



PROTECTING EU CITIZENS

After the official draft in end December 2015, during the January plenary session of the European Parliament EAF President called for a motion for resolution which would protect consumers of garlic throughout the EU and calls for banning the sale of garlic treated with methyl bromide which is dangerous for human health.



Franz Obermayr

Here you can read the full text of the motion for resolution:

Motion for a European Parliament resolution on protecting EU citizens against garlic bleached with methyl bromide

B8-0129/2016

The European Parliament,
– having regard to Rule 133 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas Chinese garlic is intensively disinfected with methyl bromide, and whereas methyl bromide is a highly toxic substance which, in relatively large concentrations, damages the respiratory system and the

central nervous system;

B. whereas methyl bromide is up to 60 times more harmful than chlorine and is used in conjunction with untreated effluent to clean and bleach Chinese garlic;

1. Considers that garlic which has been treated with methyl bromide should be labelled accordingly for the benefit of consumers;

2. Considers that the sale on the European market of garlic which has been treated with methyl bromide should be prevented.

pursuant to Rule 133 of the Rules of Procedure

on protecting EU citizens against garlic bleached with methyl bromide

EXPORT OF LIVE ANIMALS OUTSIDE THE EUROPEAN UNION

On the 26th January this year EAF President MEP Franz Obermayr put up a Parliamentary question (O-000009/2016) for oral answer to the Commission (Rule 128). We bring you the question in full transcript and are looking forward to informing you about the European Commission's reply.

Subject: Export of live animals outside the EU

Every year more than three million live animals are exported from the EU to third countries. This trade causes animal suffering related to long-distance transport as well as the fattening and slaughter conditions in the countries of destination.

A survey conducted by a number of associations in October 2015 reported inadmissible practices in slaughter conditions in a number of countries of destination in violation of the recommendations of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). This also

constitutes a serious breach of Article 13 TFEU and the ECJ judgment of June 2015 in the Zuchtvieh case regarding Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. Moreover, it is impossible properly to monitor the implementation of the legislation during unloading and transportation.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Will it ban exports of animals to countries which do not guarantee compliance with the recommendations of the OIE and European animal welfare legislation, as already occurs in Australia, for instance?

2. What steps can it take to ensure proactive assistance to importer countries as regards fattening and slaughtering?

You can read more about it here :

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+OQ+O-2016-](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+OQ+O-2016-000009+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en)

[000009+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+OQ+O-2016-000009+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en)

Progress following Western Balkans Route Leaders' Meeting: Fourteenth Contact Points Video Conference

European Commission issued a press release on the 29th January regarding the fourteenth video conference that was held between the contact points nominated after the Western Balkans Route Leaders' Meeting held on 25 October. The objective was to follow up on the agreement reached at the meeting and set out in the Leaders' Statement. Senior officials from the countries and agencies present at the meeting had a detailed discussion on recent trends concerning external borders and reception capacity:

Leaders' Statement Point 13 on border management

A broad discussion on the different border management points allowed for an exchange of information between the countries and organisations during the call, including the following key points:

Frontex reported on progress made concerning negotiations with Greece to further increase Frontex support at the Greek border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Commission provided an update on efforts to support the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as regards the management of the border.

The Commission informed about the outcome of a second video conference held between the national police authorities from all participating countries. During this video conference the national police authorities took stock of the situation on the ground and identified the concrete consequences of changes in border management policy for the participating countries.

The Dutch Presidency informed about the outcome of a political level meeting which took place in the margins of the Informal Justice and Home Affairs Council on 25 January between Austria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Serbia, and Slovenia. A political level meeting with representatives of all participating countries, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan is foreseen at the occasion of the next Justice and Home Affairs Council on 25 February.

The Dutch Presidency also informed about a political level meeting with Turkey held in the



margins of the Informal Justice and Home Affairs Council on 25 January in Amsterdam, where participants discussed progress made as regards the implementation of the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan. Furthermore, the Commission briefed participants on the outcome of the High Level Political Dialogue between Turkey and the EU in Ankara on 25 January.

