



The EU legislation on animal welfare current requirements and expected changes

Working together to ensure the welfare of farmed animals in Ukraine

2 October 2024

Stanislav RALCHEV

Policy Officer

Unit Animal Welfare

European Commission DG SANTE

Background

- First EU legislation on the killing of animals at slaughter in the 70s with the scope to avoid unfair competition in the single market.
- The minimum EU requirements for cages for laying hens were adopted in the late 80s.
- Welfare of transported animals started to be regulated in the early 90s.
- In 1999 the protocol of the EU “Amsterdam Treaty” defined the animals as sentient beings
- Part of the Common Agricultural Policies and financially supported by the Rural Development schemes when standards above the EU ones. Today part of supporting measures are called Eco-schemes.

The legal context

Article 43 TFEU (agriculture)



Article 114 TFEU (internal market)

= **LEGAL BASIS**

Article 13 TFEU:

*“In formulating and implementing the Union's agriculture, fisheries, transport, internal market, research and technological development and space policies, **the Union and the Member States shall, since animals are sentient beings, pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals, while respecting the legislative or administrative provisions and customs of the Member States relating in particular to religious rites, cultural traditions and regional heritage.**”*

Current EU legislation on animal welfare

Directive 98/58/EC on **animals kept for farming purposes**

Directive 1999/74/EC on **laying hens**

Directive 2007/43/EC on **broilers**

Directive 2008/119 on **calves**

Directive 2008/120 on **pigs**

Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on **animal transport**

Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on **slaughter and killing**

Directive 98/58: All farmed animals

- *To all vertebrate animals used for production of food, wool, skin, fur, etc.*
- *General requirements on staff, record keeping, freedom of movement, accommodation, equipment, feed and water, mutilations and breeding procedures.*
- **Refers to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for farming purposes :**
http://www.coe.int/t/e/legal_affairs/legal_co-operation/biological_safety_and_use_of_animals/farming/A_texts_documents.asp



Directive 1999/74: Laying hens

3 categories of farming systems

- Alternative = no cage + max 9 hens /m² (>1111 cm²/hen)
- Enriched cages = cage with nest and perch + >750 cm²/hen
- Unenriched cages = **banned**
from 1st January 2012



Labelling system for eggs

- *Compulsory information for eggs:*
 - *0 = organic eggs*
 - *1 = free range eggs*
 - *2 = barn eggs*
 - *3 = eggs from caged hens*
- *Reference: Regulation 589/2008
(marketing standards for eggs)*



Directive 2008/119: Calves

- *Group housing if >8 weeks age*
- *Minimum size of pen*
- *No complete darkness*
- *No permanent tethering*
- *Balanced feeding iron and fibers*

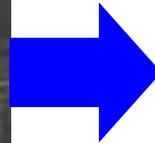


Directive 2008/120 Pigs

- *Space requirements*
- *Group housing of sows*
- *Manipulable materials*
- *Mutilations regulated*
 - Castration: < 7 days of age
 - No routine tail-docking



Group housing for sows



Directive 2007/43 Chickens for meat

- *Max density but derogation if*
 - Control of environmental parameters
 - Monitoring in farm (mortality) and at slaughterhouses (post-mortem)
- First EU legislation with outcome-based indicators (contact dermatitis)



Pododermatitis: grading system



Regulation 1/2005 Animal Transport

General technical rules

- *No weak or sick animals*
- *Means of transport*
- *Loading and unloading, handling of animals*

