

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2423/01

by Michiel van Hulten (PSE) and Ieke van den Burg (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Implementation of the ESF in the Netherlands from 1994 to 1996

On 20 July 2001 Director-General Quintin wrote to the Netherlands government informing it of the commencement of the procedure provided for in Article 24 of Council Regulation (EEC) 4253/88¹ of 19 December 1988 in respect of the implementation, in the Netherlands, of projects financed by the European Social Fund over the period 1994 to 1996.

1. In her letter DG Quintin says that the Commission is considering extrapolating the results of the investigation by the accounting department of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment to all ESF co-funded projects from the period 1994 to 1996. Regulation (EEC) 448/2001² of 2 March 2001 states, however, that 'in the case of extrapolation a representative sample of transactions with like characteristics must be used'. Does the Commission consider that it is wise to extrapolate on the basis of a very limited sample in terms of numbers?

2. The report by the accounting department of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment covers 45 projects. In the case of 12 of these 45 projects there was no longer any project administration in place. Regulation (EEC) 4253/88 stipulates that supporting documents for project expenditure must be kept and be available to the Commission for a period of three years after the last payment. Can the Commission indicate whether this requirement was satisfied in the case of the 12 projects concerned?

¹ OJ L 374, 31.12.1988, p. 1.

² OJ L 64, 6.3.2001, p. 13.