Food distribution to the most deprived persons in the Community

2008/0183(COD) - 27/09/2010

Ministers were briefed by the Commission on the proposal for a regulation concerning distribution of food products to the most deprived persons in the Union.

Some delegations expressed a reservation regarding the **legal basis** for this text, as was the case for the first proposal presented by the Commission in 2008. In their view, the legal base should be drawn from social policy rather than agricultural policy. Other delegations were also concerned with the co-financing of the measure.

The Special Committee for Agriculture (SCA) will work on this proposal.

The **first proposal on this issue** presented to the Council in 2008 (*please refer to the summary dated 17 September 2008*) did not secure a majority. The Commission originally proposed to amend the current rules under which the EU can supply food from intervention stocks to the most deprived persons. In that proposal, food would be sourced either from intervention stocks or from the market but the latter source would no longer be limited to situations of temporary unavailability of intervention stocks, as is currently the case.

Moreover, the fade-out of intervention stocks, due to the reframing of the common agricultural policy (CAP) has already increased the current scheme's reliance on market purchases for the provision of food. In addition, to optimise the nutritional balance, the choice of distributed foods would be extended to those for which intervention doest not apply. The proposal also introduces co-financing of the scheme and a ceiling for the financial contribution of the Union.

In this new version, the Commission has introduced a reshaping of the text to bring it into line with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and to take into account amendments from the European Parliament. The rules for co-financing have also been changed, increasing the Union’s contribution. Financing sources in Member States can be either public-sector or private.

The current regulation as regards distribution of food to the most deprived persons was laid down by Council Regulation (EEC) No 3730/87 and finally incorporated into the Single Common Market Organisation regulation in 2007.