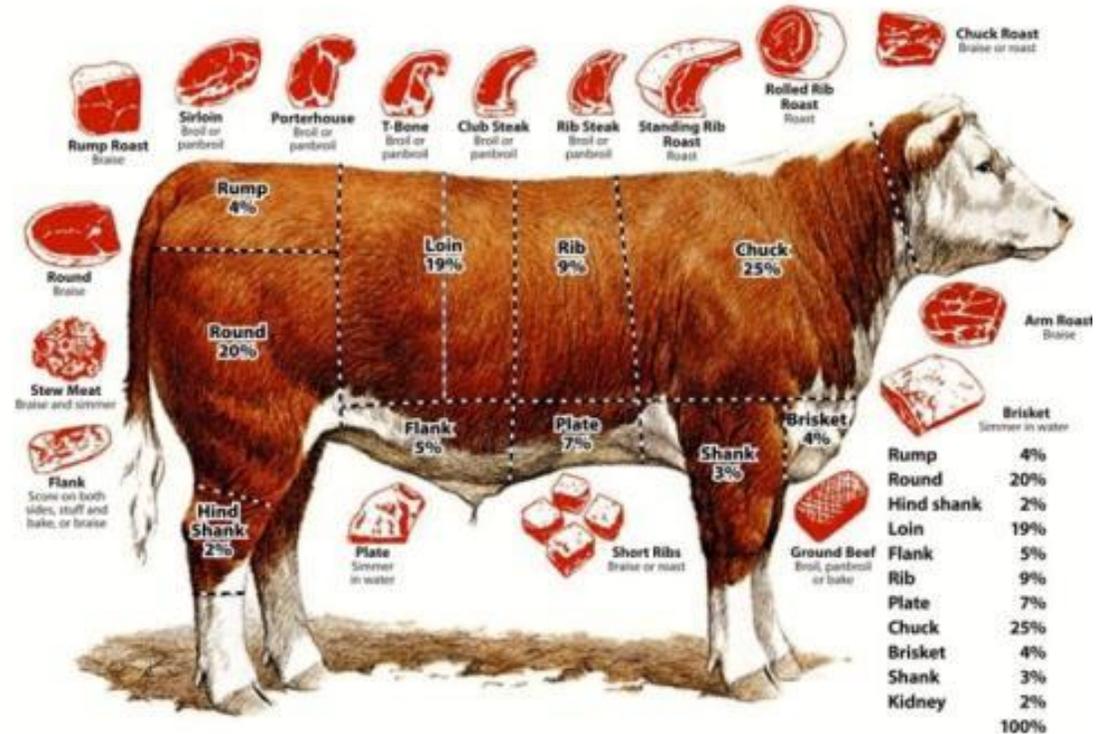
Specific rules

- *Journey times and resting periods*
- *Space allowances*
- *Additional rules for long journeys*
- *Livestock vessels and sea containers*



Regulation 1099/2009 Killing of animals

- *Stunning methods and parameters*
- *Monitoring on stunning*
- *Standard operating procedures*
- *Staff competence*
- *Instructions for stunning/restraining equipment*
- *Importation of meat from third countries*



Graphic used from the AHA website: <http://www.hereford.org/node/781>

What does the European Union do?

- **European Commission** responsible for:
 - Ensuring that Member States properly implement and enforce EU legislation on animal welfare:
 - **audits** under Regulation (EU) 2017/625 – Official controls
 - management of **complaints** from stakeholders and citizens
 - In case of systematic and serious failure to implement EU legislation, possible **infringement** procedures – Commission may bring MS to Court of Justice of EU

What do Member States do?

Member State competent authorities responsible for:

- Transposition of Directives into national legislation and implementation of EU rules at national level
- Enforcement of legislation, **official controls** (Regulation (EU) 2017/625)
- **National court cases – preliminary references to Court of Justice of EU**

What does the European Food Safety authority (EFSA) do?

- EFSA is an independent agency that provides scientific advice on food safety, animal health and sustainability, including on animal welfare
- The Commission, the European Parliament and Member States may request scientific opinions from EFSA
- EFSA expertise is globally recognised and widely used by the EU's multilateral and bilateral partners



Commission proposals on animal welfare

- Adopted on 7 December 2023:
 - Protection of animals during transport
 - Animal welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability
 - For more details: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_6251
- Ordinary legislative process – now at the level of co-legislators:
 - Council of the EU
 - EU Parliament



Animal transport proposal

- **Background:**

- Current legislation remains unchanged for 20 years
- Scientific and technological progress has evolved
- EU citizens expectations are high
- Need for modernisation and simplification

- **Key new requirements:**

- Reduced journey times;
- Increased space allowances;
- Wider digitalisation and real-time traceability;
- Stricter rules on export;
- Equivalent rules at import.
- Other (i.e. sanctions etc.)

