Basic information

2016/2078(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Responsible ownership and care of equidae **Subject** 3.10.04.02 Animal protection	

Key players

European Parliament	**Committee responsible**	**Rapporteur**	**Appointed**
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	GIRLING Julie (ECR)	23/02/2016
		Shadow rapporteur MELO Nuno (PPE) DENANOT Jean-Paul (S&D) MÜLLER Ulrike (ALDE) HAZEKAMP Anja (GUE/NGL) SEBASTIA TALAVERA Jordi Vicent (Verts/ALE)	

European Commission	**Commission DG**	**Commissioner**
	Agriculture and Rural Development	ANDRIUKAITIS Vytenis Povilas

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
12/05/2016	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
25/01/2017	Vote in committee		
01/02/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0014/2017	Summary
13/03/2017	Debate in Parliament		
14/03/2017	Decision by Parliament	T8-0065/2017	Summary
14/03/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		
14/03/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2016/2078(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AGRI/8/06482

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE589.295	16/09/2016	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE594.022	16/11/2016	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0014/2017	01/02/2017	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0065/2017	14/03/2017	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2017)390	22/08/2017	

Responsible ownership and care of equidae

2016/2078(INI) - 01/02/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted an own-initiative report by Julie GIRLING (ECR, UK) on the responsible ownership and care of equidae.

Members recognised the considerable **economic, environmental and social contribution** equidae make throughout the EU. The equid sector within the EU is worth over EUR 100 billion per annum and created approximately 900 000 jobs.

The estimated **7 million equidae** in the European Union perform varied roles: sources of milk and meat, they are also competition and recreational animals to working animals in transport, tourism, rehabilitation and education therapies, research animals, and wild and semi-feral animals.

Against this background, Members called for **greater EU-level acknowledgement of the equid sector**, and its benefits for the rural economy, and for it to be incorporated to a greater extent into the various CAP components.

They encouraged Member States to create an environment in which on-farm businesses are viable.

European guidelines: the Commission is called upon to develop European guidelines on **good practice** in the equid sector for various users and specialists.

These guidelines should:

- **consider the multifunctional role of equidae** by including guidance on responsible breeding, animal health and welfare and the benefits of equid sterilisation, work in tourism, agriculture and forestry, species-appropriate transport and slaughter and protection against fraudulent practices, including doping;
- **be accessible** in a variety of formats and languages to breeders, equid societies, farms, stables, sanctuaries, transporters and slaughterhouses.

Sustainable tourism: Members called on the Commission to recommit to the development of a **European charter for sustainable and responsible tourism** , with the dissemination of clear information to help tourists and stakeholders make welfare-friendly choices when deciding whether or not to use the services of working equidae.

Protection of animals and responsible ownership: the Commission is called upon to establish new **reference centres** for the protection of animals and to improve levels of full compliance with, and consistent enforcement of, legislation, along with the dissemination of information and best practice relating to animal welfare.

The Commission is called upon to :

- propose a shortened maximum journey limit for all movements of horses for slaughter;
- enhance scientific research in order to develop humane methods of slaughter better suited to equidae.

Members recalled the principle that any cruel, abusive treatment by any owner, trainer, groom or other person **must not be tolerated anywhere**, under any circumstances. Members States are called upon to apply stricter legislation regarding the mistreatment and to properly investigate reports of inhumane practices and welfare violations vis-à-vis equidae.

Lastly, the report stressed the need to **clarify the VAT law** applying to the equine sector in order to foster the development of a growth- and jobs-oriented equine sector.

Responsible ownership and care of equidae

2016/2078(INI) - 14/03/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 656 votes to 10, with 27 abstentions, a resolution on the responsible ownership and care of equidae.

Members recognised the considerable economic, environmental and social contribution equidae make throughout the EU. The equid sector within the EU is worth over EUR 100 billion per annum and created approximately 900 000 jobs.

Recognition of the sector: the estimated **7 million equidae** in the European Union perform varied roles: sources of milk and meat, they are also competition and recreational animals to working animals in transport, tourism, rehabilitation and education therapies, research animals, and wild and semi-feral animals.

Against this background, Parliament called for **greater EU-level acknowledgement** of the equid sector, and its benefits for the rural economy, and for it to be incorporated to a greater extent into the various CAP components. It encouraged Member States to create an environment in which on-farm businesses are viable.

European guidelines: the Commission is called upon to develop European guidelines on **good practice** in the equid sector for various users and specialists.

These guidelines should:

- **consider the multifunctional role of equidae** by including guidance on responsible breeding, animal health and welfare and the benefits of equid sterilisation, work in tourism, agriculture and forestry, species-appropriate transport and slaughter and protection against fraudulent practices, including doping;
- **be accessible** in a variety of formats and languages to breeders, equid societies, farms, stables, sanctuaries, transporters and slaughterhouses.

Member States are urged to establish **voluntary labour guidelines** including daily working hours and rest periods to protect working equidae from overwork and economic exploitation.

Sustainable tourism: Parliament called on the Commission to recommit to the development of a **European charter for sustainable and responsible tourism** and to issue guidance on welfare-friendly tourism models with regard to working equidae.

Protection of animals and responsible ownership: Members stressed that equid owners should have a **minimum level of knowledge** of equid husbandry, and that with ownership comes a personal responsibility for the standard of health and welfare of the animals in their care. Parliament underlined the importance of Animal Welfare **Reference Centres** for the protection and welfare of the animals and called on the Commission to:

- encourage and collect exchanges of good practices and educational programmes of different Member States in terms of animal welfare;
- conduct regular audits of the slaughterhouses on their territory that are licensed to take equidae and increase the number of inspections on donkey and horse milk farms;
- ensure the proper application and effective and uniform enforcement of existing EU legislation on animal transport and propose a shortened maximum journey limit for all movements of horses for slaughter;
- promote exchanges of good practices to facilitate rational use of medicines for equidae;
- enhance scientific research in order to develop humane methods of slaughter better suited to equidae.

Members recalled the principle that any cruel, abusive treatment by any owner, trainer, groom or other person **must not be tolerated** anywhere, under any circumstances. Members States are called upon to apply stricter legislation regarding the mistreatment and to properly investigate reports of inhumane practices and welfare violations vis-à-vis equidae.

Lastly, the resolution stressed the need to **clarify the VAT law** applying to the equine sector in order to foster the development of a growth- and jobs-oriented equine sector. It also called on the Commission and the Member States to support the work of the European Horse Network and the European State Stud Association, as they play an important role in the development of the European horse sector.