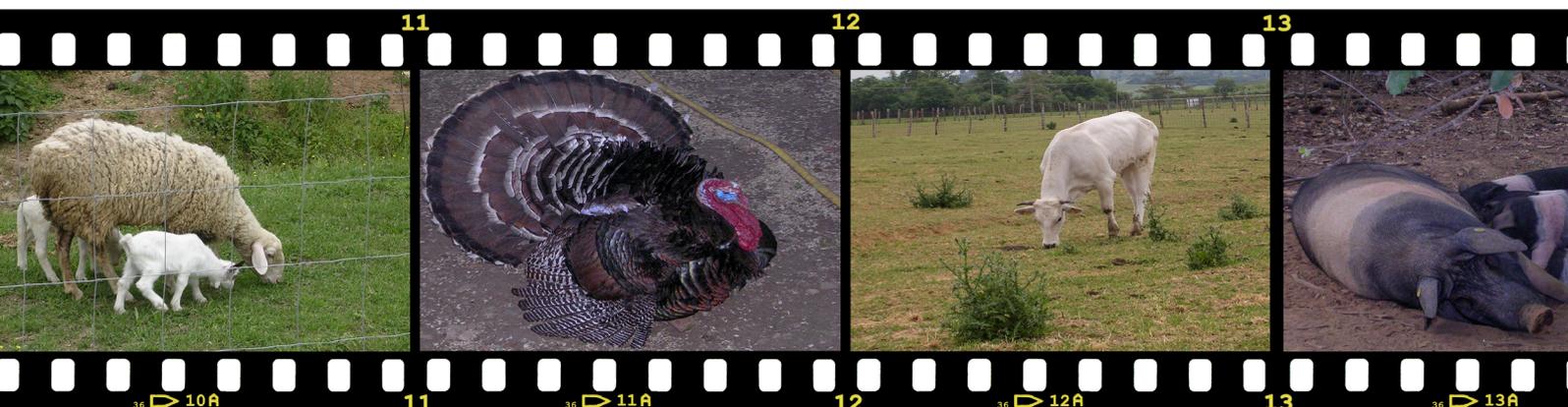


ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR THE 2014-2020 PERIOD IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

september 2020





**Animal welfare in the rural development
programme for the 2014-2020 period in the
European Union**



Report realised by the Italian Rural Network 2014-20

Two-Year Plan 2019-20

Project CREA 24.1: Animal welfare; reduction in the use of Antibiotics in husbandry and competitiveness of livestock sector



<https://www.reterurale.it/benessereanimale>

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Animal welfare: common perception and standard definition

Regulations on farm animal protection respond to the demands of society about modern intensive stock-farming systems where the needs of the animal are subordinated to farming needs. From the Council of the EU directive of 1974 on stunning of animals before slaughter (74/577/EEC) to the recognition of animals as “sentient beings” in 2007 (European Union’s Lisbon Treaty), the ambition of the EU legislation is to reduce animals’ suffering because it is considered impossible to eradicate it.

Considering these circumstances, it is easy to explain how the recurring logic in the European Union legislation for farm animal protection consists in the definition of structural requirements, first of all the livestock density. Indeed, the excessive number of livestock forced to live in small spaces generates abnormal behaviour, such as plumophagy and cannibalism in laying hens, tail biting in pigs and aggression in calves and it contributes to the increase of the already high use of antimicrobials. Moreover, other actions aimed at reducing harmful behaviour in farm animals are actually undermining even more their wellness — i.e. mutilations, docking, castration and beak and teeth trimming. In theory, these procedures are forbidden by the law as routine activities.

The EU law covers also some other aspects such as the rules on livestock protection during transport and slaughtering that does not take into consideration the farming phase.



Animal welfare and the common agricultural policy (CAP)

Before 2003, animal welfare had a very limited relevance within the rural development policy; it represented a requirement for accessing some sectoral benefits and some measures of CAP1. Thanks to the implementation of the Fischler reform within the rural development policy, animal welfare payments and animal protection have been introduced under the first pillar through the so-called “compulsory cross-compliance”. These measures, that were already compulsory, integrate the agricultural sector support law COM (2002) 394 with farm animal welfare. Animal protection in cross-compliance and animal welfare payments are confirmed for the two next periods (2007-2013 and 2014-2020), as well as in the reform proposal currently under approval. The attention paid to the animal welfare in the CAP aims at promoting the regular adoption of the rules by the possible trimming of direct payments (nowadays the majority of farmers receive these payments which imply the compliance with some requirements concerning the practices of the welfare animal) and by encouraging the adoption of higher standards through a payment for the improvement of the animal welfare. This approach may remain on paper if the member States are not determined. This approach may remain on paper if the member States are not determined. Between September 2017 and June 2018, the European Court of Auditors carried out an audit to assess the actions taken by the Commission and Member States in relation to the EU Animal Welfare Strategy 2012-2015. The audit covered the period between 2012 and the beginning of 2018: one of the aspects treated with most thorough attention was the optimization of synergistic effects from current common agriculture policy².

According to the report, there is disparity amongst Member States when it comes to implementing CAP law tools that pursue animal welfare objectives; nevertheless, in most cases the application of cross-compliance and the rural development policy, including measure 14, seem to be mostly underused compared to the potential they offer. As far as cross-compliance is concerned, the Court stresses the lack of coordination with the official control system which would make cross-compliance on farm-checks more efficient, avoiding overlaps and offering greater clarity to farmers.

¹ Namely, it related to the payment of the refund for exports of live animals (Regulation No 1254/1999 on the common organisation of the market in beef and veal) and the rural development measures such as “investments in agricultural holdings”, “setting up of young farmers”, “improving the processing and marketing conditions” (regulation No 1257/1999 on support for rural development).

² In this strategy the Commission refers namely to cross-compliance, rural development, promotional measures, quality policy, organic farming, COM (2012) 6 final, paragraph 3.5.



Furthermore, the penalty system turns out to be too “lenient”³.

What emerges from the report about the rural development policy is that companies do not sufficiently benefit from opportunities offered by farm investment measures quality schemes and organic farming, which could easily be addressed to the improvement of animal welfare; there is also an inefficient use of the measures that comprise all these issues, namely measure 14⁴. From a critical point of view, it is clear that measure 14 is not entirely applied in the whole European Union’s territory (see the box). Particularly interesting is the reference to the risk of deadweight, namely the use of public resources to support some enhancing actions that farmers would have put in place even without the rural development support, maybe because the beneficiary had already participated in a private quality scheme that covered the same requirements before applying for measure 14 support⁵.

Box: Paragraph 104 of the European Court of Auditors’ special report number 31/2018

Although promoting animal welfare was a rural development priority for the 2014-2020 period, we found that the specific “Animal Welfare” measure was not widely used. The measure’s cost-effectiveness was reduced because it supported farms that did not respect certain minimum standards on pig welfare, there was a risk of deadweight due to overlap with the requirements of private schemes, and the common monitoring framework lacked indicators for improvements in animal welfare. Member States rarely used the opportunity to support animal welfare through other rural development measures

Before presenting the analysis relating the application of measure 14 in Italy and in the European Union, it is important to clarify its role during the 2014-2020 period. The regulation (EU) no 1305/2013 introduces farm animal welfare in the focus area 3A, which aims at improving competitiveness of primary producers, integrating them in the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups/organizations and inter-branch organizations⁶.

³ Paragraph 76, European Court of Auditors, Special report n. 31/2018 “Animal welfare in the EU: closing the gap between ambitious goals and practical implementation”.

⁴ This issue is debated in special report n. 31/2018, namely from paragraph 77 to 91.

⁵ Paragraphs 87-88 of the special report 31/2018. The report mentions also a positive example regarding this issue: in Italy (Sardinia), authorities considered both legal animal welfare requirement and the higher standards that local farmers regularly apply when designing the animal welfare measure.

⁶ The 2014-2020 period is based on 6 priorities broken down into specific areas of intervention, known as Focus Areas. For further details: https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/policy-in-action/rural-development-policy-figures/priority-focus-area-summaries_en



Measure 14 – Animal welfare for the 2014-2020 period in the European Union

Measure – 14 Animal welfare is addressed to farmers who want to carry out voluntary interventions (beyond minimum legislative requirements established by cross-compliance – EU Reg. No 1306/2013) which aim at improving the welfare of farmed animals. The maximum support foreseen is € 500/LSU/year and is intended to compensate for the increasing costs and/or reductions in earnings resulting from the implementation of the improvement measures. These are expenses related to the expansion of farming areas, stock density reduction, prolonged working times due to a more accurate management of the animals during the various phases of the production cycle; measure 14 bears also costs regarding the introduction of technical-structural improvements and adaptations (temperature control, air quality, manure management), preparation and management of outer spaces, food optimisation and innovation, hygiene and sanitary interventions.

