

Protection of chickens kept for meat production

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The Council took note of the report presented by the Presidency on a draft Directive (see 9606/05+ADD1) laying down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production (broilers) and of the comments made at that stage by several delegations mainly concerning the implementing period, the issue of collecting data before the establishment of an upper compulsory limit, the need for a report on the socio-economic impact on the sector of the measures envisaged, and the issue of sanctions. The Council noted that the suggested work plan had the support of a majority of the delegations and gave the Committee of Permanent Representatives a mandate to continue work on that basis, at the appropriate level, with a view to reaching a conclusion during the Finnish Presidency.

The main suggestions drawn up by the Presidency broadly consist of extending the scope of the proposal to cover organic and free-range chickens and envisaging the possible setting up of an upper compulsory limit -to be defined- for stocking density to be presented by the Commission, after a period during which data would be collected at national level on harmonised standards of welfare (mortality rate, stocking density, footpad lesions, etc.). That upper limit would apply with enhanced welfare requirements. The initial minimum threshold of 30 kg live per square metre for stocking density remains.