Resolution on antibiotic resistance

2011/2680(RSP) - 12/05/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 11 May 2011, the European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development on antibiotic resistance.

Members recall that the European Parliament in its resolution of 5 May 2010 on the Animal Welfare Action Plan 2006-2010, underlined the **link between animal health and public health** and urged the Commission and the Member States to address the growing problem of AMR in animals in a responsible manner, particularly calling on the Commission to collect and analyse data on the use of animal health products, including antimicrobials, with a view to ensuring the effective use of such products.

Joint data collection activities: Parliament welcomes the efforts made by the Commission and its agencies as regards joint data collection activities in this field, in particular the initiative in 2009 to create ESVAC (European Surveillance of Veterinary Antimicrobial Consumption). However, it regrets that not all Member States have yet joined the ESVAC network and calls on more countries to do so. Moreover, Members call on the Commission to:

- provide the ESVAC network with sufficient financial resources to perform its tasks;
- provide an adequate legal framework in order to give Member States the authority to perform an efficient data collection;
- strive for a data collection which is harmonised and comparable, also with activities undertaken in third countries such as the United States;
- Parliament recognises that the proper collection and analysis of comparable data as regards the sales of veterinary agents - and the subsequent use of such products on animals - is an important first step, but stresses the need to get a full picture of when, where, how and on which animals the antimicrobials are actually used today, without creating additional financial or administrative burdens for farmers.

Research: Members note that the role of animals, of food of animal origin, and of resistant bacteria occurring in animal husbandry in the transfer of AMR to humans and the potential dangers resulting thereof may not be sufficiently clear. They call for **more research to be performed on new antimicrobials as well as other alternatives** (vaccination, bio security, breeding for resistance) and evidence based strategies to control infectious diseases in animals, underlining the importance of EU's Research Framework Programmes in this respect. They also call for:

- the research resources from the human and the veterinary side to be better coordinated, by creating a network of existing research institutes;
- research into the role of animals, food of animal origin, sustainable production systems including robust breeds, longevity of animals, improved herd management, early disease prevention, exercise and access to free range and lower stocking densities and other conditions ensuring the biological needs of the animals are met; and the resistant bacteria occurring in animal husbandry in the transfer of AMR to humans and the potential danger resulting thereof.

Monitoring and surveillance: the resolution calls on all Member States to perform regular systematic surveillance and monitoring of AMR in both food producing animals and companion animals, without creating additional burdens for farmers. Members call on the future budgets for the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to reflect the increased need for further inspections and analyses in this field.

Maintained efficiency of antimicrobials: Parliament emphasises that the ultimate objective is to maintain antimicrobials as an effective tool to combat disease, both in animals and in humans, while keeping the use of antimicrobials to the strict necessary. It calls for a prudent use of antimicrobials in animals and for more information to veterinarians and farmers to minimise the development of AMR, as well as the exchange of best practices. Members note that processed animal proteins from non-ruminants show intrinsic animal health and nutritional benefits, which could make a significant contribution to balanced diets for monogastric animals including farmed fish and at the same time contributing to a reduced use of antimicrobials. They ask the Commission to lift the current restrictions under conditions which would ensure a maximum level of food safety. They also ask the Commission to:

- work towards an international ban on antimicrobials as growth promoters in animal feed, and to bring this matter up in its bilateral negotiations with third countries such as the United States;
- monitor how the Member States are implementing and applying the relevant existing European legislation on antimicrobials;
- develop a broad multi-annual action plan against AMR in the framework of the EU animal health strategy; believes that such an action plan should cover all animals under the EU animal welfare strategy, including companion animals, and emphasise the logical connection between animal health and the use of antimicrobials, as well as the link between animal health and human health. This action plan should include a detailed review of the different ways in which antimicrobials are used prophylactically, in order to settle controversy over what is a routine prophylactic and what is an acceptable prophylactic.