On December 31st, 2019, measure 14 has been activated by 15 European regions in their regional development plans (RDPs): Mainland (Finland), Baden Württemberg, Lower Saxony and Rhine-Westphalia (Germany), Calabria, Campania, Friuli, Lazio, Liguria, Marche, Sardinia, Umbria, Aosta Valley (Italy), Andalusia and Cantabria (Spain); 14 countries finance this measure at a national level, within the respective national rural development plan (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: The activation of measure 14 in the EU (2014-2020)



As it already happened for the last programming period, Italy is confirmed as the European country where animal welfare measure is present in most of the regional RDPs. The support may be required to take on voluntary commitments by: owners of cattle (dairy and meat), pigs, sheep, goats and poultry (broilers, laying hens and turkeys) and in the current programming period, for the first time, also of rabbits and equidae. With the exception of Andalusia, Lower Saxony, Cyprus, Ireland and Slovenia, all the countries/regions finance commitments in favour of cattle and pig holdings; the largest percentage of welfare interventions concerns dairy cattle and pigs; while the smallest percentage concerns rabbits (table 1).



Table 1: Species eligible for support in the RDPs

Country		Beef cattle	Dairy cattle	Sheep	Goats	Laying hens	Poultry	Buffaloes	Pigs	Equidae	Rabbits
Austria		X	X	X	X						
Bulgaria		X	X	X	X			X			
Cyprus				X	X						
Croatia		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Estonia		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	
Germany	Mainland	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
	Baden Wurttemberg	X	X				X		X		
	Low Saxony - Bremen					X			X		
Rhine-Westphalia		X	X						X		
Ireland				X							
Greece		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Italy	Calabria	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	Campania	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
	Emilia-Romagna										
	Friuli V. G.	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
	Lazio	X	X	X	X			X			
	Liguria	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
	Marche	X	X	X					X		
	Sardinia		X	X	X				X		
	Tuscany										
	Umbria	X	X	X	X				X	X	
	Aosta Valley	X	X							X	
	Veneto										
Czech Republic			X						X		
UK	Scotland										
Romania						X	X		X		
Slovakia			X					X	X		
Slovenia									X		
Spain	Cantabria	X	X								
	Andalusia			X	X	X	X		X		
Sweden			X						X		
Hungary			X								
Total number of RDPs implementing Measure 14		17	22	17	15	11	11	5	19	4	2

Source: European network for rural development

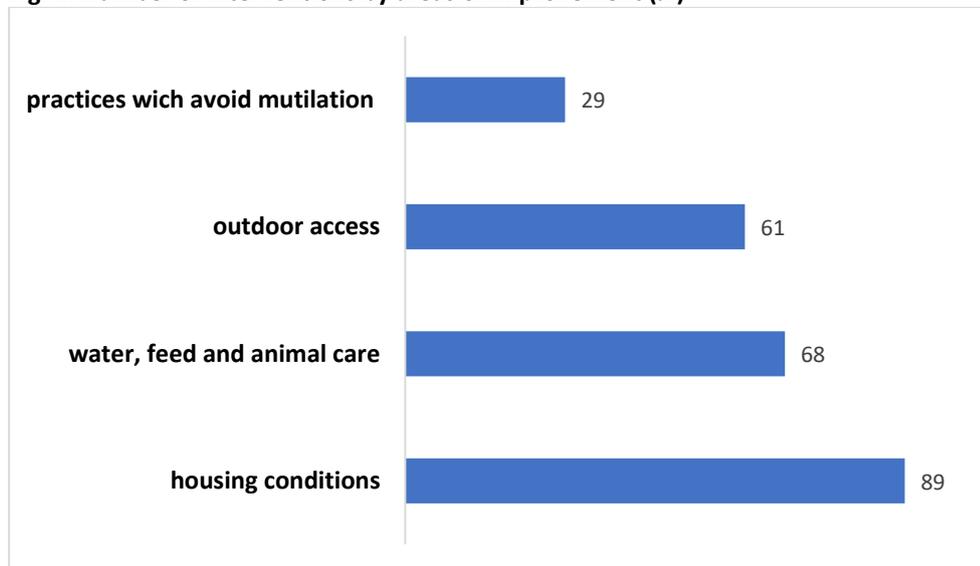


On the basis of the art. 10 of the delegated regulation (EU) No 807/2014, commitments eligible to receive support pertain improvements of the following areas:

- water, feed and animal care in accordance with the natural needs of animal husbandry;
- housing conditions, such as increased space allowances, flooring surfaces, enrichment materials, natural light;
- outdoor access;
- practices which avoid mutilation and/or castration of animals, or in specific cases when mutilation or castration of animals is deemed necessary, provide for the use of anaesthetics, analgesia and anti-inflammatory medication or immunocastration.

Almost the 90% of the European RDPs that have implemented measure 14 finance interventions within “housing conditions” area of improvement; 68% finance the “water, feed and animal care” area; almost 61% finance the “outdoor access” area and eventually less than 30% are the interventions that limit mutilations and/or castration or the use of anaesthetics, analgesia and anti-inflammatory medications (see Figure 2).

Fig. 2: Number of interventions by areas of improvement (%)



Source: European network for rural development

Before proceeding with the analysis of the interventions foreseen by the European rural development programmes to improve farm animal welfare, it is important to highlight the extreme



heterogeneity of these interventions, which together with the diversified methods of implementation, complexify data presentation and compensatory aids. In order to grasp this complexity, the analysis was carried out by examining the interventions addressed to each species eligible for support (cattle, pigs, sheep, goats and poultry) in every improvement area, out of any implementation environment (if possible). As far as the premiums granted are concerned, a few cases are given for indicative purposes, referring to the single documents approved for reading the data in detail.



The interventions of the measure 14 for cattle and buffaloes

Improvement of housing conditions

Amongst more than 20 different improvement projects of housing conditions for dairy cattle, meat cattle and buffaloes, those regarding the increase of space allowances are the most numerous; these are often associated with other interventions belonging to the same macro-area and/or to the "outdoor access" area (grazing period and/or outdoor areas management/aptitude). In most cases, the required increase is (at least) 10 % as for Croatia which grants a premium of 42.59 €/LSU/year for dairy cattle, € 36.21 for beef cattle and € 10.05 for calves. A higher percentage of increase (15%) is expected from Liguria for cattle for fattening from 6 to 24 months old and for those over 24 months old (115.28 € /LSU/year) and from Slovakia for dairy cattle (max. area 5.90 sq. m./head; 5.58 sq. m./head area in front of the boxes; 7.19 sq. m./head area for animal houses); moreover, for this latter country, the commitment may be associated with other agri-environment-climate measures for endangered animal husbandry (330 €/LSU/year – support amount for single operations). In Hungary, compulsory basic commitments relate to the increase of housing areas for calves (25€ /LSU/year); in case of accession, the support for other interventions belonging to different areas of improvement (such as the reduction of density livestock, whose ceiling is 183 €/LSU/year) is expected.

Housing areas widening or the passage from tethering to an open housing system are present in eight European programmes, four of which are Italian; therefore, Calabria, Lazio, Marche and Umbria support the passage from tethering to open housing, while Campania enhances the open housing system for animals reared as a group (rearing of cows and calves, baby beef, bullocks, buffaloes) as well as Estonia (calves) and Bulgaria (cows). Greece requires a minimum of 10% increase in open housing areas for calves (27.46 € /LSU/year) and a minimum of 160 days of open housing per year, including at least 120 days of free grazing and 40 days in the cowshed for cattle and buffaloes over 6 months of age (22.46 €/LSU/year).

The second largest group of commitments within the "housing conditions" area of improvement concerns the lying areas/litter housing. In total, 12 European programmes provide support in this area for cattle, most of which aimed at improving litters system management by increasing the amount of straw or replacing it more frequently; this is the case of Lazio, which provides straw replacement at least three times a year for beef cattle, along with two other commitments to be chosen among six, including: maintenance of external surfaces according to



defined limits, installation of technological elements to improve farm animal welfare, separation of internal and external areas for heifers and multiparous. More general measures are applied in other cases indicating only that the lying area should include soft litter as in Estonia for calves kept in groups, where the intervention is associated with the increase of the available free space; or in Finland where the presence of soft litters is required in the sub-measure "conditions of calf rearing" and is associated with other interventions related to farm animal care (11 €/year/LSU). Other programmes only require litter replacement (Greece) or its better management (Umbria). The Czech Republic has widened the lying area by 15% compared to the national regulations for dairy cattle, along with other commitments aimed at ensuring the maximum possible comfort in terms of rest (13 €/LSU = 50 % of the expenditure).

There are few other interventions, such as those aimed at limiting competition for food and water: an increase in the total number of drinking troughs is financed by Calabria, Cantabria (Spain), Friuli, Lazio and Liguria; similarly, the increasing number of feeding troughs is provided not only by the last three Italian regions mentioned above, but also by Greece (structure/head ratio 1.2:1). The number of commitments financed for the preparation or improvement of spaces for sick animals (Lazio, Sardinia and Umbria) and the recording of the interventions carried out (Mainland, Sardinia and Cantabria) are particularly low, similarly to other cases that you can see in the following three tables (Tabs. 2A, 2B and 2C).



