

**Questions to Ms Garreta and Ms Orain
French Economic, Social and Environmental Council (ESEC)**

Public Hearing on “Recommendations for the future”

	EPP FROM QUESTIONS
Questions from MEP Daniel BUDA	<p>Do you think that Member States should invest in regional slaughterhouses?</p> <p>What are the advantages of these slaughterhouses?</p>
ANSWERS	<p>For us, the answer is yes and we have developed it extensively in our opinion “The QUESTIONS at stake in animal welfare in relation to breeding, transport and slaughter”.</p> <p>In the abovementioned opinion, we established a direct link between a balanced geographical distribution of slaughterhouses and animal welfare. A territorial network of slaughterhouses is key to reducing transport times between the farm and the place of slaughter, thus fostering the dynamism of the territories. Farming methods have indeed an impact on the structuring of the sectors and thus on local socio-economic activity.</p> <p>We made the following findings in the EESC opinion =</p> <p>Since the 60s and mainly in recent decades, livestock farming has undergone profound transformation, with a sharp decline in the number of livestock farms, an increase in the size of those which have remained, and an uneven distribution of such holdings across the regions, with concentration in certain regions and their specialisation, such as Brittany. Thus, the disappearance of livestock farming in areas now devoted solely to arable crops has led to the complete disappearance of slaughterhouses which are essential for local economic activity.</p> <p>The consequences of this change are manifold and, first of all, agronomic and environmental.</p> <p>This insufficient grid has a direct climate and environmental impact, as it results, depending on the situation, in deficits or surpluses of natural fertilisers which, in the event of excessive density, become dubious pollutants. At the same time, it involves</p>

extending and intensifying the transport of live animals, carcasses and livestock feed. More generally, the importance of greenhouse gas emissions varies widely according to farming methods. All studies show that there is an undeniable virtuous circle between the fight against climate change and animal welfare, less energy intensive and grazing practices, which can bring environmental benefits through the capture of carbon by grasslands.

We also found that large industrial farms often work also with similar large slaughter and processing facilities, not necessarily in the immediate vicinity, which reduces the positive impact on the local economy.

On the other hand, profit-seeking means that live animals are transported over long distances, including in other EU countries, such as Germany, where slaughter costs are lower and wages are lower than in France, before their carcasses go back. In addition, they are generally standardised meat products intended for the domestic or even global market. In these circumstances, the positive effects, including in terms of employment, for the production areas are low, with added value being achieved elsewhere, while the negative environmental and climate impacts are not negligible at local level. Overall, the territorial impacts of the different production methods are not accounted for.

In the light of these various findings, the EESC has made a number of recommendations, including:

Implement a dedicated national plan to ensure a balanced territorial network of local slaughterhouses, particularly public slaughterhouses, in line with existing or future “territorial food projects” (eligible to EU CAP funds)). It may also incorporate suitable alternative solutions, such as mobile slaughterhouses and slaughter boxes, whose health conditions would be controlled.

The allocation of public support for the establishment of slaughterhouses under this plan must be conditional on proper account being taken of animal welfare.

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	QUESTIONS FROM S & D
QUESTIONS	No Written Questions
ANSWERS	

