

Council of the European Union

PRESS RELEASE

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2797th Council meeting
Agriculture and Fisheries
Brussels, 7 May 2007

CHICKENS

The Council reached political agreement by qualified majority on a directive on the protection of animals during transport, as set out in Annex to document 9150/07 amended during the meeting on the basis of a compromise drawn up by the Presidency, which the Commission could endorse.

The Austrian delegation indicated it would vote against. The directive will be adopted as an "A"-item by the Council at a forthcoming meeting.

Most of the substance of the amendments adopted by the European Parliament and accepted by the Commission has been inserted into the directive.

The three changes made during the meeting to the above-mentioned document are the following: The stocking density should read respectively 33 and 39 kg/m², with a possibility of "bonus" of 3 kg/m² (Article 3(2) and (4) and (5) respectively.

Currently, the welfare of chickens for meat production was only covered by the general requirements of directive 98/58/EC. Certain type of chicken farming such as organic and free range are excluded from the scope of the directive together with holdings rearing less than 500 birds.

The directive will introduce the following provisions:

- General requirements for all holdings - maximum **33kg/m² (Annex I)**:
 - Requirements for drinkers, litter, noise, light cleaning and record keeping.
 - Monitoring and reporting of post mortem inspection, with a special care for lesions correlated to poor welfare.

- Possible derogation for a maximum of **39 kg/m² under additional provisions (Annex II)**:

Communication to the competent authority, documentation kept available, controlled ventilation and/or heating system, controlled concentration in ammonia, 20 parts per million (ppm) and carbon dioxide 3000 ppm respectively, monitoring and reporting of daily mortality rate recorded at the slaughterhouse.

- "reward system"= possibility to grant a bonus of **3 kg/m² if high welfare management** is achieved (Annex V) :
 - Mortality below a given rate (around 3%) on 7 consecutive flocks
 - No welfare deficiencies observed during the past 2 years
 - Monitoring carried out using Good management practice guides (Article 8);
- Good Practices Guides to be developed at national/European level;
- Training of farmers dealing with chickens kept for meat production;