Tab. 2a: Commitments in the area of “housing conditions” - Bovines

Country/Regions	Increase in surface area	Reduction in in stock density	Loose housing	Arrangement of loose housing area	Arrangement of lying area/litter	Increase/enrichment of housing area	Lying area/litter material
Austria							
Bulgaria							
Cyprus							
Croatia							
Estonia							
Finland (Mainland)							
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)							
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)							
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)							
Greece							
Ireland							
Italy (Calabria)							
Italy (Campania)							
Italy (Friuli)							
Italy (Lazio)							
Italy (Liguria)							
Italy (Marche)							
Italy (Sardinia)							
Italy (Umbria)							
Italy (Valle d'Aosta)							
Czech Republic							
Romania							
Slovakia							
Slovenia							
Spain (Cantabria)							
Spain (Andalusia)							
Sweden							
Hungary							

Source: European network for rural development



Tab. 2b: Commitments in the area of “housing conditions” - Bovines

Country/Regions	Housing system for group according to age	Separate areas for injured/ill animals	Farrowing area	Conditions in which calves and cows are kept	Temperature	Ventilation system	Light
Austria							
Bulgaria							
Cyprus							
Croatia							
Estonia							
Finland (Mainland)							
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)							
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)							
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)							
Greece							
Ireland							
Italy (Calabria)							
Italy (Campania)							
Italy (Friuli)							
Italy (Lazio)							
Italy (Liguria)							
Italy (Marche)							
Italy (Sardinia)							
Italy (Umbria)							
Italy (Aosta Valley)							
Czech Republic							
Romania							
Slovakia							
Slovenia							
Spain (Cantabria)							
Spain (Andalusia)							
Sweden							
Hungary							

Source: European network for rural development



Tab. 2c: Commitments in the area of “housing conditions” - Bovines

Country/Regions	Humidity	Hygiene/cleanin g of premises and equipment	Different feeding areas	Increased number of feeding troughs	Increased number of drinking troughs	Recording of the interventions	Banning of tying of heads	Other
Austria								
Bulgaria								
Cyprus								
Croatia								
Estonia								
Finland (Mainland)								
Germany (Baden Wuerttemberg)								
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)								
Germany (Rhine- Westphalia)								
Greece								
Ireland								
Italy (Calabria)								
Italy (Campania)								
Italy (Friuli)								
Italy (Lazio)								
Italy (Liguria)								
Italy (Marche)								
Italy (Sardinia)								
Italy (Umbria)								
Italy (Valle d'Aosta)								
Czech Republic								
Romania								
Slovakia								
Slovenia								
Spain (Cantabria)								
Spain (Andalusia)								
Sweden								
Hungary								

Source: European network for rural development

Water, feed and animal care

For cattle, the most numerous interventions concern parasitological controls and farm animal cleaning; Croatia requires, together with the 120-day grazing period, a stool test twice a year for dairy cattle (€ 34.06), similarly to Campania, where buffaloes cares are also covered. For Marche and Umbria, at least one annual sampling test (1%) on grazing animals is planned; while Hungary provides a compulsory commitment for dairy cattle with an extra day of supervision and surveillance of farm animals and finances the following three interventions: technological milking and preventive



controls of the animals, improvement of the preparation for milking, disease prevention controls (horns, movements, nails) (5 €/LSU).

Environment and equipment cleaning, pest control included, are required by six rural development programmes in total, most of which are Italian; in particular, Campania requires, besides the weekly cleaning of the bulk tanks and vehicles and a six-monthly check at the milking system, at least 10 annual rat exterminations and one disinfestation against flies. Campania finances also the use of disposable material for those who work in the shelters of sick, injured or unsuitable for milk production animals. The commitments required by the Czech Republic include four chemical and eight non-chemical disinfestation treatments per year, where both methods may be used (67€/LSU); in Calabria, Umbria and Marche, the actions relating the cleaning of the farm holding concern the fight against rodents and pests.

As far as feed and water for cattle are concerned, there shall be two kind of interventions: the first relates to health and quality certification for farm animals; the second is more specifically addressed to their nutritional needs. Croatia (4.93 EUR), Umbria and Calabria require mould and mycotoxin tests for farm animal feed; the latter region, together with Marche, requires bacteriological water analysis as well. Croatia (€65.13), Finland (11€/year/LSU), Calabria, Lazio, Marche and Umbria also include within their interventions a feeding plan and the assistance of a dietician. For Finland in particular, this commitment also establishes that calves under six months of age should be fed weekly with milk or similar liquid feed to be sucked; a similar situation can be seen in Lazio where the drafting of a feeding plan is one of the three commitments that the farmer may choose amongst others to have access to the financial support, i.e. specific feeding for cattle and buffaloes in the first 100 days of suckling. These commitments can be selected from other areas of improvement too.

The following group of interventions is more specifically linked to the needs of the animals: sufficient quantity of feed and water, free access to water, increase in the lactation length, harmonious group formation; although the former two are important to limit competition and aggressiveness, they are actually applied only by Marche, Lazio and Finland (this latter finances harmonious calve groups based on age and health conditions). Only Greece includes natural lactation length increase in its intervention (up to three months); Calabria and Marche support a continuing veterinary assistance (see Tabs. 3A and 3B).



Tab. 3a: Commitment in the area of “Water, feed and animal care” - Bovines

Country/Region	Parasitological controls and farm animals cleaning	Check on feed and water	Analysis/quality certification of water and/or feed	Nutrition plan	Tailored diet	Ad libitum feeding and water	Increase in the lactation length	Veterinary assistance
Austria								
Bulgaria								
Cyprus								
Croatia								
Estonia								
Finland (Mainland)								
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)								
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)								
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)								
Greece								
Ireland								
Italy (Calabria)								
Italy (Campania)								
Italy (Friuli)								
Italy (Lazio)								
Italy (Liguria)								
Italy (Marche)								
Italy (Sardinia)								
Italy (Umbria)								
Italy (Valle d'Aosta)								
Czech Republic								
Romania								
Slovakia								
Slovenia								
Spain (Cantabria)								
Spain (Andalusia)								
Sweden								
Hungary								

Source: European network for rural development



Tab. 3b: Commitment in the area of “Water, feed and animal care” - Bovines

Country/Region	Homogeneous group formation	Pest control	Hygiene/cleaning of premises and equipment	Disposable workwear	Recording of treatments/interventions	Checks plans/transport/productive cycle	Assessment of welfare at the slaughterhouse
Austria							
Bulgaria							
Cyprus							
Croatia							
Estonia							
Finland (Mainland)							
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)							
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)							
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)							
Greece							
Ireland							
Italy (Calabria)							
Italy (Campania)							
Italy (Friuli)							
Italy (Lazio)							
Italy (Liguria)							
Italy (Marche)							
Italy (Sardinia)							
Italy (Umbria)							
Italy (Valle d'Aosta)							
Czech Republic							
Romania							
Slovakia							
Slovenia							
Spain (Cantabria)							
Spain (Andalusia)							
Sweden							
Hungary							

Source: European network for rural development



Outdoor access

Nine European programmes include a grazing period of more than 100 days for cattle and buffaloes; Austria (from 27 to 55 €/LSU), Bulgaria, Croatia (with two stool tests as well), Cantabria and Greece require at least 120 days per year; the German region of Rhine-Westphalia requires daily group grazing from 15th May to 15th October with an indication of at least 0.2 ha/UBA (50 €/year or 40 € for organic farms). Marche promotes extensive grazing or semi-intensive grazing, requiring eight-hour grazing per day for at least 180 days annually (not necessarily consecutive). Moreover, Lazio provides for cattle and dairy buffaloes a choice between grazing for at least 8 hours per day for 100 days/year and grazing for at least 180 days/year for heifers and grazing for at least 30 days for dry cows. For beef cattle, the choice is between the following interventions: a) grazing for at least 8 hours a day or 200 days/year for brood mares, grazing for 180 days/year for heifers; b) arranging a grazing rotation programme in which heifers are separated from multiparous cows (beef cattle). Eventually, Estonia and Cantabria provide grazing for calves in the appropriate period, with Cantabria indicating 5 sq. m./head. Finland imposes less than 100 days of grazing for male bovines over six months of age. Baden Württemberg (Germany) acts the same way of Finland and it separates groups for female animals too.

Outdoor access/paddock often becomes an alternative to grazing (sometimes it is also associated to it). This occurs in Bulgaria, Greece and Cantabria; this latter provides dairy cattle with an access to the outdoor area (5 sq. m./head) for at least three times a week (exits always recorded). Friuli and Liguria support the outdoor access for dairy and beef cattle with 15% increase in the size of the areas compared to the good husbandry practices. Campania promotes outdoor access the same way – if not twice big - the covered area. In addition to the unlimited access to the equipped and safe outdoor areas, Czech Republic requires the guarantee of a stay in the outdoor areas, near the stable, for at least 30 days with 5 sq.m./head minimum grazing area; eventually, other programmes support interventions such as: keeping the grazing in good conditions and increasing the grazing area by 0.10 ha for the other herbivores in the herd (Baden Württemberg); exercise areas for bulls and its related recording (Finland) (Tab. 4).



Tab. 4: Commitment in the area of “Outdoor access” - Bovines

Country/Regions	Grazing period of more than 100 days	Grazing period of less than 100 days	Rotational grazing	Outdoor access/paddock	Increase size outdoor areas	Arrangement of outdoor areas, near the stable	Specification size of grazing areas	Recording of interventions	Cleaning /grazing management	Other
Austria										
Bulgaria										
Cyprus										
Croatia										
Estonia										
Finland (Mainland)										
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)										
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)										
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)										
Greece										
Ireland										
Italy (Calabria)										
Italy (Campania)										
Italy (Friuli)										
Italy (Lazio)										
Italy (Liguria)										
Italy (Marche)										
Italy (Sardinia)										
Italy (Umbria)										
Czech Republic										
Romania										
Slovakia										
Slovenia										
Spain (Cantabria)										
Spain (Andalusia)										
Sweden										
Hungary										

Source: European network for rural development



Practices which avoid mutilation and/or castration or the use of anaesthetics, analgesia and anti-inflammatory medication

Interventions for cattle in this area of improvement belong to four programming documents; Greece (€ 25) and Finland support anaesthetics and analgesics use for medical removal of calves horns up to 6 months old; Lazio and Marche require that the number of mutilations and castrations must not exceed 5% of the farmed animals.