	QUESTIONS FROM RENEW
QUESTIONS	No Written Questions
ANSWERS	

QUESTIONS FROM GREENS/EFA	
QUESTIONS	<p>Slaughterhouses: Improving slaughterhouse was available with different slaughter possibilities is necessary if we want to shift to meat and carcasses trade, and to try to limit as much as possible live animal transport to slaughter facilities.</p> <p>> What have been the main conclusions of your report concerning slaughterhouse facilities in France and the main obstacles we are presenting?</p> <p>> Have you witnessed margins for farmers to access slaughterhouses? If so, how do you explain them? What would be the solutions to develop local slaughterhouses and facilitate slaughter on-farm?</p> <p>> What actions need to be taken, at EU and Member State level, to promote mobile slaughter? What other actions need to be taken to improve the availability of local slaughter facilities across the EU, thus comparing the consolidation and geographical concentration of slaughter facilities in fewer, wider-scale units?</p>
ANSWERS	<p>First of all, it should be borne in mind that in our opinion we proposed a preliminary point, which consists of adding the following concept to the definition of the Animal Welfare as defined in 2018:</p> <p>‘The welfare of production animals cannot be achieved without satisfactory living and working conditions for the humans in charge of their rearing, transport and slaughter. They are a fundamental prerequisite by integrating into the “One Welfare” concept, which also includes the preservation of the environment.’</p> <p>As explained above, the process of industrialisation and concentration of livestock farms has led to that of slaughterhouses. Indeed, in 1970 in France, around 1 200 were recorded for large animals (excluding poultry), apart from some 2 700 specific butchers’ killings, almost all of which disappeared at the end of the 20th century. Following the disappearance of many public, often small, slaughterhouses and the development of large private structures, only 263 slaughterhouses of animals for slaughter remain, of which 2/3 are privately owned. The factors that have led to this situation in a few decades are of various kinds, but often linked to short-term political and economic choices that do not primarily meet the needs of the population or health requirements.</p> <p>As a result of the strengthening of health and safety rules for both national and European employees, small public bodies, most often belonging to local and regional authorities, have been unable or unwilling to do so, as a result of the considerable financial investment, which has led to the closure of a significant number of them unable to comply with the new standards. Overall, the</p>

lack of investment in public slaughterhouses has led to a restructuring of companies in the sector and the widespread privatisation of the sector.

The multiplication of standards and rules (health, animal welfare, etc.) complicates work and places important responsibilities on employees. In addition to the high rates, the unpredictability of working hours, the rotation of night work, the extension of transport time due to the closures of slaughterhouses and the pressure of the hierarchy which may be exercised in order to comply with the specifications drawn up by the various processing and distribution commissioners in order to justify a commercial differentiation. Moreover, work in slaughterhouses is emotionally demanding. ‘The profession is dangerous because of direct contact with the animal, which is in an unknown environment. Too often, the openings (‘bouveries’) are not equipped with automatic doors that would make it possible to move the cattle remotely”

Our opinion has therefore focused on promoting better working conditions in existing slaughterhouses both for employees and for animals and breeders concerned with the conditions for killing their animals.

Recommendation 8:

To enable slaughterhouse workers to carry out their profession in good conditions and to ensure that animal welfare provisions do not worsen their working conditions:

- reduction in rates, regular rotation of posts and reduction of working time through the creation of permanent jobs and the taking into account of arduous employment (pay, training, retirement), by means of collective agreements and sectoral agreements;
- making available:
 - ergonomic equipment (exoskeletons...);
 - suitable and serviceable equipment;

Psychological monitoring and legal protection of employees and employees.

In many territories there are no slaughterhouses, in particular slaughterhouses adapted to the small volume or multi-species within an acceptable perimeter for farmers, and plans to set up innovative slaughterhouses are being developed. In the French department (‘province’) of Creuse, where livestock farming is still very important, more than fifty breeders have come together to design their own tool which best respects the last hours of their animals. Inspired by the work of Ms Temple Grandin, the first circular “bouverie” in France makes it possible to facilitate the movement of animals without human intervention, making it

unnecessary to use an electric needle. The aim of this creation is to reduce the transport of live animals and to provide its members with a tool to promote local chains by providing them with a cutting plant and meat conservation areas. This demand is linked to the increase in farms engaged in direct sales, by carrying out the processing stage themselves or by entrusting this task to artisanal and local agri-food businesses. A growing proportion of consumers and consumers are looking for the resulting traceability. As regards meat products, one of the limits to the development of such outlets is whether slaughterhouses are present in the territory in question.

