Milk and milk products: distribution of milk in schools

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The committee adopted the report (consultation procedure) by Albert-Jan MAAT (EPP/ED, NL) amending the proposal for a Council regulation on the common organisation of the market in milk and milk products. The report underlined Parliament's commitment to the continuation of school milk subsidies and called for the Community to pay 95% of the cost of such subsidies, far more than under the Commission's proposal for the Community and the Member States to pay 50% each. The committee argued that school milk contributed to healthy nutrition for school children and to maintaining consumption of milk products. Milk, it said, provided a significant proportion of protein, calcium, vitamin and mineral requirements and consuming it during a person's early years could prevent osteoporosis in later life. The report also noted that life-styles and eating patterns had changed: increasing numbers of children and young people went to school without breakfast. Resulting deficiencies and lack of concentration could be mitigated by providing school milk. In view of changed eating patterns and preferences and in order to increase the attractions of the programme to consumers, the committee also decided to add drinking yoghurt and milk-based beverages. to the regulation.