The interventions of the measure 14 for pigs

Improvement of housing conditions

As mentioned above, many RDPs provide measure for the improvement of farm animal welfare relates to pigs (see Table 1).

The European Union has been introducing stricter controls on the breeding systems of this species and in some countries (Netherland and Germany) voluntary national certification protocols for pig welfare have been developed; in Italy, this process is being defined⁷.

The most numerous interventions relate to the space allowance increase and the lying area/litter enrichment (through different methods of implementation); for example, Croatia promotes straw littering alternatively to 10 % increase of space allowance for rearing pigs, sows, gilts, weaners with quantity and support depending on specific animals (from € 54.00 for pigs kept for breeding to € 21.00 for weaners). In Finland, three sub-measures "improvement of housing conditions" for three categories of pigs state that sows of at least 8 months of age shall stay in an area available outside the pen of 2.25 sq. m./ head and at least 1.3 sq. m./head with a fixed base platform for lying (38.00 €/year); for weaners and rearing pigs the commitments are: returning indoor at night, a rigid litter for each animal in the lying area or something that may keep the area adequately drained and clean, alternatively, areas with heated floor and a big litter (59 €/LSU/year).

The commitments required for pigs by the German region of Baden Württemberg are all related to the "Animal Welfare" certification implemented at two levels: entry and premium. In relation to the first level, farmers are required to adopt a certain number of commitments, most of which relate to increasing space allowances and improving housing areas. As far as the first area of improvement is concerned, it is established a minimum increase of the unobstructed floor area which goes from 0.7 sq. m. to 0.90 sq. m. for pigs that go from 50 live weight (kg) to 120 live weight (kg), along with other interventions related to the housing areas with straw and a deformable paddock.

The other commitments required relate to the livestock care (manipulable materials, automatic feeders and thermoregulation); it is compulsory to submit an inventory provided with purchase and sale documents as well as entry and exit documents.

⁷ Article 224-bis of the conversion law of the decree law 19 May 2020 No 34 states "National quality system for the animal welfare". Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies and Ministry of Health shall give the details of the content.



The required space for the “premium” certification level relates the progressive increase from 1.50 sq. m. to 1 sq. m. for pigs whose live weight goes from 50 kg to 120 kg, in addition to the provision of an external (freely accessible) area of variable width from 0.30 sq. m. to 0.8 sq. m. depending on the weight of animals. Alternatively, a proper lying area for pigs in the stable is required, whose size shall range from 0.25 sq. m. for animals up to 50 kg to 0.9 sq. m. for animals over 120 kg; the provision of thermoregulation system is also required for hottest days; the minimum annual premium is € 250.

In addition to the housing system with straw and soft bedding disposal in lying areas for pigs, Greece promotes an increase of space allowance of 3% for all pigs, a minimum increase of 20% for sows and gilts after 4 weeks from farrowing and 6 sq. m. before farrowing; a reduction by 20% of the total number of farm animals is promoted as well (33.93€/head/year or 135.7 €/LSU/year); 4.5 % of income reduction is taking into account due to farm animal reduction. In Liguria, a housing condition improvement for pigs shall increase the available floor area by 50% in relation to the following regulations and the obligation to ensure 90 % at least of the standard ventilation following these parameters: weaners 75.6 m³/head; rearing pig 144 m³/head; sows, gilts, boars 198 m³/head.

In Romania, the improvement of pig welfare is implemented thanks to the combination of four actions belonging to at least two out of four sub-measures of measure 14. The increase of unobstructed floor area available to each animal goes from 10 % up to 15%; for rearing pigs, whose weight goes from 50 to 85 kg, the area is 0.605 sq. m.; for farm animals whose weight goes from 85 to 110 kg the area is 0.715 sq. m. and for pigs whose weight is over 110 kg the available area is 1.1 sq. m. For animals kept for breeding, in group, the increase of the available area varies from 1,804 to 2,475 sq. m./head. Other interventions relate the maintenance of the lying area drained and clean by using straw, hay, mushroom compost, peat and the creation of separated areas for sick or aggressive animals.

Slovakia and Slovenia address the interventions for improving housing conditions to pigs kept for breeding and weaners; Slovakia promotes the area for sow in pens differing in density and size, namely: 72 sq. m./head at least for groups of 5 animals (standard measure 2.48 sq. m./head); 2.85 sq. m./head for groups from 6 to 40 animals (standard measure 2.25 sq. m.); for over 41 heads with an area of 2.26 sq. m./head (standards 2.05 sq. m.). In Slovenia, stock-keepers shall increase the available area of 10 % at least for sows kept for breeding, gilts reared as a group and weaners. Eventually, the commitment of Andalusia is to reduce by 20% maximum the density for rearing pigs and weaners. Croatia and Finland finance interventions for farrowing crates; namely, Finland states



that sows can farrow freely, if the farrowing crate is at least 6 sq. m.; for Croatia, the farrowing crate with closed nest must be at least 0.75 sq. m. wide and 45 cm high, and heating with configurable temperature is required (at least).

Measures to improve the temperature or the introduction of heating in animal housing are planned by the German region Baden Württemberg ("premium" certification level) and Finland, which also finances the introduction of a backup system for energy production to support ventilation, irrigation and the slurry system. 90% at least of the ventilation standard (compared to the good husbandry practices) is promoted by Liguria, while Romania requires the reduction of at least 30 % of dangerous dust. Few interventions are addressed to the areas for sick animals (Romania and Finland), to hygiene and cleaning of the areas (Sardinia) and to the recording of interventions (Finland) (see Tab. 5).



Tab. 5: Commitments in the area of “housing conditions” – Pigs

Country/Region	Increase in surface area	Reduction in stock density	Loose housing	Increase/enrichment of housing area	Lying area/litter material	Housing system for group according to age	Separate areas for injured/ill animals	Farrowing area	Temperature	Ventilation system	Light	Hygiene/cleaning of premises and equipment	Recording of the interventions	Other
Austria														
Bulgaria														
Cyprus														
Croatia														
Estonia														
Finland (Mainland)														
Germany (Baden Württemberg)														
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)														
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)														
Greece														
Ireland														
Italy (Calabria)														
Italy (Campania)														
Italy (Friuli)														
Italy (Lazio)														
Italy (Liguria)														
Italy (Marche)														
Italy (Sardinia)														
Italy (Umbria)														
Czech Republic														
Romania														
Slovakia														
Slovenia														
Spain (Cantabria)														
Spain (Andalusia)														
Sweden														
Hungary														

Source: European network for rural development



Outdoor access

The number of interventions of this area of improvement is limited for pigs; Croatia finances continuous or occasional outdoor access whose surface is 0.55 sq. m/head for sows and gilts; in case of rotational grazing there is the obligation to keep animals outdoor twice a week for two hours at least (€ 84.66); interventions shall be recorded. Similarly, Finland promotes the outdoor access for sows of at least 8 months old and the physical exercise outdoor twice a week from May 1st to September 30th. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, free outdoor access is present among the conditions that Baden Württemberg requires for the premium level certificate. The other three RDPs that finance interventions relating the “outdoor access” belong to: Friuli, that promotes the equipment of external areas which are freely accessible by pigs besides the pigpen area; Sardinia, that promotes the obligation to divide the area in at least two sides and the rotational grazing for a certain period; Liguria, that finances the creation of outdoor areas (20 sq. m/LSU at least) freely accessible by animals (see Tab. 6).



Tab. 6: Commitment in the area of “Outdoor access” – Pigs

Country/Regions	Outdoor access/paddock	Increase in the outdoor area	Recording of interventions
Austria			
Bulgaria			
Cyprus			
Croatia			
Estonia			
Finland (Mainland)			
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)			
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)			
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)			
Greece			
Ireland			
Italy (Calabria)			
Italy (Campania)			
Italy (Friuli)			
Italy (Lazio)			
Italy (Liguria)			
Italy (Marche)			
Italy (Sardinia)			
Italy (Umbria)			
Czech Republic			
Romania			
Slovakia			
Slovenia			
Spain (Cantabria)			
Spain (Andalusia)			
Sweden			
Hungary			

Source: European network for rural development



Water, feed and animal care

15 interventions have been identified for “water, feed and animal care” area of improvement: the vast majority of these relates to animal feed. Croatia promotes the creation of a feeding plan based on the nutritional needs of sows, gilts and weaners (63.13 €/year); Calabria and Marche, as it occurs with all other species for which they have access to the financial support, have the assistance of a dietician; Czech Republic requires the obligation of weaning in piglets at least 30 days after their birth, along with other interventions that aim at an integrated approach in sow farms (77.50 €); Sweden act similarly, associating also the specific feed for each phase of the production cycle. Health and parasitological controls on animals are promoted by Greece (mycoses prevention), Calabria and Marche (requiring treatment of infected feet as well); moreover, Marche requires an annual parasitological control on 1 % of animals and a possible pharmacological treatment. Czech Republic finances the treatment of infected feet for gilts after weaning, while Sweden finances behavioural controls and medical care with a written recording of the interventions made. Control on the presence of moulds in the feed is required by Croatia (twice a year), Marche and Calabria; this latter and Greece also require an annual bacteriological water analysis (three-month certification). The elaboration of a feeding plan is promoted by Croatia for pigs kept for breeding, Calabria, Marche (dietician assistance included) and Sweden (see the paragraph above). Interventions aimed at limiting the competition for feed and water are promoted by some Italian regions: Friuli and Liguria require 20% larger feeding-troughs, an increased number of drinking troughs (pin valves and tube valves); Sardinia requires the obligation to provide drinking and feeding troughs in conformity with the outdoor grazing density for pigs. Cleaning and disinfestation of the livestock housing is required by Calabria (fight against rodents and flies), Marche (rat extermination every four months) and Czech Republic that requires disinfestation after every farrowing, leaving the area for at least one day.

