

ORAL QUESTION H-0444/08
for Question Time at the part-session in July 2008
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure
by Ioannis Gklavakis
to the Commission

Subject: 'Health check' for the Common Agricultural Policy

Tobacco growing is the sole source of income for some 130 000 European farmers. Despite this, Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003¹ provides that from 2010 50% of Pillar I resources (direct aid) will be transferred to Pillar II (rural development), thereby significantly reducing the income of these producers. Furthermore, tobacco cultivation occurs in semi-arid regions where no alternative employment opportunities are available.

At the same time, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is currently being given a 'health check', and many decisions taken during the CAP reform of 2003 are being reviewed.

In view of the above, will the Commission say whether it intends, as part of the CAP 'health check', to re-examine the tobacco aid regime and to preserve existing arrangements beyond 2009 until 2013? Has it drawn up a study to establish which crops could replace tobacco in these regions so that European tobacco farmers are not affected financially or socially?

Tabled: 03.06.2008
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¹ OJ L 270, 21.10.2003, p. 1.