

Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission

(21 December 1998)

In view of the economic, administrative and legal implications of this affair, the situation must be examined not only in the light of the legislation currently in force but also of the common organisation of the market which will result from the negotiations currently underway in the Council.

The Commission is carrying out a detailed examination of the problem raised by the Honourable Member.

(1999/C 207/063)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3300/98

by Graham Watson (ELDR) to the Commission

(10 November 1998)

Subject: Visitor requirements for Slovaks

What view does the Commission take of the UK's introduction this month of visa requirements for visitors from Slovakia? Have any other Member States taken similar action? In view of the recent change of government in Slovakia, is such action not particularly unwelcome?

Reply given by Mr Monti on behalf of the Commission

(28 January 1999)

Council Regulation (EC) 2317/95 of 25 September 1995 ⁽¹⁾ determining the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders of the Member States ⁽²⁾ has an Annex containing the list of States whose nationals are required by all the Member States to be in possession of visas.

The Regulation leaves it open to Member States to impose a visa requirement on nationals of non-member countries which are not on that list. The United Kingdom has made use of that right, and the Commission does not intend to comment on the steps it has taken, which are the sole responsibility of the United Kingdom.

The Commission understands that Ireland has also decided to introduce a visa requirement for Slovak nationals.

⁽¹⁾ In a judgment of 10 June 1997 (Case C-392/95), the Court of Justice allowed an action brought by the European Parliament and annulled Regulation (EC) 2317/95. The Court nonetheless declared that the effects of the Regulation should be maintained until the Council adopted new legislation.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 234, 3.10.1995.

(1999/C 207/064)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3310/98

by Encarnación Redondo Jiménez (PPE) to the Commission

(10 November 1998)

Subject: Agriculture: imports of tiger nuts into the EU from third countries

The tiger nut (*Cyperus esculentus* L.) is one of the traditional crops grown by farmers in the area known as 'L'horta de Valencia' (Spain). Historical records show that this crop has been cultivated since the sixteenth century, in agricultural and climatic conditions which are unique to this particular Mediterranean area. The plant is used mainly for the preparation of 'horchata', a refreshing drink (resembling a milk-shake) of indisputable nutritional value. The tiger nut is still being cultivated in 'L'horta de Valencia', but in recent years severe difficulties have arisen which are endangering the continued production of this traditional, local Valencian crop. One reason for the fall in production lies in the large-scale imports of the product from African countries.