Finland is the only country which supports the lactation length for pigs (up to seven days after farrowing); Finland and Czech Republic require a written production plan which includes birth, weaning, insemination and farrowing details. A continuing veterinary assistance is required by Calabria and Marche (see Tab. 7).



Tab. 7: Commitment in the area of “Water, feed and animal care” - Pigs

Country/Regions	Health check, cleaning and care of heads	Control/ Quality certification of water and/or feed	Nutrition plan/tailored diet	Increasing number and/or size of feeding troughs	Increasing number of drinking troughs	Increase in the lactation length	Veterinary assistance	Pest control	Cleaning and disinfection of livestock housing	Checks plans/transport/productive cycle
Austria										
Bulgaria										
Cyprus										
Croatia										
Estonia										
Finland (Mainland)										
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)										
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)										
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)										
Greece										
Ireland										
Italy (Calabria)										
Italy (Campania)										
Italy (Friuli)										
Italy (Lazio)										
Italy (Liguria)										
Italy (Marche)										
Italy (Sardinia)										
Italy (Umbria)										
Czech Republic										
Romania										
Slovakia										
Slovenia										
Spain (Cantabria)										
Spain (Andalusia)										
Sweden										
Hungary										

Source: European network for rural development

Practices which avoid mutilation and/or castration or the use of anaesthetics, analgesia and anti-inflammatory medication

Croatia and Finland establish that 70% of weaners shall not be tail-docked, while Marche and Lazio require that mutilations and castrations must be kept under 5 % of farm animals. The use of anaesthetics and analgesia is promoted by Estonia and Finland; this latter along with Greece also promote immune-castration for boars.



The interventions of the measure 14 for sheep and goats

Improvement of housing conditions

Within 60 % of the RDPs that finance measure 14 concern sheep and goats (see Table 1). Hence, commitments to improve housing conditions emerge. The increase of the free area by at least 10% is supported by Bulgaria as follows: suckling lambs indoor 2.4 – 2.6 sq. m./LSU, outdoor 3.3 – 3.9 sq. m./LSU; lambs and kids indoor 0.44 sq. m./LSU, outdoor 0.7 – 0.8 sq. m.; fattening lambs indoor 7-8 sq. m/LSU, indoor 1.7-2,2 sq. m. (44.40 €/LSU). A minimum of 2.2 sq. m. housing area is required in Finland for sheep and newly born lambs; Greece supports 10% of minimum area increase in the frame of the housing livestock regulation (44.40 €/LSU). Here there are some examples: newly born indoor from 2.4-2.6 sq. m. to 3.3-3.9 sq. m. outside and for lambs and goats outside 2.2 - 2.8 sq. m., while for lambs for fattening indoors 1.8 and outside 1.7-2.2 sq. m. Greece supports the increase of areas for slaughtering until 1.7 sq. m. In Calabria, there is an increase in space for sheep and goats from 0.8 sq. m./head to 1 sq. m./head; for heifer lambs from 0.6 sq. m./head to 0.8 sq. m.; for lambs up to four months old from 0.4 sq. m. to 0.6 sq. m./head and for rams from 2.0 sq. m./head to 2.5 sq. m. In Liguria, the increase of available spaces for lambs/kids is fixed at 0.12 sq. m./head, for sheep and goats at 2.00 sq. m./head and for rams and billy goats at 5.00 sq. m./head. In Lazio, dairy and meat sheep holders shall introduce at least four interventions related to the following housing conditions: increase of space allowances, suitable flooring, enrichment material, natural lighting.

Commitments to improve the lying area are financed by five Italian RDPs: in Calabria, straw bedding management is regularly provided and renewed twice a year at least, for all species eligible for support; this occurs in Lazio and Marche as well. Umbria requires a better management of beddings, while the Aosta Valley promotes the use of straw for bedding (in tethering systems) or alternatively carpets (so it does for cattle and equidae). Separate areas are provided for the injured/ill animals in Finland (group stalls with at least 1.8 sq. m./head; individual stalls at least 2 sq. m), in Lazio (permanent area equipped for feeding and milking), in Sardinia and Umbria. Interventions for the improvement of temperatures, air and lighting are present in the programmes of Greece (provision of heating sources for lambs or kids) and Calabria (natural lighting). Liguria supports at least 90% of suitable ventilation (84 m³/hour for lamb and kid; 116 m³/hour for sheep, goat, ram and billy goat) and ventilation installations on two sides or from above. Among the four conditions chosen to access the support, Lazio includes the installation of at least two other



ventilation components including: fans, awnings, windbreaks, heated areas for lambs and kids up to 15 days after their birth. As for cattle and equidae, Umbria does not reward improvement practices such as artificial ventilation, lighting systems and farm cleaning. The increase in the number of through spaces is enhanced by Friuli (10% increase in the number of places in racks and constant-level drinking troughs) and Liguria (increase in the number of drinking troughs by 50 litres for a maximum of 35 lambs/kids and 30 goats/rams/billy goats). Sardinia is the only region whose programme requires a compulsory recording of the interventions made in the sheep and goat housings. Within the programme, a technician shall carry out a business plan in which critical points present in the farm can be pointed out; s/he will write a report with the conditions that stock-keepers need to respect.

Eventually, the Spanish region of Andalusia should be mentioned: farms with 77-100 points (Tab. 8) are given financial support by the region for sheep and goats out of a protocol evaluation on animal welfare, which is more restrictive than the compulsory minimum requirements.



Tab. 8: Commitments in the area of “housing conditions” – sheep and goats

Country/Region	Increase in surface area	Lying area/litter material	Housing system for group according to age	Separate area for injured/ill animals	Temperature	Ventilation system	Light	Hygiene/cleaning of premises and equipment	Drinking and feeding troughs	Recording of interventions	Other
Austria											
Bulgaria											
Cyprus											
Croatia											
Estonia											
Finland (Mainland)											
Germany (Baden Württemberg)											
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)											
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)											
Greece											
Ireland											
Italy (Calabria)											
Italy (Campania)											
Italy (Friuli)											
Italy (Lazio)											
Italy (Liguria)											
Italy (Marche)											
Italy (Sardinia)											
Italy (Umbria)											
Italy (Aosta Valley)											
Czech Republic											
Romania											
Slovakia											
Slovenia											
Spain (Cantabria)											
Spain (Andalusia)											
Sweden											
Hungary											

Source: European network for rural development

Water, feed and animal care

For sheep and goats there are numerous commitments relating to the area of improvement "water, feed and animal care", which can be divided into various groups. The first relates to livestock control methods. Cyprus requires the adoption of three of the following interventions: the application of bio-safety measures, the prevention of killing agents, the maintenance of an appropriate health conditions and parasitological controls on livestock (34,04 €/LSU); parasitological controls are also supported by Ireland, Finland (with an annual control sample),



Campania (on at least 20% of the LSU on the farm), Marche and Umbria (at least one annual control on 1% of the animals - minimum three subjects). Checks on cleaning, health and care of sheep and goats are financed by Greece, Ireland, Marche, Calabria, Sardinia and Sweden. Furthermore, Ireland financially supports females during the breeding season (5.25 €), Calabria finance lameness check, Marche and Sardinia finance pairing and foot bathing; Sardinia also requires the isolation of sick animals (both unpaid); Sweden supports fleece cleaning and periodic checks to avoid parasites and detect injuries. Diagnostic tests for animals during pregnancy are included within Ireland and Greece programmes; in particular, this latter country supports the multiple pregnancy diagnosis by ultrasound in order to identify the number of embryos. In this case, the animals are required to be manipulated in order to avoid toxemia (€ 10.50); Sardinia promotes a monthly monitoring of subclinical mastitis for four months of lactation.

Veterinary assistance is financed by Calabria and Marche. Commitments regarding feed controls are present in the programmes of Calabria, Umbria and Sweden; this latter also requires feed production according to the needs of farm animals. This also occurs in Finland, where feed production is associated to the requirement of ensuring a suitable (in quantity and quality) bran and water. In Ireland, mineral feed supplements are promoted for lowland and hill livestock; for the latter, a suitable feeding before and after the weaning of lambs is required. Lazio also enhances interventions related to food and water, namely the stock-keeper is required to combine three conditions among the following: presence of troughs; forage dry matter 60% minimum; dry matter content between 50% and 60% can only be present during 60 days of lactation; presence of a rationing plan adapted to the single needs of the herd and of farm holding management. In their interventions, Calabria and Marche state in their interventions a bacteriological water analysis and the continuing veterinary assistance. Umbria acts as these latter two regions and adds dietician support in its programme.

