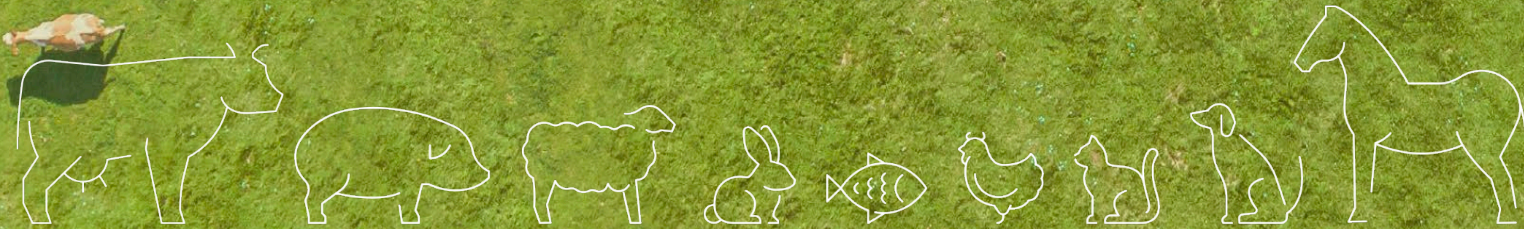


11th meeting of the EU Platform on animal welfare

Subgroup on Welfare of Poultry
Overview of the work done



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The subgroup: mandate

- Scope according to the Terms of Reference
 - > **Welfare on farm of chicken (all ages), ducks, geese, quail**
- Objective
 - > **Explore options of a legislative proposal revising Directives 1999/74/EC, 2007/43/EC and 98/58/EC**
 - > **Propose provisions for phasing out of cages**
 - > **Explore the pros and cons of the options foreseen in the IIA on the revision of the AW legislation, identify additional options if necessary, review existing relevant EU legal provisions, discuss the possible elements of a legislative proposal in this area.**

The subgroup

- 10 membres + Commission + guests

- **2 Independent experts**

Evangelia Sossidou / Leonardo J. Vinco

- **1 Civil society organisation**

Eurogroup for animals

- **3 Business and professional organisations**

AVEC / COPA / FVE

- **4 Member States / EEA Countries**

Czech Republic / Denmark / Sweden /
Norway

- 4 meetings since March

Inception Impact Assessment of July 2021

- **Baseline:**

The current legislation protecting animals kept for farming purposes and laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens, broilers, pigs and calves, would continue to apply.

The technical requirements set in the five Directives would be even more outdated in light of newly available science and technology.

This legislation would continue to rely on the “old-fashioned” principles of the “Five Freedoms”, and could not cater for developments stemming from the more modern animal welfare approach based on Five Domains.

Inception Impact Assessment of July 2021

- Topics for discussion (1)
 - Decrease negative impacts of selective **breeding** on the welfare of animals
 - Prohibition of **cages**
 - Addressing the **five domains**
 - **Training requirements** for animal handlers (skills and competences)
 - Mandatory/ voluntary animal based **indicators**

Inception Impact Assessment of July 2021

- Topics for discussion (2)
 - Monitoring, measuring and reporting **tools**,
 - **Outdoor** access/ fresh air, **light**,
 - environmental **enrichment**,
 - **space** allowance (floor and height), **mutilations**,
 - **duty-of-care** (SOP).

1st topic: Decrease negative impacts of selective breeding on the welfare of animals

- Problem:
 - Despite application of general requirements since many years (Directive 98/58/EC, CoE) there are severe problems
 - Examples: laying hens (keelbone fractures); broiler breeders (hunger); broilers (health problems due to fast growth);
- Options:
 - Refine rules on breeding
 - Strengthen rules on the keeping of animals

1st topic: Decrease negative impacts of selective breeding on the welfare of animals

- Options -

- Refining rules on breeding:
 - **Reword** Annex No 20 and No 21 of Directive 98/58/EC
 - **Prohibit certain breeds**, e.g. layer breeds with start of lay at early age and/or laying a maximum number of eggs/year; aggressive breeds (feather pecking); broilers with average weight gains of more than x g/day.
- Strengthening rules on the keeping of animals:
 - **Examples**: specific rules for breeders and for pullets (layer and broiler); rules on feeding (meshed feed), light; health related indicators such as food pad health or bone fractures; require minimum slaughter age (broilers)
 - **Strengthen communication** between farmers and breeders (feedback to breeders)

1st topic: Decrease negative impacts of selective breeding on the welfare of animals

- Impacts on the problem
 - (+) to (+++) depending on the option chosen: do nothing/ strengthen keeping rules/ amend rule on breeding
- Impacts on stakeholders
 - (+) on breeders in case of strengthening breeding requirements or prohibiting certain breeds
 - (+) on farmers in case of strengthening rules on farm
- Mitigation of negative effects
 - Foresee a mix of the options

2nd topic: Prohibition of the use of cages

- Problem:
 - Current provisions are **not futureproof**
 - Unmet **expectations** of parts of citizens and consumers in terms of protection of animals
- Options:
 - Phase out and finally **prohibit the use of cages** for all species and categories referred to in the ECI “End the Cage Age”: laying hens, pullets, broiler breeders, layer breeders, quail, ducks and geese.
 - Update legislation in the light of **scientific evidence**; consider **social and economic needs** of the farming sector, **trade** aspects, **environmental** aspects, **transition** period.

