

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2635/03  
by Maurizio Turco (NI)  
to the Commission

Subject: Refunds on exports from Member States to the Vatican City State of butter and other fats and oils derived from milk, milk products (code 0405) for 1998

In response to questions E-1477/03 and E-1480/03<sup>1</sup> relating to refunds on exports of agricultural products from Member States to the Vatican City State (VCS), Commissioner Fischler stated on 21 May 2003 that the Commission was collecting the information it needed to answer the question and would communicate its findings as soon as possible.

The following supplementary data can be supplied in relation to the export of butter and other fats and oils derived from milk, milk products (code 0405):

- a) the European Commission's CATS (Clearance Audit Trail System) database shows that in 1998:
  - 155 000 kg were exported from Austria to the VCS with a refund of EUR 272 200,57, equivalent to aid of EUR 1,76/kg;
  - 19 215,50 kg were exported from Germany to the VCS with a refund of EUR 33 854,82, equivalent to aid of EUR 1,76/kg;
- b) the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) database shows that in 1998:
  - 150 000 kg were exported from Austria and 18 000 kg from Germany to the VCS,

This indicates that:

- unwarranted aid of EUR 10 922,19 was paid on an additional 6 215,50 kg not shown in the OECD data;

Does the Commission not agree that the increasingly patent omissions and the discrepancies between the data from the different institutional sources seriously affect the credibility of these institutions and might be due to possible fraud against Community funds, or is it already able to discount this possibility?

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C ...