









Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2017/2117(INI)	Procedure completed
Current situation and future prospects for the sheep and goat sectors in the EU		
Subject 3.10.04 Livestock farming		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Agriculture and Rural Development	 HERRANZ GARCÍA Esther	29/06/2017
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 ANDRIEU Eric	
		 PROCTER John	
		 VAUTMANS Hilde	
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Agriculture and Rural Development	HOGAN Phil	
		 BOVÉ José	

Key events			
06/07/2017	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/02/2018	Vote in committee		
04/04/2018	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0064/2018	Summary
02/05/2018	Debate in Parliament		
03/05/2018	Results of vote in Parliament		
03/05/2018	Decision by Parliament	T8-0203/2018	Summary
03/05/2018	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2017/2117(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative

Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AGRI/8/10354

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report	PE612.315	26/10/2017	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee	PE613.623	28/11/2017	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A8-0064/2018	04/04/2018	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T8-0203/2018	03/05/2018	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2018)482	21/09/2018	EC	

Current situation and future prospects for the sheep and goat sectors in the EU

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted the own-initiative report by Esther HERRANZ GARCÍA (EPP, ES) on the current situation and future prospects for the sheep and goat sectors in the EU.

The report noted that sheep and goat farming are low-profit sectors in most of the EU, with incomes among the lowest in the EU, chiefly as a result of high operating and regulatory costs. Imbalances in the food chain aggravate the vulnerability of these sectors and the Commission has so far failed to take the necessary regulatory action, called for by Parliament, in this regard.

The sheep and goat sectors account for 3 % of European milk and 9 % of European cheese production, and together they employ 1.5 million people in the European Union.

Brexit could cause significant changes to intra-EU trade in sheep meat, given that the UK is the largest producer and the main gateway for imports from third countries.

Better support: Members called on the Commission and on the Member States to:

- increase voluntary coupled aid for sheep and goat farming in the forthcoming reform of the common agricultural policy;
- further assist young farmers through incentives for the setting up or taking over of sheep or goat farms;
- consider offering incentives to farmers who practice transhumance;
- develop specific programmes enabling women to find their place in these sectors.

Promotion and innovation: the report called on the Commission and the Member States to:

- step up support for research into innovative production methods and technologies with the aim of strengthening the competitiveness of the sheep and goat sectors, and promoting meat, dairy and wool products in the internal market;
- encourage more regular consumption through information campaigns on cooking and preparation methods;
- support the exploitation of the high potential of traditional sheep and goat farming practices through agri-tourism.

Good practices and improving markets: the Commission is urged to:

- set up an online platform focused on the sheep and goat sectors with the main purpose of exchanging relevant good practices and data from the Member States;
- draft guidelines for good practices for marketing products from the sheep and goat sectors that can then be shared among the Member States and with professional organisations;
- bring forward proposals on price transparency in the sectors in order to provide consumers and producers with information on product prices;
- foster a climate of direct sales by producers and producer organisations in order to limit artificial price increases;
- ease the administrative requirements for opening small cheese-making ventures on sheep and goat farms, thereby enabling farmers to boost the added value of their farms.

Brexit and trade agreements: Members asked the Commission to:

- ascertain what the post-Brexit sheep meat market will look like, and to put necessary measures in place to prevent severe market disturbances, including the establishment of a more efficient safety net for prices and markets in order to protect the sector from the impact of Brexit;
- introduce a mandatory EU labelling regulation system for sheep meat products, possibly with an EU-wide logo, to allow consumers to distinguish between EU products and those from third countries;
- provide assistance in opening export markets for EU sheep meat and offal in countries where unnecessary restrictions currently apply.

Health aspects: Members called on the Commission to:

- provide incentives and support for sheep and goat farmers who can demonstrate that they have attained high vaccination coverage among their animals, in keeping with the European One Health Action Plan against Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), as there would

- otherwise be little market incentive for farmers to do so;
- improve its ability to respond to outbreaks of animal diseases, such as bluetongue, by means of a new EU animal health strategy, research funding, compensation for losses, advances on payments, etc.;
- facilitate the use of immunoprecise vaccines as a first measure to combat possible disease outbreaks in the sectors.

