

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3038/00  
by Luís Queiró (UEN)  
to the Commission

Subject: Over-production of milk in the Community

According to the information available, Community milk production has risen sharply in the last marketing year (1999/2000).

As a result of this increase in milk production, twelve out of the fifteen Member States have exceeded the national milk quotas assigned to them.

The increase is undoubtedly due in part to a number of factors related to the consumption trend regarding dairy products and productivity gains in the sector.

Will the Commission work out an overall solution with the countries concerned in order fully to allow for likely production increases in subsequent marketing years, or will it seek to punish the producers?

Specifically as far as Portugal is concerned, the only group who would suffer if penalties were to be imposed would be producers in one of the more outlying regions, the Azores. The social consequences and economic repercussions would be extremely serious, given that there are a great many producers and milk and dairy production occupies a key place in Azorean society.

Furthermore, the Azores, like the other outermost regions, are covered by Article 299 (formerly Article 227) of the EC Treaty, which stipulates that the Council, acting on a proposal from the Commission after consulting the European Parliament, may adopt specific measures to take account of the economic and social situation in these regions resulting from their remoteness or the fact that they are islands.