

Question for written answer E-002792/2012
to the Commission
Rule 117
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Subject: Health risks due to a lack of hygiene in some European slaughterhouses

Six years after the new legislative package on the hygiene of foodstuffs came into force and in view of recent debates on the health risks due to a lack of hygiene in some European slaughterhouses, it is time to take stock of the implementation of the hygiene package, especially the specific rules for organising official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption.

Under Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down these rules, Member States are required to prepare lists of approved establishments and inspect them. Under that regulation, where inspections reveal shortcomings or irregularities, appropriate measures must be taken. Slaughterhouses are a case apart, with numerous determining factors in terms of food safety and hence public health. In slaughterhouses, animal health, food safety and European consumer protection are closely bound together.

1. Does the Commission know of any European studies carried out or under way to review hygiene in European slaughterhouses?
2. Having launched an initiative in 2008 to improve the training of official inspectors in order to improve harmonisation and to modernise inspection activities ('Better training for safer food'), has the Commission evaluated progress in the harmonisation of inspection activities in Europe?
3. Given that it has a monopoly on legislative initiative, does the Commission plan to prepare new measures to ensure that the necessary inspections and penalties are implemented systematically?