Current situation and future prospects for the sheep and goat sectors in the EU

The European Parliament adopted by 507 votes to 112, with 27 abstentions, a resolution on the current situation and future prospects for the sheep and goat sectors in the EU.

Members recalled that sheep and goat farming are low-profit sectors in most of the EU, with incomes among the lowest in the EU, chiefly as a result of high operating and regulatory costs. Imbalances in the food chain aggravate the vulnerability of these sectors and the Commission has so far failed to take the necessary regulatory action, called for by Parliament, in this regard.

The sheep and goat sectors account for 3 % of European milk and 9 % of European cheese production, and together they employ 1.5 million people in the European Union.

Brexit could cause significant changes to intra-EU trade in sheep meat, given that the UK is the largest producer and the main gateway for imports from third countries.

Parliament addressed a number of recommendations to the Commission and the Member States:

Better support:

- maintain or increase voluntary coupled aid for sheep and goat farming and other respective measures targeted at both sectors, with differentiated subsidies for grazing herds, in the forthcoming reform of the CAP;
- extend agri-environmental payments to pastures used for sheep and goat grazing and support farmers who provide enhanced animal welfare;
- consider offering incentives to farmers who practice transhumance;
- further assist young farmers through incentives for the setting up or taking over of sheep and goat holdings, via both direct aid and rural development policy;
- take measures to step up support for the keeping of native sheep and goat breed;
- develop specific programmes enabling women to find their place in these sectors.

Promotion and innovation:

- step up support for research into innovative production methods and technologies with the aim of strengthening the competitiveness of the sheep and goat sectors, and promoting meat, dairy and wool products in the internal market;
- encourage more regular consumption through information campaigns on cooking and preparation methods and coordinate promotional campaigns for PGI and PDO labelling of sheep and goat products;
- support the exploitation of the high potential of traditional sheep and goat farming practices through agri-tourism.

Good practices and improving markets:

- set up an online platform focused on the sheep and goat sectors with the main purpose of exchanging relevant good practices and data from the Member States;
- draft guidelines for good practices for marketing products from the sheep and goat sectors that can then be shared among the Member States and with professional organisations;
- bring forward proposals on price transparency in the sectors in order to provide consumers and producers with information on product prices;
- foster a climate of direct sales by producers and producer organisations in order to limit artificial price increases;
- ease the administrative requirements for opening small cheese-making ventures on sheep and goat farms, thereby enabling farmers to boost the added value of their farms;
- consider additional tools and instruments that can help the sectors face crises, meet global challenges.

Brexit and trade agreements:

- ascertain what the post-Brexit sheep meat market will look like, and to put necessary measures in place to prevent severe market disturbances, including the establishment of a more efficient safety net for prices and markets in order to protect the sector from the impact of Brexit;
- introduce a mandatory EU labelling regulation system for sheep meat products, possibly with an EU-wide logo, to allow consumers to distinguish between EU products and those from third countries;
- provide assistance in opening export markets for EU sheep meat and offal in countries where unnecessary restrictions currently apply.

Health aspects:

- provide incentives and support for sheep and goat farmers who can demonstrate that they have attained high vaccination coverage among their animals, in keeping with the European One Health Action Plan against Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), as there would otherwise be little market incentive for farmers to do so;
- improve its ability to respond to outbreaks of animal diseases, such as bluetongue, by means of a new EU animal health strategy, research funding, compensation for losses, advances on payments, etc.;
- facilitate the use of immunoprecise vaccines as a first measure to combat possible disease outbreaks in the sectors.

Members supported a review of the relevant annexes of the Habitats Directive with the aim of controlling and managing the spread of predators in certain grazing areas. Lastly, they called on the Commission to identify support measures for the establishment of slaughter points and the simplification of authorisation procedures.