Dogs and cats proposal

- **Background:**

- **73 million dogs** and **84 million cats** in the EU
- **Online** platforms sales up to 60%
- Evidence of **poor standards, negligence, abuse**
- **EFSA 2023** opinion on breeding establishments

- **Key new requirements:**

- Rules for breeders, pet-shops and shelters
- Identification and registration
- Entry into the EU – equivalent rules

EU Reference Centres on AW - EURCAWs

- *Regulation (EC) 2017/625 on official controls (Art 96)*
- *Support EU Member States and the EU Commission with technical expertise.*
- *Disseminate knowledge and tools to assist the competent authorities in performing better official controls.*
- *Develop animal-based indicators for a better monitoring of animal welfare.*
- First Reference Centre on pigs (www.eurcaw-pigs.eu)
- Second on poultry and other farmed animals (www.eurcaw-poultry-sfa.eu)
- Third on ruminants and equids (www.eurcaw-ruminants-equines.eu)
- Fourth on farmed aquatic animals

For more information about EURCAWs please visit:

https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-welfare/eu-reference-centres-animal-welfare_en

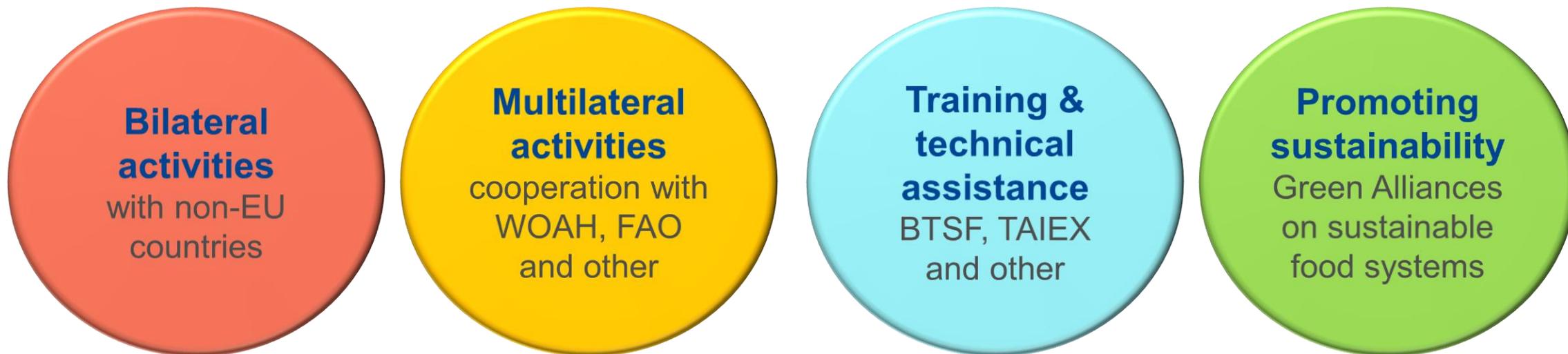
EU Platform on Animal Welfare



- **EU Platform on Animal Welfare**

- 2 meetings per year with 75 stakeholders attending as members
- Sub-groups and voluntary initiatives per specific subjects
- All Platform meetings are webstreamed and recorded:
- https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-welfare/eu-platform-animal-welfare/platform-meetings_en

What does the EU do at international level?



“Animal welfare international activities are a long-term investment, based on three subsequent steps: awareness raising, capacity building and funding.”

Commission’s report on the impact of animal welfare international activities on competitiveness:
https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/aw_international_publication-report_en.pdf

**Thank you for your
attention!**

