

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mr WOLTJER, Mrs SEIBEL-EMMERLING, Mr EISMA,
Mr EYRAUD, Mrs VAN MEMELDONCK, Mr GATTO, Mr JOHNSON,
Mrs KROUWEL-VLAM, Mrs MAIJ-WEGGEN, Mrs PANTAZI,
Mr VGENOPOULOS and Mrs WEBER

pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

on

animal welfare policy

PE 85.152

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The European Parliament,

- having regard to the European Convention for the protection of animals during international transport (No. 65),
 - having regard to Recommendation 641 on animal welfare in intensive rearing,
 - having regard to the proposal for a Council decision adopting joint research programmes and programmes for coordinating agricultural research,
 - (a) whereas the past decades have seen significant developments in the business structure of agriculture, in particular in the (intensive) animal rearing sector,
 - (b) whereas these developments have brought about great changes in the living conditions and welfare of the animals concerned,
 - (c) recognizing that it is an economic necessity for producers in many cases to make use of technical possibilities,
 - (d) aware, however, that recent developments in the animal rearing sector have rightly given rise to concern, which requires a response at policy level,
 - (e) whereas improvements in the welfare of farm animals frequently have economic repercussions,
 - (f) whereas measures to improve the welfare of farm animals can have effects on the formation of consumer prices and the quality of some products in the intensive animal rearing sector,
 - (g) realizing, therefore, that legislation in this area should preferably be framed at Community level.
1. Hopes that in those cases where measures relating to animal welfare are likely to conflict with cost-benefit considerations and where there are considerable differences in Member States' legislation in this area, the Commission will bring forward directives to enforce such measures;
 2. Believes that future directives must be based on the definition of welfare as adopted by the Council of Europe (Convention 641, Article 3);
 3. Hopes that the Council of Europe Conventions 641 (on animal welfare) and 65 (on animal welfare during transport) will be adopted by the Communities;

4. Is of the opinion that research has provided sufficient findings to enable legislation to be adopted at an early date;
5. Calls for future necessary research to be coordinated and initiated on a joint basis to a greater extent than in the past;
6. Hopes that it may be made easier for the existing group of experts on animal welfare to perform their coordinating and consultative role;
7. Considers that this group of experts should lay down the guidelines for future necessary research and, under the responsibility of the Commission, should:
 - assess whether or not specific research projects are consistent with the policy guidelines,
 - endeavour to reach agreement on criteria for assessing research findings and to ensure their dissemination,
 - initiate cooperation if the intended research project is beyond the capabilities of one institute or one Member State,
 - ensure that research findings from outside the Community are also used for the benefit of the Commission's policy;
8. Takes the view that the broad lines of research activity should be defined in close consultation with the Commission, which is and should remain responsible for matters of animal welfare policy;
9. Calls on the Commission to publish annually a report of the progress made in its research activities;
10. Believes that the broad acceptance of Conventions 641 and 65 of the Council of Europe should be followed by more specific legislation covering the following aspects:

- farm conditions (housing, treatment/care)
 - trade conditions (marketing and transport)
 - slaughterhouse conditions (treatment and stunning);
11. Is of the opinion that the introduction and use of medicines and hormones may only be allowed to protect the health of animals and human beings;
 12. Calls for the laying down of welfare standards for the rearing of various categories of farm animals, which should serve as a framework for the development of new techniques or methods of animal rearing;
 13. Believes that a broad policy approach is necessary for real progress to be achieved in the field of animal welfare;
 14. Considers that such a broad policy approach is only possible if the Commission indicates its importance by creating a special policy section to deal with animal welfare matters;
 15. Takes the view that this section must be staffed by at least one or more veterinarians, legal experts, economists, agricultural and information experts;
 16. Is aware that an effective policy in this area is only possible if the Community is prepared to provide sufficient financial support both for the functioning of the group of experts on animal welfare and for the special policy section of the Commission;
 17. Calls on the Commission to bring forward proposals to ensure that new directives are observed in the Member States and that an appropriate control will be established;
 18. Considers that measures in the field of animal welfare should be accompanied by measures aimed at avoiding distortion of the conditions of competition between the animal rearing sector in the Community and in non-member countries;
 19. Calls on the Commission to initiate, as part of its policy, a consumer-orientated information campaign to explain to consumers not only the reasons for the measures to improve animal welfare and the consequent improvements in quality, but also the possible effects on the price formation of some products from the intensive animal rearing sector;
 20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