Leaders' Statement Points 5 and 6 relating to support and shelter to refugees

The UNHCR provided an update on progress towards the delivery of the 20,000 reception places which will be provided in private accommodation via a voucher scheme with partners in Greece. This is part of the total of 50,000 additional reception places which Greece committed to provide at the Leaders Meeting of 25 October. The UNHCR is making good progress towards the target. The number of places offered by UNHCR through its partners so far stands at an estimated number of 14,520. The UNHCR and Greece also gave an update on ongoing works to increase reception capacity in the Greek islands.

The group will reconvene again for the next weekly video conference on 3 February, and will continue their bilateral contacts in the meantime to ensure full communication, coordination and cooperation to address the migration flows and to ensure humane treatment of those seeking asylum in Europe.

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The Netherlands presidency of the Council of the EU: 1 January-30 June 2016

The presidency of the Council rotates among the EU member states every 6 months. During this 6-month period, the presidency chairs meetings at every level in the Council, helping to ensure the continuity of the EU's work in the Council.

Member states holding the presidency work together closely in groups of three, called 'trios'. This system was introduced by the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. The trio sets long-term goals and prepares a common agenda determining the topics and major issues that will be addressed by the Council over an 18 month period. On the basis of this programme, each of the three countries prepares its own more detailed 6-month programme.

The current trio is made up of the presidencies of the Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta.

The Netherlands presidency started with the beginning of 2016 and its work programme focuses on four key areas: migration and international security, sound finances and a robust eurozone, Europe as an innovator and job creator and forward-looking climate and energy policy.

The presidency wants an EU that focuses on what matters to Europe's citizens and businesses, an EU that creates growth and jobs through innovation and connects with civil society. The presidency will promote action at EU level only if it is more effective than policies



at national level.

The presidency is responsible for driving forward the Council's work on EU legislation, ensuring the continuity of the EU agenda, orderly legislative processes and cooperation among member states. To do this, the presidency must act as an honest and neutral broker.

The presidency has two main tasks:

1. Planning and chairing meetings in the Council and its preparatory bodies

The presidency chairs meetings of the different Council configurations (with the exception of the Foreign Affairs Council) and the Council's preparatory bodies, which include permanent committees such as the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper), and working parties and committees dealing with very specific subjects.

The presidency ensures that discussions are conducted properly and that the Council's rules of procedure and working methods are correctly applied.

It also organises various formal and informal meetings in Brussels and in the country of the rotating presidency.

2. Representing the Council in relations with the other EU institutions

The presidency represents the Council in relations with the other EU institutions, particularly with the Commission and the European Parliament. Its role is to try and reach agreement on legislative files through trilogues, informal negotiation meetings and Conciliation Committee meetings.

The presidency works in close coordination with the President of the European Council

and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

It supports their work and may sometimes be requested to perform certain duties for the high representative, such as representing the Foreign Affairs Council before the European Parliament or chairing the Foreign Affairs Council when it discusses common commercial policy issues.

Progress following Western Balkans Route Leaders' Meeting: Fourteenth Contact Points Video Conference

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Background

On Wednesday 21 October, European Commission President Juncker called for a Leaders' Meeting on refugee flows along the Western Balkans route to address the emergency situation unfolding along this route.

At the meeting, all 12 leaders – including the President of the Commission – agreed to nominate contact points within 24 hours to allow daily exchanges and coordination to achieve the gradual, controlled and orderly movement of persons along the Western Balkans route and to monitor the implementation of the 17-point plan agreed on 21 October.

Attending the Leaders' Meeting were the Heads of State or Government of Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. The President of the European Parliament and the President of the European Council, the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the EU, the future Dutch Presidency of the Council of the EU and the United Nations



High Commissioner for Refugees were in attendance. The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) were also represented.

On 15 December, the European Commission published a Progress Report on measures taken to tackle the refugee and migration crisis along the Western Balkans Route. The Report assessed progress on the measures in the Leaders' Statement adopted after the Western Balkans Route Leaders Meeting on the 25 October.

You can read more about it here:
http://ec.europa.eu/news/2015/10/20151025_en.htm

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