2nd topic: Prohibition of the use of cages

- Options -

- Prohibition of cages for all species/categories of the ECI:
 - **EFSA opinions** awaited (12/2022 and 03/2023)
 - Define **minimum requirements** for all species/categories concerned (dust bathing, foraging, choice in nesting, structuring of housing, etc.)
 - Address **management** differences of cage/ non-cage systems (higher workload for staff; control for feather pecking, disease control => training needs)
 - **Environmental** legislation impacting building permits and outdoor access
 - Considerations for **transition periods** between “no transition period needed” (financial support and training needed) to “minimum of 15 years”
 - **Obstacles** for breeder birds, egg laying quail and mallard ducks

2nd topic: Prohibition of the use of cages

- Impacts on the problem
 - (+++) where the use of cages is prohibited.
- Impacts on stakeholders
 - (+) on farmers in case of strengthening rules on farm
 - (++) on breeders in case of prohibiting cages for breeding animals
 - (+++) on farmers keeping quail for egg production and for farmers keeping mallard ducks
- Mitigation of negative effects
 - Foresee balanced requirements and transition periods to facilitate the change

3rd topic: Five domains

- Problem:
 - Current provisions are **not futureproof**
- Option:
 - Introduction of common and comprehensive animal welfare **principles and requirements**, to ensure a high level of animal welfare, based on
 1. good nutrition,
 2. good environment,
 3. good health,
 4. appropriate behaviour, and
 5. positive mental experiences (“Five Domains”).

3rd topic: Five domains

- the model -

- **Aim:** free of chronic or intense negative experience;
(5 Freedoms: free of negative feeling or experience - impossible to provide)
- **Way to organise** features that matter to the animal:
- Domain 1-4: physical/functional;
Domain 5: tangible, resulting from observations of domains 1-4, measured through animal based indicators

3rd topic: Five domains

- Options -

- To consider: use the **concept** and use it as a tool to assess animal welfare, e.g.
 - enough information is available for **ABI** to assess space allowance or painful actions as regards animal welfare but
 - collecting information on ABI is very **time consuming** and
 - it is difficult to measure e.g. enhancement of **positive experience**.

=> **Combine** the concept of the Five Domains with the use of resource and management based indicators (require and collect data – facts, e.g. accumulated mortality or feed consumption – to evaluate compliance with legislation).

- Since this is a **dynamic model**, new conditions and rules can be added as animal welfare evolves.

3rd topic: Five domains

- options -

- General:
 - Replace Article 3 of 98/58/EC by putting the **animal into the centre** (not any more “avoiding unnecessary suffering”)
 - **Species-/category-specific** requirements are still needed. To be grouped into the 5 Domains to ensure not forgetting any of the important needs.

3rd topic: Five domains

- options -

- “Five Domains” examples:
 - **a) good nutrition:** access to water of drinking water quality ad lib.;
 - **b) good environment:** physical environment, e.g.access to solid floor
 - **c) good health:** animal health plan with checks for FPD and hock burns, bruises and fractures (to check in slaughterhouses); emergency provisions (ventilation and fire alarm system)
 - **d) appropriate behaviour:** swimming possibility for waterfowl; availability of litter, perches and/or elevated platforms, hiding space for quail, roughage; breeding strains appropriate to the production system (feather pecking, egg lay)
 - **e) positive mental experiences:** grains in the litter => pos. experience (+ avoid feather pecking); training programme to make this model more known to farmers

3rd topic: Five domains

- Impacts on the problem
 - (++) more flexibility to adjust to evolution of scientific knowledge
- Impacts on stakeholders
 - (++) need for information and training for the farming community
- Mitigation of negative effects
 - Foresee balanced requirements, transition periods

Next steps

- **Continuation with monthly meetings, probably until the end of this year
(about 10 meetings in total)**
- **Topics to discuss as shown earlier.**

An aerial photograph of a lush green field filled with numerous cows of various breeds, including brown, white, and spotted. The cows are scattered across the field, some standing and some grazing. The text "Thank you" is centered in the middle of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

Thank you

