



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Health and Food Safety Directorate General

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Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed
Section *Animal Health and Welfare*
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SUMMARY REPORT

A.01 General information by Member States.

No item raised.

A.02 One Health surveillance in animals and the environment for cross-border pathogens that threaten the Union.

The Commission invited EFSA and HADEA to present the current state of play and outlook for future actions in relation to EU4Health 2022 action (CP-g-22-04.01 Direct grants to Member States' authorities).

The Committee expressed appreciation for this action and emphasized then to continue this action beyond 2026. The Committee also underlined the importance to manage the data being produced by this action with consideration and allowing for proper risk communication.

A.03 Information from the Member States on African swine fever.

Lithuania, Greece, Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Italy, and Latvia provided an update about the epidemiological situation in their territories and measure taken.

In Greece, Italy, Czechia, Slovakia, and certain territories in Poland the disease continues to spread in wild boars mainly in already infected areas.

In Latvia, Lithuania, and certain zones in Poland we observed an improvement of the epidemiological situation following the effectiveness of the disease control measure applied.

In all Countries active and passive surveillance in both wild boars and holdings are ongoing.

The Commission and a Member State pointed out the importance of the application of the disease control measures, included the building or strengthening of barriers to limit the spreading of the disease toward free areas or free Countries. For this reason, Commission emphasizes the relevance of collaboration between Member States.

A.04 EU cofinanced veterinary programmes for 2025-2027 : state of play and next steps.

HaDEA presented the state of play and next steps concerning the veterinary programmes for the period 2025-2027. To simplify the work and decrease the workload of the Member States and third countries, these grants will be multiannual and covers the full period of 2025-2027, with the possibility to add new work packages and amend the grants and related budget every subsequent year if needed, in the limit of the EU overall available budget. The application period will be 16/04 to 31/05/2024 and an info session will be organized by end of April. All Member States and third countries will be invited to apply for the full period 2025-2027. Prefinancing will also be implemented in the 2 first years of the grants, and a final payment will take place at the end of the grant.

A.05 Information from Poland and France on outbreaks of infection with Aujeszky disease.

Poland and France provided an update of the actions taken following outbreaks of infection with Aujeszky disease in late 2023 and early 2024 in order to maintain the free status. In the case of France, the Commission and a Member State pointed out that as the outbreaks were mostly affecting establishments rearing free range pigs, biosecurity should be increased in this type of farming activity. Also, the Commission highlighted how individual cases can affect the health status of a bigger area and the associated public goods, following the description by the French delegation of an outbreak in an establishment with one single (Vietnamese) pig.

A.06 Information from Italy on outbreaks of infection with *Brucella abortus*, *B. melitensis* and *B. suis*.

Italy provided an update of the actions taken following outbreaks of infection with *Brucella abortus*, *B. melitensis* and *B. suis*. in late 2023 and early 2024 in order to maintain the free status. The source of the infection in the majority of the cases was movements of live animals from areas that are not yet free. The Commission suggested to increase the level of surveillance in areas receiving regularly animals from areas that are not yet free.

A.07 Information from Member States on highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia, and Sweden have presented the updated epidemiological situation with highly pathogenic avian influenza and the measures taken to control and eradicate the disease in poultry and/or captive birds. Overall, the situation with the disease seems to be calmer in the last weeks, no new outbreaks in kept birds have been confirmed in Bulgaria, Poland, and Slovakia. Also, in wild birds within EU, small number of wild birds are found infected with HPAI in the last month.

A.08 Implementation by Member States of provisions of Directive 98/58/EC regarding genetic selection of broilers for rapid growth rate.

The Commission reminded Member States of the deadline of 1st April for sending information regarding the implementation of provisions in Art. 3, 4 of Directive 98/58/EC and points 20 and 21 of its annex, in relation to genetic selection of broilers for fast growing rate.

B.01 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the evolution of animal diseases in the Union.

No item raised.

B.02 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation amending Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 laying down special control measures for African swine fever.

Since the date of adoption of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/870 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594, there have been new outbreaks of African swine fever in wild porcine animals in Czechia, Italy, Poland, and Slovakia. For this reason, zoning in those Member States has been reassessed and updated in accordance with Articles 5 and 6 of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594. In addition, the epidemiological situation in certain zones listed as restricted zones III in Latvia and Lithuania, and as restricted zones I and II in Poland in Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 has improved as regards kept and wild porcine animals, due to the disease control measures being applied by those Member States in accordance with Union legislation. Based on the information and justification provided by Latvia and Lithuania certain zones listed as Restricted zones III have been lifted as Restricted zones II. In Poland certain restricted zones II listed, based on the information and justification provided and measure taken, have been lifted to Restricted zones I. In addition, in Poland, certain zones listed as restricted zones II in Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 have been delisted from that Annex due to the absence of African swine fever outbreaks in kept and wild porcine animals in those restricted zones II for the past twelve months.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

B.03 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2447 concerning emergency measures in relation to outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States.

The EU regionalization for outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza needed to be updated to take into account the development of the epidemiological situation in certain Member States.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

M.01 Information from Greece on sheep pox and goat pox.

Greece informed the Commission and Member States about the epidemiological situation of Sheep and Goat Pox (SGP) in its territory. To date there has been one outbreak of SGP in Lesvos Island (October 2023, no new outbreaks ever since) and 7 outbreaks in the Phthiotis regional unit, in mainland Greece (region of Central Greece), all within the municipality of Lokron. Following the confirmation of the latest outbreak in mainland Greece (March 2024) the durations of the previously established protection and surveillance zones have been extended accordingly, while the further restricted zone (including that of Lesvos) will remain in place until the end of June 2024. Regarding the measures for sheep pox and goat pox at Union level, the Commission reminded Member States that a new amendment of Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2725 was adopted recently and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/881).

M.02 Information on the evaluation of the Animal Health Law.

The Commission informed about the process of the evaluation, which will result in a report submitted to the European Parliament and to the Council by April 2026. The evaluation will assess if the legislation is effective, proportionate, coherent, and easily applicable. A call for evidence was published on the Commission's "have your say"-website and is open for feedback until 3 April 2024. A contractor will carry out a study, gathering all the necessary data from relevant stakeholders (competent authorities and animal health advisory committee (AHAC) members). Member States' competent authorities will receive surveys and be invited for interviews after the summer break.