

**Question for written answer E-005244/2021
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Rosanna Conte (ID)

Subject: New cases of avian influenza in Europe and risk of spillover

Over the past few weeks, there have been numerous cases of the H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) on domestic farms and, to a very small extent, in wild birds, especially in northern Italy between the provinces of Verona and Brescia, but also in France, Norway and Belgium.

Although avian influenza is not transmitted to humans according to the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS), the risk of direct infection is nevertheless possible in the event of exposure to large amounts of virus, as has happened before in South East Asia.

According to the ISS, there is also a risk that the virus, under appropriate conditions, may also 'spill over', changing to a new virus that has the ability to spread easily to humans, thus becoming a potential danger to the population.

In view of this, can the Commission say:

1. whether it intends to monitor the development of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) and review protection measures, taking account of the updated epidemiological situation; and
2. whether there is an adequate European health plan in place to curb the spread of possible epidemics triggered by spillovers?