



# Press Release

1st December 2005

For immediate use

## EU budget plans a double-whammy on developing countries – new website to expose CAP payments

Speaking as the Prime Minister began a tour of Eastern European countries to sell a deal on the EU budget, STEPHEN TWIGG, Director of the FPC today said:

“The plans to resolve the EU budget negotiation are a double-whammy on developing countries. The Prime Minister is giving up his bargaining chip on CAP reform.

“The new budget being proposed by Britain would mean that less economically developed countries in Europe have fewer resources to spend on infrastructure plans such as rail and road projects vital for development and reducing poverty.

“Secondly, Tony Blair’s plans to give up the British rebate in return for a smaller budget amounts to the PM losing his central bargaining chip to negotiate reform of the wasteful Common Agricultural Policy. This is another blow to countries in Africa and elsewhere who suffer from restrictive trade policies and the dumping of cheap European goods on their markets.”

Today, an associate of the Foreign Policy Centre, Jack Thurston is launching, along with an international network of journalists and activists, a new website that will enable European citizens to find out who gets what from the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Coordinated from Denmark and the UK, the website is the product of intensive collaborative working across more than ten countries. The website facilitates access data on farm subsidy payments obtained through requests under legislation on public access to information.

In 2004, the CAP paid out €43.5 billion in farm subsidies but unlike most other areas of EU expenditure, the payments have been kept top secret. This began to change in 2004, when DICAR, an organisation of Danish investigative journalists, succeeded in their application for data on farm subsidy payments in Denmark. DICAR has since joined with UK-based non-profit EU Transparency to bring together a network of campaigners in other member states and to build the farmsubsidy.org website.

“Obtaining this data has been a slow and labour-intensive effort, and there is still a long way to go”, said co-founder JACK THURSTON of London-based EU Transparency. “So far only a handful of EU member states have provided data that meets our ‘gold standard’ for openness and transparency. Now that this information is on the web and European citizens can access it easily, we hope more countries will follow suit.” The ‘gold standard’ countries are Denmark, Estonia, the Netherlands, Sweden and Slovenia. Incomplete data

**For more information or a copy of the report, please contact Alex Bigham on  
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# The Foreign Policy Centre

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has been released in Belgium, Spain, Ireland and the United Kingdom. Data requests have been refused in Germany, France, Poland, Greece and Finland.

As EU heads of government argue over the EU budget for 2007-13, Nils Mulvad, co-founder of farmsubsidy.org and executive director of DICAR said, "Transparency is the only way to know if the budget is spent well. The EU should have published this information a long time ago."

So far the data has revealed that many of the EU's wealthiest people (including royal families, nobility and senior politicians) are amongst the biggest recipients of taxpayer-funded handouts. Data has also shown that large multinational food companies and government agencies are amongst the biggest recipients of aid under the CAP.

## **ENDS**

### **Editor's Notes**

1. The farmsubsidy.org website is currently in a beta-test format and will be subject to testing and improvements over the coming weeks and months. Gradually, it will be made accessible in European languages besides English. For more information, visit [www.farmsubsidy.org](http://www.farmsubsidy.org)
2. Jack Thurston of the farmsubsidy.org network is available for interview: Telephone: +44 7973 155 278 Email: [jack@farmsubsidy.org](mailto:jack@farmsubsidy.org)
3. The Foreign Policy Centre (FPC) will launch its publication, '*European Infopolitik: Developing EU Public Diplomacy Strategy*', authored by the FPC's Director of Public Diplomacy, Philip Fiske de Gouveia on 15 December 2005. For more details, please contact [alex.bigham@fpc.org.uk](mailto:alex.bigham@fpc.org.uk)

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