



Brussels, 16 April 2014

European Parliament votes on proposals for Animal Health and Official Controls

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UEVH
Hygienists

EVERI
Veterinarians in
Education, Research
and Industry

In its Plenary Meeting of 15 April 2014 the European Parliament voted on the European Commission's proposals for a Regulation on **Animal Health** and for a Regulation on **Official Controls**.

Although these votes in first reading are an important step in the legislative procedure, it should be noted that they are not final ones. The Commission proposals are also under discussion by the other co-legislator, the Council of the European Union. A thorough evaluation of the Parliament's voting results will need some time, however at first glance the following provisional conclusions can be drawn.

Proposal for Animal Health Regulation

Out of a total of 351 amendments on the COM proposal that were voted, 334 AM were put forward by Rapporteur Mrs. Paulsen. All except 2 of these 334 AM were adopted. The remaining 17, proposed separately from Mrs. Paulsen report were rejected.

Through the vote the European Parliament

- adopts definitions of **veterinarian** and **official veterinarian**. In fact the EP has taken over the definition of veterinarian as developed by FVE;
- adopts the provisions for Animal Health Visits. However, in contrast with the COM proposal, these visits can be done not only by veterinarians but also by other qualified professionals. The national Competent Authority shall lay down detailed rules as regards the content and the frequency of the visits for different types of risks.
- stresses the need to address **antimicrobial resistance**. For the purpose of the Regulation, microorganisms that have developed resistance shall be considered a disease. Furthermore, referring to COM Action Plan against AMR, the EP votes that MSs shall report on the usage of VMPS containing antibiotics. The EU thereafter proceeds to establish appropriate reduction targets;
- underlines that animals are **sentient beings** and that their welfare should be respected. Also the interdependency of animal welfare to animal health is emphasised;
- strengthens the input of **stakeholders** in the development of secondary legislation by adding several times *"after due public consultation with stakeholders"*;

President

Christophe Buhot

Vice-Presidents

Hans-Joachim Götz
Robert Huey
Rafael Laguens
Karin Östensson

- votes for **bee health professionals** to undertake activities attributed to veterinarians provided that they are authorized to do so under the national legislation;

Proposal for Official Controls Regulation

The total number of amendments tabled was 349. Most of the amendments by Rapporteur Mr. Pirillo were adopted.

Through the vote the European Parliament

- recognizes the role and tasks of the **Official Veterinarians** for the benefit of food business operators and consumers. Recognize the leading role Official Veterinarians have in the supervision of other staff.
- defines the **Official Auxiliaries** who shall be *“appointed by the competent authority and working under the authority and responsibility of an official veterinarian”* and identifies the training and the education they shall undertake in order to carry out their duties competently.
- clarifies the role of the border control posts (procedure and tasks to be performed). FVE appreciates that *“the responsibility for such controls must be entrusted to highly qualified staff that is able to identify the emergence of possible risks and threats to human health”*.
- extends the purpose of official controls into the verification of compliance with **animal welfare requirements** making use of specific animal welfare indicators based on measurable performance criteria and on scientific and technical evidence.
- provides that Competent Authorities shall perform official controls on all operators regularly, on a risk basis and with appropriate frequency, taking account also **private quality assurance schemes** put in place by operators certified and audited by independent and recognised certification bodies.
- adopts that *“staff performing official controls and other official activities shall be officials employed by the competent authorities or by an **independent public body** delegated by the competent authority”*: FVE is concerned as this is in contrast with the EN ISO/IEC 17020:2012 in respect of the audit principles and the inspection body accreditation process and contradicting the current Reg. 882/2004.
- adopts the principle that the rules *“under Article 34 (second expert opinion) and Article 36 (designation of official laboratories) of the Legislative proposal do not concern the responsibilities of the competent authorities”*: such text approved excludes Competent Authority from the **designation of official laboratories** undermining their role.