Another group of commitments is related to the sheep and goat behavioural needs and it concerns the increase of the lactation length (Greece), the formation of harmonious groups (Sweden) and shearing. As far as shearing is concerned, Finland requires it twice a year for farm animals over one year old, while Sweden just requires it during the season when weather is warm and dry. Few programmes state pest control for sheep and goats (Calabria, Marche and Umbria) and cleaning and disinfestation of the environment and the equipment (Greece and Sardinia). Eventually, the recording of the interventions is only required by Finland, Sardinia and Sweden (Tab. 9a and 9b).



Tab. 9a: Commitments in the area of improvement "water, feed and animal care" – sheep and goats

Country/Region	Health check, diagnostic control	Parasitological controls	Health check, cleaning and care of heads	Control on feed and water	Certification of feed and water	Veterinary assistance	Ad libitum feeding and water	Tailored diet	Dietician support
Austria									
Bulgaria									
Cyprus									
Croatia									
Estonia									
Finland (Mainland)									
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)									
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)									
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)									
Greece									
Ireland									
Italy (Calabria)									
Italy (Campania)									
Italy (Friuli)									
Italy (Lazio)									
Italy (Liguria)									
Italy (Marche)									
Italy (Sardinia)									
Italy (Umbria)									
Czech Republic									
Romania									
Slovakia									
Slovenia									
Spain (Cantabria)									
Spain (Andalusia)									
Sweden									
Hungary									

Source: European network for rural development



Tab. 9b: Commitments in the area of improvement "water, feed and animal care" sheep and goats

Country/Region	Increase in the lactation length	Homogeneous group formation	Shearing	Pest control	Hygiene/cleaning of premises and equipment	Recording of treatments/interventions	Other
Austria							
Bulgaria							
Cyprus							
Croatia							
Estonia							
Finland (Mainland)							
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)							
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)							
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)							
Greece							
Ireland							
Italy (Calabria)							
Italy (Campania)							
Italy (Friuli)							
Italy (Lazio)							
Italy (Liguria)							
Italy (Marche)							
Italy (Sardinia)							
Italy (Umbria)							
Czech Republic							
Romania							
Slovakia							
Slovenia							
Spain (Cantabria)							
Spain (Andalusia)							
Sweden							
Hungary							

Source: European network for rural development

Outdoor access

For sheep and goats, the most numerous interventions in the frame of "outdoor access" area of improvement relate the grazing period lasting more than 100 days a year. Austria states an annual free grazing period of 120 days (27 to 55€/LSU); Greece requires an additional 40 days of open housing outside the stable. Lazio provides 200 grazing days a year (not necessarily continuous) for at least 8 hours a day, similarly to Marche, where the minimum period is fixed at 180 days. In Sardinia, the grazing period shall cover summer and spring seasons. Grazing days in Finland are up to 100 per year; in this case, the stock-keeper can choose the following options: pasture and outdoor



access during the grazing period; 60 days of grazing between May and September, including a weekly outdoor access; grazing period of at least 90 days, from May to September (for all commitments are excluded females that have given birth during the two previous weeks). Rotational grazing is established by Estonia and Lazio; namely, Lazio requires for dairy and meat sheep and goats on rotational grazing the presence of a tank for foot bathing (along with rotational grazing) in order to treat infected feet, parasitosis and keeping the herd healthy. Liguria is the only region that enhances outdoor areas/paddocks and space allowance increase for sheep and goats; namely, the region requires that outdoor areas must be always connected with the stable and always available for farm animals; regarding the space allowances, paddocks shall be 1 sq. m. floor space/lamb/kid and 2 sq. m. floor space/sheep/goat/ram/billy goat; paddocks made of different kind of flooring 2 sq. m./ lamb/kid and 4 sq. m./sheep/goat/ram/billy goat; paddock made of earthen floor 3 sq. m/ lamb/kid and 6 sq. m./sheep/goat/ram/billy goat (Tab. 10).



Tab. 10: Commitment in the area of “Outdoor access” – sheep and goats

Country/Region	Grazing period > 100 days/year	Grazing period < 100 days/year	Rotational grazing	Access to outdoor /paddock	Increase in the size of outdoor area	Cleaning/management of pasture	Other
Austria							
Bulgaria							
Cyprus							
Croatia							
Estonia							
Finland (Mainland)							
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)							
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)							
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)							
Greece							
Ireland							
Italy (Calabria)							
Italy (Campania)							
Italy (Friuli)							
Italy (Lazio)							
Italy (Liguria)							
Italy (Marche)							
Italy (Sardinia)							
Italy (Umbria)							
Czech Republic							
Romania							
Slovakia							
Slovenia							
Spain (Cantabria)							
Spain (Andalusia)							
Sweden							
Hungary							

Source: European network for rural development

Practices which avoid mutilation and/or castration or the use of anaesthetics, analgesia and anti-inflammatory medication

For sheep and goats, interventions in this area of improvement are few and relate to Cyprus, Lazio and Marche. Cyprus prohibits castration; Lazio and Marche require that mutilations and castrations shall not involve more than 5 % of farmed animals (this occurs also with the other species included in the support).



The interventions of the measure 14 for poultry

Improvement of housing conditions

The “housing conditions” area of improvement counts the highest number of commitments relating to space allowances increase. Finland requires 10% of the housing area to be equipped with perches 15 cm long for chickens for fattening and 20 cm long for turkeys, for all categories of poultry, shelves and ramps must cover 10% of the farming area; in Baden Württemberg, all commitments for broilers are connected to the "Animal Welfare" labelling (two entry levels and premium). For the first level, the maximum weight per square metre is fixed at 25 kg and it is required as follows: shelters should cover at least 20% of the whole area, 3 mt. of depth and provide free access until sunset throughout summer; 50 % of the indoor area should be sun-lit and provided with air-inlets; 3 bales of straw are expected for 2,000 heads while 2 bales of straw will be sufficient for less dense breeding groups, there shall be a 15 m long and 10-30 cm high perch (adjustable). Purchase and sale documents shall be recorded. Last four mentioned commitments along with the following requirements lead to a “premium” level of certification access: 21 kg is the weight limit for sq. m. for breeding areas and the fattening period should cover at least 56 days. Animals may access to a 4 sq. m. outdoor area per head, for a minimum of 1/3 of their life at least (minimum contribution 250 €/year).

Interventions for poultry in Low Saxony – Bremen ban cage and establish 1 sq. m. area per nine laying hens (additional commitment: 1 sq. m. every 7 laying hens); moreover, in systems of rearing where laying hens can move freely on different levels, 14 heads are admitted per sq. m. and animals must lay on lifted perches (two-level perches at least) while nests should meet the following requirements: perches should be equally distributed and provided with barriers/caves in order to control livestock excessive density and pressure in the breeding area. For group nests, the Lower Saxony – Bremen region states a maximum of 100 hens for every nest sq. m. (500 €/LSU/year). Calabria promotes 20% of breeding area increase for lying hens while Campania requires 50% indoor breeding area increase per head compared to the regulation into force. In Slovakia, stock-keepers must respect the following commitments: 23% of density reduction in laying hens compared to minimum standard requirements; 6 production cycles is the limit number of lots allowed per year; cleaning and new production cycle preparation should not be inferior than 14 days. Moreover, free access to litters is permitted: it must be drained, high-quality and equipped with adjustable material (32,370 LSU); the additional commitment requires that the fattening period for poultry should not



be inferior than 38 days (75 €/LSU/year). Estonia requires 1 sq. m. of breeding area every 8 laying hens and a comfortable, drained and clean lying area; a better litter management is promoted by Calabria too. Liguria requires 20 % decrease of Livestock density coefficient compared to the broilers and laying hens baseline and, for these latter, A 20% space increase of the litter is also promoted. Baden Württemberg and Low Saxony, along with Calabria and Finland (this latter for turkey, 2 objects for each 100 sq. m.; for hens, 4 objects for each 100 sq. m.) promote the housing condition enhancement for livestock with manipulable material. Cleaning interventions for livestock housing areas are into force in Finland (excrement removal at least three times a week to limit the concentration of ammonia in 18 parts for million in livestock and in 8 parts for millions in cages with the respective written recording); in Greece (maintenance and disinfestation of outer areas) and as mentioned above, in Slovakia (see Tab. 10).