In view of the difficulties caused by the scarcity and concentration of slaughterhouses, but also in limiting the stress and suffering of animals, as a result of their transport, mobile facilities visiting the rearing sites have been implemented by certain Member States, such as Sweden and Germany. Almost 60 % of farmers would be in favour of this solution because after having taken care of their animals during their lives, they are concerned about the conditions of their death. In our country, such experiments have been authorised by a decree implementing the EGALIM law. An evaluation will be carried out before a possible generalised authorisation. The 'Ethical Beef' project based in Franche Comté region, inspired by the Swedish model, is part of this framework and has just started its activity, with initial slaughtering on the farm. The break-even point would be around 12 animals slaughtered per day, with an estimated additional cost of around EUR 1/kg of meat compared to conventional slaughterhouses.

Finally, another type of equipment with "mobile slaughter boxes", lighter structures than slaughterhouse trucks, is envisaged and studied. These boxes, which have been used for several years in Germany, offer a solution for mountainous and steep areas. They only allow slaughter and bleeding on the farm, the carcass being transported to a slaughterhouse for processing within a maximum of 60 minutes. The cost of the boxes which must be approved and comply with European standards varies between EUR 4 500 and EUR 10 000.

These experiments, which are part of balanced spatial planning, go beyond the important question of respect for the 'well-dying' of animals.

They also meet the demand of many breeders who claim the right to slaughter their animals on the farm, considering that the profession they have chosen range from birth to life but also to the death of their animals. Finally, by reducing transport, they respond to the need to reduce livestock related greenhouse gas emissions.

Finally, the concentration of slaughterhouses is linked, as we have already pointed out, to the specialisation of the regions and to put an end to it, it is about making an essential and urgent transition to agricultural and food systems that respond to environmental, health, climate, economic and social challenges and not to short and medium term financial interests. This will entail profound changes for both agriculture and all sectors concerned to abandon intensive models, the negative consequences of which are now evident. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise the reality of the constraints faced by the various actors, in

	<p>particular farmers and employees, but also those at the downstream level. This transition, beneficial to both humans and animals, in line with the “One Welfare” principle, cannot be undertaken without taking into account or adapting the European regulatory framework to ensure that competition rules are applied everywhere in the same way. This is what the EESC recommends. They are based on public policies and articulate social, economic and regulatory requirements to “do system”.</p>
<p>QUESTIONS</p>	<p><u>Specialisation of Livestock Production</u></p> <p>When we look at intra-EU trade, key QUESTIONS are the structure of delivery production, chartered by an increased specialisation of production and repair into breeding and rearing units, and slaughterhouse usable, as well as capacity. This process has been exposed to intensive scale production. This has been achieved in certain countries developing high self-sufficiency rates exposed to exports (for example, Ireland for category; Denmark and the Netherlands for piglets). The increase in long-distance intra-euro transport is driven by measurable growth in exports of category for other purposes than slaughter. This includes replacements for dairy herd or animals for further fattening, for example. Analysis of TRACES data shows a substantial increase in long distance live animal transport within the EU between 2005 and 2015.</p> <p>> What alternatives could be developed to mitigate this framework and limit as much as possible transport of animals across EU and outside, in this case concerning those transferred for other purposes than slaughtering? How could we encourage “closed” farming systems which do not involve the repair of the different stages of production?</p>
<p>ANSWERS</p>	<p>We did not really address this point in our opinion, but we however considered that the free trade agreements currently being negotiated or ratified do not meet the same level of animal welfare requirements. We therefore recommended that we:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Systematically include the animal welfare dimension (animal husbandry, transport and slaughter) in free trade agreements to ban imports of meat that do not meet European standards. Ratification as it stands of free trade agreements (CETA, TAFTA, MERCOSUR, etc.) is therefore not possible; The competent authorities must have the means to control these prohibitions.</p> </div> <p>To conclude, the industrial orientation of livestock farming has reached its limits. The transformation towards a more virtuous model for humans, animals and the environment is now necessary. In particular, it requires the re-creation of downstream tools to provide farmers and breeders with diversified outlets and to ensure a fair distribution of value across all food chains. Livestock farming and all related processing activities play a leading economic role in many regions, including tourism, with a positive or negative impact on landscapes.</p>

