

Animal diseases and public health: measures for the control of avian influenza (repeal. Directive 92/40/EEC)

2005/0062(CNS) - 28/04/2005 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to update current Community measures on Avian Influenza (AI), with the objective of achieving better prevention and control of outbreaks and to reduce the health risks, the costs and losses and the negative impact to the whole of society due to this disease.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Directive

CONTENT: AI is a serious, highly contagious disease of poultry and other birds caused by different types of viruses included in the very large virus family called *Influenzaviridae*. AI viruses may also spread to other animals and humans, usually following direct contact with infected birds.

Based on consultations with interested parties, the Commission proposes the introduction of the following main changes to current provisions on AI control:

- Change in the definition of AI to extend the scope of the control measures also to those LPAI (low pathogenic AI) viruses which could potentially mutate into HPAI (high pathogenic AI) viruses, however it would make a distinction between the two conditions so that specific control measures can then be applied in relation to the different risks posed by these viruses.
- Introduction of compulsory surveillance for LPAI in all MSs.
- New and more flexible provisions on vaccination.
- New and flexible provisions for the control of LPAI and HPAI in domestic birds other than poultry, such as those kept in zoos or endangered species.
- New provisions to ensure co-operation between MSs veterinary and public health authorities in case of detection of AI, with the view of protecting human health.
- Attribution to the Commission, through Comitology procedures, to adopt further and more specific AI control measures and to establish an AI vaccine bank.

It is proposed to make these changes in Community legislation on AI control in parallel with amendments to Council Decision 90/424/EEC on Community expenditure in the veterinary field, to bring it in line with this proposal and ensure adequate financial support to the Member States (MSs) in relation to some of the newly envisaged control measures (see CNS/2005/0063).

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Budget lines: 17 01: Administrative expenditure of health and consumer protection policy area; 17 04 02: Other measures in the veterinary, animal welfare and public-health field; and 17 04 03: Emergency fund for veterinary complaints and other animal contaminations which are a risk to public health.

Total allocation for action: EUR 18.810 million for commitments over six years (EUR 3.135 million per year from 2006), broken down as follows:

- Objective 1 (emergency fund eradication of the disease): impossible to predict with precision.
- Objective 2 (surveillance): EUR 9 million.
- Objective 3 (establishment of a vaccine bank): EUR 9 million.
- Objective 4 (establishment of a Community Reference Laboratory for avian influenza): EUR 0.810 million.

Impact on human resources: EUR 1,170,000 (EUR 0.195 per year from 2006).

Total cost of measures: EUR 19.980 million (EUR 3.33 million per year from 2006).

BUDGETARY IMPACT: the additional annual costs for the Community budget of the adoption and implementation of the planned measures is between EUR 3 and 6 million, thus an average of EUR 5.5 million. These costs will be largely recouped by the savings generated from the reduction in the risk of HPAI epidemics breaking out. If they take as a point of reference the two recent epidemics in the EU, it can be estimated that in terms of costs, the prevention of two epidemics would save EUR 100 million or more of the Community budget over a period of ten years. This saving would be considerably higher than the additional costs planned for the new LPAI surveillance measures and the fight against this disease (around EUR 55 million over ten years).