

Briefing | EP Animal Welfare Intergroup - European Court of Auditors report on animal welfare in the EU



Dods - Debate Summary

14/12/2018

Source: European Parliament's Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals

Subject: The European Court of Auditors report on animal welfare in the EU: closing the gap between ambitious goals and practical implementation

Date: December 13 2018

Documents: [Agenda](#) / [Presentation by Commissioner Andriukaitis](#) / [Attendance List](#)

On December 13, European Parliament's Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals convened to the European Court of Auditors report on animal welfare in the EU. Janusz Wojciechowski, Member of the European Court of Auditors, provided an overview of the report, emphasising that there are good standards and legislation, but that these are not effectively controlled. The ECA Member also drew attention to problems in the implementation of the religious derogation for slaughter without stunning as well as the low implementation of rural development measures to improve animal welfare. Afterwards, Commissioner Andriukaitis presented a speech which touched on the conclusions of the Court of Auditors, animal transport, pig welfare, pet welfare, horse welfare, and international activities.

The members of the Intergroup presented questions concerning the launch of a new animal welfare strategy, discussions with Muslim communities on slaughter without stunning, live animal transport conditions, reference centres for fur animals, wild animals in circuses, and broiler chickens.

Please see below a summary of the meeting.

Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP, FI), President of the Intergroup, urged the members of the Intergroup to support the oral question on strengthening animal welfare rules in aquaculture. Consumers and people in general are increasingly aware that fish are sentient beings. Fish suffer, so basic rules for aquaculture are needed. The purpose of the question is to address the issue with the European Commission, in order to achieve developments in this field.

The European Court of Auditors report on animal welfare in the EU: closing the gap between ambitious goals and practical implementation

Janusz Wojciechowski, Member of the European Court of Auditors, highlighted that it is the first time that the ECA has focused entirely on animal welfare and that the audit was inspired by the activities of the EP Animal Welfare Intergroup. EU citizens are increasingly concerned about animal welfare. The concept of animal welfare is enshrined in Article 13 of TFUE which recognises animals as sentient beings. The EU has some of the world's highest regulatory standards, which includes requirements on breeding, transport and slaughter of farm animals. The audit was confined to farm animals, so focused on the area that is subsidised by EU legislation. The audit looked into risks of mistreatment of farm animals, since animal welfare does not always go together with the economic interests. The audit covered the life of the animals on the farm as well as the transport and slaughter. The audit examined the EU Welfare Strategy, focusing on its two objectives: achieving compliance with animal welfare