Austria: list of less-favoured farming areas within the meaning of Directive 75/268/EEC

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The Council adopted Directive 212/95/EC establishing the list of less-favoured farming areas in Austria within the meaning of Directive 75/268/EEC. In accordance with Declaration No 37 of Austria's Act of Accession to the European Union, the boundaries of these areas were established in line with the acquis communautaire and, in the case of Austria, as a mountainous country, on the basis of criteria similar to those used in Germany, Italy and France. In accordance with these criteria, the Austrian Government proposed in the annex to the Directive a list of municipalities (Gemeinden) to the Commission liable to appear on the Community list of less-favoured farming areas. These areas met the requirements laid down in Article 3(3), (4) and (5) of Directive 75/368/EEC concerning: - mountain areas where the altitude and slope shortened the growing season and limited the possibilities of using machinery (Article 3(3)); - less-favoured areas from an agricultural point of view, characterised by land with low productivity and low agricultural incomes (Article 3(4)); - less-favoured areas affected by specific handicaps (small areas, hills, poor hydrographic situation) where farming needed to be continued to conserve the countryside (Article 3 (5)). The application of these indices corresponded to 68.6% of Austria's agricultural area (AA). A breakdown of the classified areas was contained in the annex. The areas with specific handicaps did not exceed 4% of Austria's total surface area. Moreover, for 27 municipalities which bordered mountain areas, it was proposed that only the section of the municipality meeting the relevant criteria be included, which represented an eligible area of around 26 000 ha. The amount of expenditure set aside for the compensatory allowances for farmers in these areas would be included in the overall amount allocated to Objective 5a within the framework of the distribution of appropriations among Objectives as approved by the Commission.