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<p>QUESTIONS</p>	<p><u>Cold chain capacity in export markets</u></p> <p>A key driver of the live trade between Member States and non-EU countries, specifically those which tend to be the major destinations for current EU exports in live animals, is a lack of infrastructure to facilitate trade in meat and carcasses, specifically poor/insufficient cold chain facilities. This incurs the import of live animals for slaughter.</p> <p>> What solutions could be developed to support and improve cold chain capabilities? How do stakeholders deal with this matter on the ground?</p>
<p>ANSWERS</p>	<p>This topic was not dealt within the opinion.</p>
<p>QUESTIONS</p>	<p><u>Transport outside the EU</u></p> <p>Report on animal welfare during exports (DG SANTE 6834) state that “the available information indicators that most transporters do not meet applicable EU rules after leaving the Union. The absence of agreements with EU neighboring countries, together with poor retrospective checks and the inability of Member States to determine the conditions of transport and the feasibility of the plan for that part of the day contributing to that concern.’</p> <p>Regarding the lack of feedback from third countries on the condition of animals during transport and at arrival (DG (SANTE) 2019-6835), it is impossible for Member States to comply. To force this Court ruling, would mean for Member States to refuse any export of animals towards non-EU countries (clear link with meat trade). If we look at transport in the Middle East and in North Africa, they do not have full European law but are all outside the context of influence of the organisation: No authorisation of the local transport company, no approval of the lorries and no certification of competence of the person responsible for the load, and, no contingency planning.</p> <p>> When a part of the day is to be made out of the EU, how can we make sure the comply with EU Regulation, can it bring it to competent authorities? Many professionals heard the need to shift from live animal transport to a meat, carcasses and genetic material transport. From your point of view, how useful and accessible is this solution?</p>
<p>ANSWERS</p>	<p>Not answered</p>

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	QUESTIONS FROM ID
QUESTIONS	No Written Questions
ANSWERS	

	QUESTIONS FROM ECR
QUESTIONS	No Written Questions
ANSWERS	

	QUESTIONS FROM THE LEFT
QUESTIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In your report, you stated that transport of live animals should possibly be limited to 8 hours in the EU, does this duration include loading and unloading of animals? However, most NGOs consider that 8 hours is still too long for animals such as pregnant females, unweaned animals or end-of-career animals. What is your opinion on this subject? 2. You also stressed that there should be more controls: Do you agree that, to ensure proper enforcement of regulation 01/2005, more Veterinarians and police officers should be hired and traced in order to make more controls and inspections? 3. Export transport of animals to non-EU countries legally violate EU law with EU animal welfare requirements regulated and thus causing extreme sufficiency to the animals. However, veterinary authorities still approaching animal transport without realising road planning, complete dayney logs and transport conditions contrary to animal welfare. In your opinion, how full enforcement of the Regulation could be inserted outside the EU? How is it possible that those responsible for such transport, both economic operators and authority representatives, have been able to operate in this way for years and continue to do so, apparently without any consequences? In your opinion, do you think if the EU law cannot be enforced in third countries (not only in transport, but also with regard to the slaughter methods), the export of live animals from the EU should be stopped? 4. European Parliament in the 2019 implementation report called on the Commission to develop a strategy to ensure a shift from live animal transport to a traditional meat-and-carcass and germinal products trade, given the environmental and animal welfare and health impacts of live animal transport. What is your experience in this regard and could you provide us with examinations of best practices?
ANSWERS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, recommandation 7: Strengthening the rules on the transport of live animals and intensifying controls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — reduce transport times by lorry to a significant extent now on the basis of the works of the Institute for Livestock, with the ultimate objective of limiting the journey times to a total of 8 hours throughout the European Union; — improve the conditions of transport by ship (systematic presence of veterinarians during loading and unloading). 2. Yes, recommendation 4: To ensure strict enforcement of animal welfare rules in France and in the European Union, through the creation of public employment (in particular veterinary public health inspectors), the strengthening of public and/or independent controls, in particular through contracts with independent ('liberal') veterinarians, and the publication of statistics on the follow-up given.

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	3. Not answered. 4. Not answered.
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