeting on 20 November 2000 in Paris, European ministers responsible for child welfare discussed at length issues relating to children and the family, and agreed that a European day for children's rights is to be held annually.

Agreement was also reached on reviving the European monitoring centre for children, setting up an emergency phone number for children suffering abuse and drawing up a European code of ethics concerning the quality of audio-visual programmes.

Looking ahead to the world summit for children to be held in New York in September 2001, what steps does the Commission intend to take to put into effect the decisions reached at the ministers' meeting of 20 November 2000, in order that Europe can be seen to be leading the way with regard to policies to protect children and promote the family?

Answer given by Mr Nielson on behalf of the Commission

(8 May 2001)

On 20 November 2000 in Paris EU Ministers responsible for children's matters agreed on a common action plan including undertakings for children's rights, and notably the establishment of tools for the operational follow-up. Taken the inter-governmental context of the agreed results of the ministerial meeting, the Commission will not undertake any specific initiative.

In spite of a very large number of interventions of relevance for children there is currently no explicit or formalised EC policy focus on children's issues. Especially in the field of humanitarian aid the issue of children in conflicts is given special attention. The Commission will however participate in co-ordination with the Member States in the preparatory process and Special Session for Children and will submit to the Special Session a factual document providing an overview of its activities in support of children, including in the field of development co-operation.

(2001/C 235 E/213)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0340/01

by Giovanni Pittella (PSE) to the Commission

(13 February 2001)

Subject: Security of energy supply

The Commission's recent report (of 29 November 2000) opens up a new and searching debate on the 'security of energy supply', stressing the negative prospects for the energy dependency of EU countries in the next 30 years, not least in view of the forthcoming enlargement to include countries which do not have significant natural and/or energy resources. The Commission forecasts that in the next 20 or 30 years energy imports will increase by 20% (from 50% at present to 70%). In 1999 they amounted to € 240 billion (ITL 500 000 billion), equivalent to 6% of total imports. At present 45% of oil imports come from the Middle East and 40% of gas imports from Russia. A substantial fall in the demand for hydrocarbons from 41% at present to 38% by 2030 is forecast.

Against this background Abruzzo (where the first oil well in Italy was drilled at Tocco a Casauria in 1863 – the third in the whole world after the US and Romania) has an underestimated oil-producing potential. The recent promising discovery of petroleum deposits in C. da Lazzaretto (between Francavilla and Ortona), currently at the experimental stage, confirms that oil exploration in the whole area is of interest and it is not clear how ENI can maintain a large proportion of the prospecting licences without investing in exploration activities, in effect paralysing a situation which could produce positive results.

AGIP's Ortona oilfield is important not only for jobs, but above all for the industries dependent on oil. There are almost 500 people working there and in the last thirty years a whole production and economic system has grown up, including hotels, which revolves around it.