

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2448/03  
by Georges Berthu (NI)  
to the Commission

Subject: Inappropriate incentive to destroy hedgerows

Article 22(2) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 2419/2001<sup>1</sup> of 11 December 2001 specifies that the width of hedgerows taken into account when determining the surface area of agricultural parcels eligible for area aid 'must correspond to a traditional width in the region in question and shall not exceed 2 metres. The Member States may [...] allow a width greater than 2 metres if those areas were taken into account for the fixing of the yields of the regions concerned.'

The upshot of these provisions is to encourage farmers to destroy hedgerows that exceed the permitted width, at a time when their conservation would often seem to be an objective in the general interest.

Might the Commission present to the Council and the European Parliament a measure reforming the article in question so as to put an end to its perverse effects?

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 327, 12.12.2001, p. 11.