Tab. 11: Commitments in the area of “housing conditions” – Poultry

Country/Region	Increase in surface area	Reduction in in stock density	Lying area/litter material	Enrichment of housing area	Fattening period	Ventilation system	Light	Hygiene/cleaning of premises and equipment/ outdoor area	Recording of treatments	Ban on cages	Other
Austria											
Bulgaria											
Cyprus											
Croatia											
Estonia											
Finland (Mainland)											
Germania (Baden Wurttemberg)											
Germania (Low Saxony - Bremen)											
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)											
Greece											
Ireland											
Italy (Calabria)											
Italy (Campania)											
Italy (Friuli)											
Italy (Lazio)											
Italy (Liguria)											
Italy (Marche)											
Italy (Sardinia)											
Italy (Umbria)											
Italy (Aosta Valley)											
Czech Republic											
Romania											
Slovakia											
Slovenia											
Spain (Cantabria)											
Spain (Andalusia)											
Sweden											
Hungary											

Source: European network for rural development



Water, feed and animal care

Low Saxony is the only region that promotes interventions relating poultry feeding for laying hens and broilers and the use of flour as feed in its programme. Other interventions relating this area of improvement are sustained by Greece, which requires the annual certification of the outer areas; Baden Württemberg, which promotes breeding lines with a daily increase rate of 45 gr /head on average for broilers and Finland, which promotes a support for an outer area where animals can express their behavioural needs (scratching, etc.) as well as providing shelters for feeding during summer; Finland also promotes animal welfare through tests on slaughtered animals: an independent testing body tests broiler carcass and pinpoints ill and inadequate samples in reporting dermatitis and ascites, which should not exceed 1% among the total tested sample; a similar intervention is required for turkeys, whose level of welfare is established by the discarded rate of carcasses at slaughter (maximum 6.5% between 1 May and 30th September and 5 % maximum between 1st October and 30th April) (see Tab. 12).



Tab. 12: Commitments in the area of “Water, feed and animal care” - Poultry

Country/Region	Tailored diet	Analisis quality certification water-feed	Promotion of natural behaviors	Checks plans transport/productive cycle	Assessment of welfare at the slaughterhouse
Austria					
Bulgaria					
Cyprus					
Croatia					
Estonia					
Finland (Mainland)					
Germania (Baden Wurttemberg)					
Germania (Low Saxony - Bremen)					
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)					
Greece					
Ireland					
Italy (Calabria)					
Italy (Campania)					
Italy (Friuli)					
Italy (Lazio)					
Italy (Liguria)					
Italy (Marche)					
Italy (Sardinia)					
Italy (Umbria)					
Czech Republic					
Romania					
Slovakia					
Slovenia					
Spain (Cantabria)					
Spain (Andalusia)					
Sweden					
Hungary					

Source: European network for rural development

Outdoor access

Finland promotes outdoor access for broilers and laying hens for at least twice a week, avian influenza risk period excluded (March-May): during this period, an entry register is expected. Greece promotes rotational grazing (Tab. 13).



Tab. 13: Commitments in the area of “Outdoor access” – Poultry

Paese/Regione	Rotational grazing	Access to outdoor	Arrangement of outdoor area near stable	Recording of treatments
Austria				
Bulgaria				
Cyprus				
Croatia				
Estonia				
Finland (Mainland)				
Germany (Baden Wurttemberg)				
Germany (Low Saxony - Bremen)				
Germany (Rhine-Westphalia)				
Greece				
Ireland				
Italy (Calabria)				
Italy (Campania)				
Italy (Friuli)				
Italy (Lazio)				
Italy (Liguria)				
Italy (Marche)				
Italy (Sardinia)				
Italy (Umbria)				
Czech Republic				
Romania				
Slovakia				
Slovenia				
Spain (Cantabria)				
Spain (Andalusia)				
Sweden				
Hungary				

Source: European network for rural development

Practices which avoid mutilation and/or castration or the use of anaesthetics, analgesia and anti-inflammatory medication

Lower-Saxony – Bremen is the only region that bans mutilation for poultry.



The interventions of measure 14 for rabbits and equidae

No intervention is planned for these species; only Friuli, Umbria and Aosta Valley include actions for equidae. Friuli supports farriery; Umbria promotes the same actions applied for other species; eventually, Aosta Valley promotes litter management which is the only intervention applied for the other species.



Financial data

As far as national measures/interventions are concerned, the greatest public contribution (EU + national funds) is supported by Romania, which disposes little more than 776 million euros, followed by Finland with € 388 millions and Austria with less than € 229 millions. Cyprus has € 9 millions of national financial support, which represents the smallest budget. According to the financial data of the regional programmes, Sardinia⁸ is at the top of the programmed public expenditure (€225,638,229), followed by Rhine-Westphalia with more than €225 millions; Friuli has just € 1 million of national financial support (Tab. 14).

⁸ During 2007-2013 period, Sardinia gave more than € 200 millions for measure215 – Animal welfare payments, which represents almost 13% of the total RDP financial support budget.



Tab. 14: Programming Period 2014-2020 – Measure 14 (€)

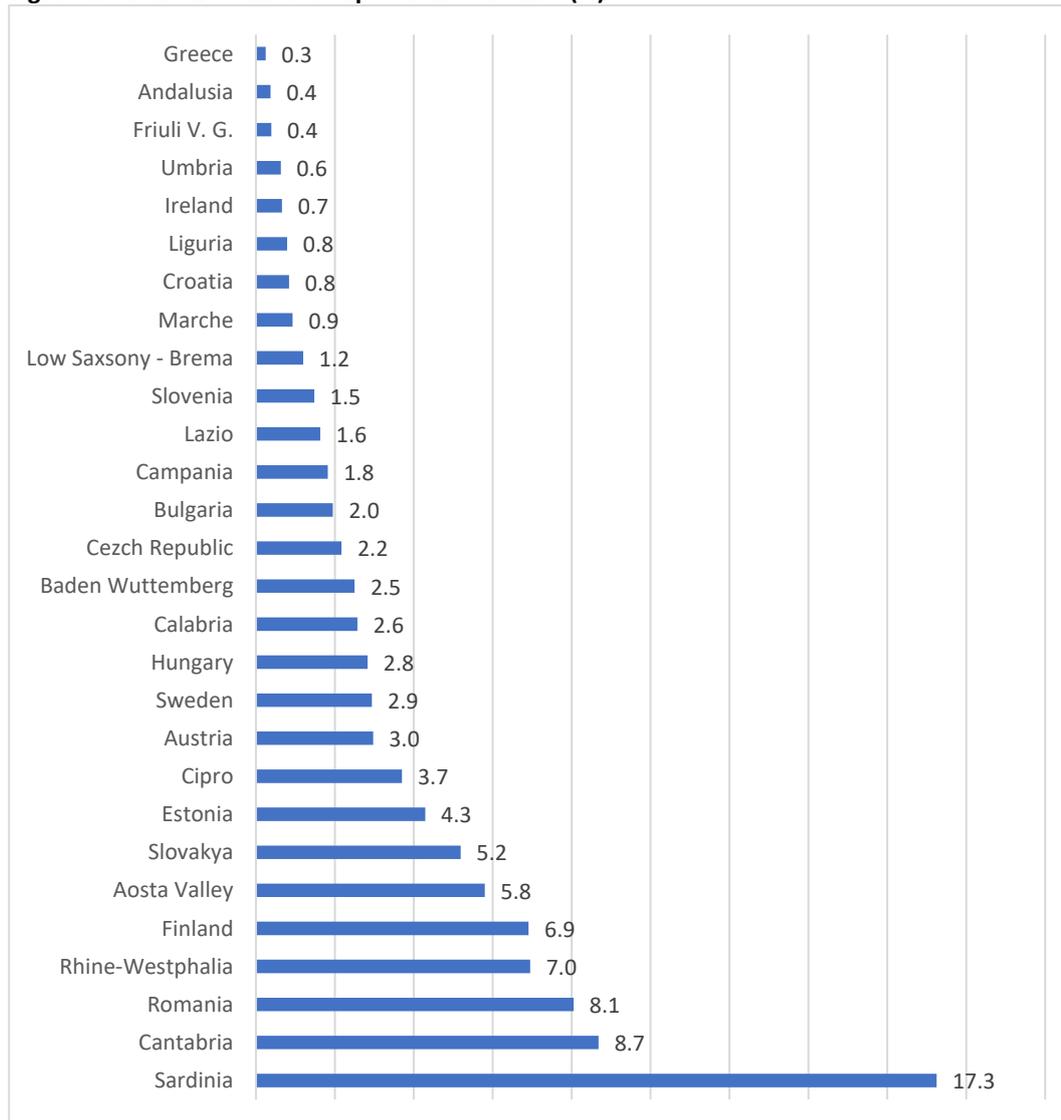
Country	Region	EAFRD Mis. 14 2014-2020	National/regional contribution Mis. 14 2014-2020	Public expenditure (UE+country or Region Measure 14
Austria		113.127.555	115.372.445	228.500.000
Bulgaria		48.330.584	8.528.926	56.859.510
Cyprus		4.770.000	4.230.000	9.000.000
Croatia		17.000.000	3.000.000	20.000.000
Estonia		38.857.950	3.727.050	42.585.000
Finland		162.960.000	225.040.000	388.000.000
Germany	Baden Wuttemberg	1.750.000	31.710.000	33.460.000
Germany	Low Saxony – Bremen	27.500.000	0	27.500.000
Germany	Rhine Westphalia	48.000.000	34.222.222	82.222.222
Greece		10.000.000	2.980.583	12.980.583
Ireland		21.000.000	5.000.000	26.000.000
Italy	Calabria	17.150.000	11.197.110	28.347.110
Italy	Campania	12.402.500	20.500.000	32.902.500
Italy	Emilia Romagna			
Italy	Friuli V. G.	431.200	568.800	1.000.000
Italy	Lazio	5.607.278	7.396.612	13.003.890
Italy	Liguria	1.065.904	1.414.096	2.480.000
Italy	Marche	2.156.000	2.844.000	5.000.000
Italy	Sardinia	108.306.350	117.331.879	225.638.229
Italy	Toscana			
Italy	Umbria	2.156.000	3.244.000	5.400.000
Italy	Aosta Valley	3.449.829	4.550.702	8.000.531
Italy	Veneto			
Czech Republic		50.000.000	16.666.666	66.666.666
Romania		687.938.706	88.469.900	776.408.606
Slovakia		79.812.000	28.188.000	108.000.000
Slovenia		12.276.000	4.092.000	16.368.000
Spain	Andalusia	6.750.000	2.250.000	9.000.000
Spain	Cantabria	9.155.620	12.580.229	21.735.849
Sweden		51.405.037	75.210.253	126.615.290
United Kingdom	Scotland			
Hungary		112.724.205	5.069.387	117.793.592
total		1.656.082.718	835.384.860	2.491.467.578

