EAGGF Guarantee section, control of expenditure: member states' action programmes

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The Commission has presented a report on the utilisation (1997-2000) of Council Regulation 723/97/EC on implementation of Member States' action programmes on policing of EAGGF Guarantee Section expenditure. This report states that more than half (56%) of total programme expenditure for 1997 to 1999 went on purchase or hire of computer equipment/facilities and installation of heavy computer systems, primarily for creation of the national databases for identification and registration of bovines required under Regulation 820/97/EC, the basis for the majority of programmes part-financed from 1997 to 2000. Around 1% of expenditure was on training. Four Member States (Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and Greece) clearly stated that Community part-financing was absolutely essential to their programmes. The other Member States were either against extending the term of validity of the Regulation (Sweden) or thought their programmes could have been run using national resources alone (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom). The common position of Belgium, France, Spain is less distinct in that they consider that had the programmes been financed purely nationally it would have been more difficult to operate them for the deadline set by the Community Regulations. But all Member States replying to the questionnaire agreed, even though they could not back up their opinion by a cost-benefit analysis of the action part-financed, that the programmes had boosted the effectiveness of their policing.