Microbial challenge - rising threats from antimicrobial resistance

2012/2041(INI) - 21/06/2012

The Council adopted **conclusions on the impact of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the human health sector and in the veterinary sector**, calling upon member states to develop and implement national strategies or action plans for countering AMR.

These national strategies or action plans should, amongst others, include the following elements:

- national guidelines on the treatment of humans and animals with antimicrobial agents;
- communication guidelines and programmes for education and training of professionals;
- enforcement of national legislation preventing all illegal sales of antimicrobials including illegal sales over the internet;
- limitation of the use of critically important antibiotics to cases where microbiological diagnosis and susceptibility testing has determined that no other type of antimicrobials will be effective;
- limitation of prophylactic use of antimicrobials to cases with defined clinical needs;
- limitation of prescription and use of antimicrobials for herd treatment of animals to cases with a clear clinical or epidemiological justification.

The conclusions also call upon the member states and the Commission to examine the conditions of prescription and sale of antimicrobials in order to ascertain whether practices in human and animals healthcare may lead to over-prescription, overuse or misuse of antimicrobials.

The Commission is invited to expedite the review of legislative acts in order to take antimicrobial resistance better into account. This applies notably to directive 90/167 laying down the conditions governing the preparation, placing on the market and use of medicated feedingstuffs in the EU and directive 2001/82 on the EU code relating to veterinary medicinal products.

The Commission informed that preparatory work for some of the actions to which it is invited has already been started.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) about 440 000 new cases of multidrugresistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) emerge annually, causing at least 150 000 deaths. A high percentage of hospital-acquired infections are caused by highly resistant bacteria such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).