Source: European network for rural development



Considering public expenditure percentage addressed to RDPs in the past and in current programmes, Sardinia is positioned as leader with 17%, followed by Cantabria with 8.68%, Greece, Andalusia. This same percentage represents less than 1% for Greece, Cantabria and other 4 Italian regions, and it ranges from 1.20% in Lower Saxony (Germany) to 5.80% in Aosta Valley. In general, RDP public expenditure percentage under measure 14 (knock-on effects excluded) accounts for 3.11 % with 4.10 % of average percentage (see Fig.3).

Fig. 3 - Measure 14: Planned expenditure on RDPs (%)



Source: European network for rural development



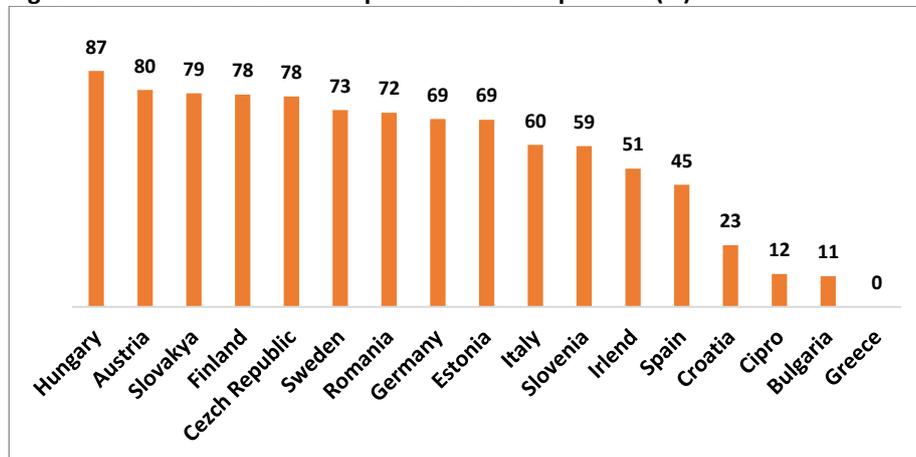
Tab. 15 – LSU by specie and Country – Year 2016

Country	Equidae	Bovines	Pigs	Sheep	Goats	Poultry	Rabbits
Austria	69.780	1.374.350	699.400	39.850	9.110	239.540	:
Belgium	22.450	1.767.700	1.506.820	8.620	5.080	462.090	:
Bulgaria	54.080	501.070	176.230	131.640	26.660	203.550	1.000
Cyprus	3.380	39.900	60.770	26.480	17.000	24.240	320
Croatia	19.650	309.240	228.370	77.820	9.960	107.980	1.690
Estonia	4.590	189.610	56.570	9.080	450	18.990	40
Finland	15.770	639.780	245.380	15.650	480	153.570	:
France	301.690	13.573.320	3.068.020	674.430	101.440	4.351.490	11.600
Germany	349.460	8.968.180	6.475.000	185.600	13.810	2.190.260	:
Greece	13.410	459.090	170.750	822.760	354.170	280.410	2.290
Ireland	76.830	5.105.030	388.690	514.040	920	110.130	0
Italy	131.820	4.554.050	2.036.140	702.650	98.200	1.930.920	13.930
Latvia	6.720	325.010	94.750	13.000	1.410	56.640	1.100
Lithuania	11.780	564.970	137.110	18.720	1.400	115.380	630
Luxemburg	3.630	145.700	21.270	900	510	1.580	10
Malta	1.050	11.130	10.460	1.310	450	7.870	180
Netherland	65.850	3.011.520	2.427.240	78.390	49.960	1.186.110	890
Polonia	148.390	4.384.760	2.643.190	25.340	4.420	2.230.140	6.990
Portugal	34.230	1.116.360	434.430	219.970	39.050	377.550	2.140
Czech Republic	20.040	1.018.090	354.090	23.090	2.200	338.850	160
Romania	290.650	1.584.790	991.710	910.650	137.280	908.840	4.860
Slovakia	6.180	328.220	118.470	37.410	1.640	129.520	150
Slovenia	15.560	341.330	67.060	13.490	3.860	70.320	500
Spain	250.180	4.365.390	5.675.710	1.586.220	249.070	2.293.560	22.410
Sweden	81.000	1.035.740	330.750	57.820	:	200.480	:
Hungary	47.730	618.040	740.220	121.350	10.020	905.010	2.510

Fonte: Eurostat, Farm Structure

Concerning public expenditure of the EU member States for measure 14, data (May 2020 last record) show that the highest amount of financial support was given by Hungary (86.9% of the total amount) followed by Austria and Finland with almost 80 %. Spain, Croatia, Cyprus and Bulgaria position at the bottom with less than 50% paid out of the total amount (see Figure 4).

Fig. 4 - Measure 14: Realised expenditure on the planned (%)



Source: European network for rural development



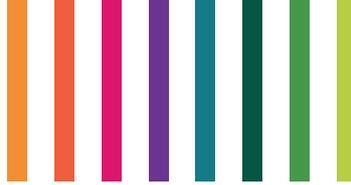
Conclusions

The measure 14 analysis in different European areas shows that despite the identification of specific areas of improvement, measure 14 has been implemented irregularly for all the interventions, especially because of the low budget allocated. Moreover, the analysis shows that countries where the zootechnic sector is relevant (i. e. France) have not applied the measure: few resources have been involved in several RDPs, considering this action an experiment.

Furthermore, this study shows that when this measure has been introduced in some States, it has effectively applied in regions where the zootechnic sector was very relevant, i.e. Spain, Aragona and Catalonia account for 31% of national LSU (Eurostat, 2016). In certain cases, the entirety of the resources was destined to one species with the same consistency as others. For example, Ireland addressed its support to sheep and goats although livestock density was almost the same of cattle; this also occurs in Austria for dairy cattle. In light of these cases, it may be supposed that the purpose is not the improvement of animal welfare but a support for the structure of animal husbandry particularly connected to the local identity or to areas in difficulty. Although these may be legitimate objectives, they are actually hiding the real purpose of the measure; at the same time it disorients consumers who care about animal welfare and creates a distant perception of what EU institutions truly are. Concerning interventions, the majority regards housing conditions, namely the increase of space allowances (about 10 %) and interventions for lying areas. These latter often relate to litter management, namely the obligation of regularly replacing or renewing it regularly and the lameness check (although these two interventions should be a habit for livestock-keepers, regardless of the support provided by the measure). Interventions on cattle are significant within the “housing conditions” area of improvement, given that there is the passage from an open housing system to the outdoor access. Overall, the measure is scarcely used to introduce innovative systems to improve health and life of animals: i.e. Finland improves farrowing crane by equipping it with technologies to stimulate maternal physical behaviours of sows (Finland) . Similarly, there are few interventions addressed to support natural behaviours: Greece is the only country that supports the increase of the lactation length for calves and sheep and goats, while Finland is the only one to support the increase of the lactation length for pigs. This is a good practice because it reduces the use of antibiotics, has a positive impact on immune defences and reduces animal vulnerability to illness. No effort is made to promote a different cultural approach for those who receive the support: a specific training on animal welfare in farm management should be also taken into account. Moreover, attention should be paid to the risk of deadweight, i.e. those commitments that



merely follow practices already applied in farm holdings independently of the measure adoption, as pointed out by the European Court of Auditors. This also implies that updated animal-based indicators should be introduced. Eventually, a reflection should be made on the focus area 3A; indeed, by making animal welfare an instrument of competitiveness within the sector, the inherent general purpose is minimized and its “trust” attribute is exalted. This aspect relates the production process and therefore cannot be verified by consumers even after purchase and consumption, resulting in the proliferation of quality self-certifications by companies. Following this logic, commitments should be defined by bearing in mind the consumer expectations because consumers’ idea of welfare does not fully coincide with most of the intensive production patterns. Most of the times, consumers only know superficially breeding systems. This choice is presumably a consequence of long negotiations towards the definition of a common policy, which always recurs in this case. There is a contradiction with many statements and the premises of the regulation, which often link animal welfare to more general objectives, such as the environmental protection, aimed at responding to the interest of society. The premises seemed to trigger a deeper revision process of the production pattern, while its explanation in the focus area 3A seems to admit that everything can be solved with quality certifications. The lack of effectiveness complained by the Court of Auditors could also be the result of this contradiction.



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