

## Antimicrobial resistance

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Budapest, Hungary on 19 to 21 November 2015:

### Notes that:

- it is estimated that globally 10 million people will die every year because of antimicrobial resistance by the year 2050;
- it is estimated that the economic impact of antimicrobial resistance would be a reduction of 2% to 3.5% in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) globally. It would cost the world up to 100 trillion USD;
- in many parts of Europe there is a lack of awareness of the importance of the rational use of antimicrobial agents, and antibiotics in particular;
- the development and introduction into clinical practice of new antibiotics do not match the rate of increasing antimicrobial resistance;
- the overuse of antimicrobials, including antibiotics, and in particular their systematic and excessive use, is one of the main causes of antimicrobial resistance;
- the same classes of antibiotics are used in both animal and human medicine, and similar resistance mechanisms have emerged in both sectors;
- the use of antimicrobials in human and veterinary medicine contributes to the increase of antimicrobial-resistant bacteria in the environment, which may serve as a source of resistance development in both humans and animals;
- the majority of medicated feed for farmed animals contains antimicrobials;
- there is an increase in antibiotic resistance encountered at veterinary clinics for pets;
- the current legislation on veterinary medicines does not ensure that risks to human health arising from the use of antimicrobials in animals are effectively managed;
- overuse of antimicrobials is often driven by pressure on farmers from supermarket chains for cheap food produced by intensive methods;

### Believes that:

- infections caused by antimicrobial-resistant bacteria are very likely to result in prolonged hospital stays and increased costs for medical healthcare sectors in European countries;
- the high number of animals infected with bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics will result in increased carry-over of these bacteria from infected meat to consumers;

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- there is a strong link between the irresponsible use of antimicrobials for farm animals and the development of antimicrobial resistance in farmers, and a risk that this resistance will be spread by hospital treatment; there is therefore a pressing need to develop common European standards for the responsible use of antimicrobials and the eventual reduction of the use of antimicrobials in the EU;
- research and new business models for the creation of new antimicrobial drugs and alternative measures are of utmost importance;

### **Calls on:**

- European countries to implement the WTO action plan on antimicrobial resistance;
- the development of common European standards for responsible use of antimicrobials based on transparent and scientific criteria;
- initiatives and actions by European countries, animal health professionals and animal owners aimed at ensuring responsible use of antimicrobials in animals and reducing antimicrobial use in animal husbandry;
- greater attention, new incentives and new economic models for the development of new antimicrobial agents;
- European countries to increase research and development activities which aim at providing new tools to fight bacterial infections that are increasingly prevalent in Europe;
- European countries to increase the level of cooperation with regard to patient safety and combating antimicrobial resistance, in order to limit and reduce the spread of resistant bacteria from one Member State to another;
- all European countries to develop criteria for, and enforce and uphold a strict ban on, self-medication with antibiotics, and stresses the necessity of a 'prescription only' policy for antibacterials by national competent authorities;
- to ensure the responsible and sensible use in human medicine of all antimicrobial agents, and in particular of antibiotics that are considered to be last-line treatment of bacterial infections in hospitals;
- a phase-out of all prophylactic use of antibiotics in livestock and fish-farming sectors in all European countries;
- European countries to make sure that livestock and intensive fish-farming sectors should focus on preventing disease through good hygiene, housing and animal husbandry;
- all European countries to promote and foster the responsible and sensible use of antimicrobials in veterinary medicine, including medicated feed;

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- all European countries to restrict the right to prescribe antibiotics to professionally-qualified veterinarians;
- all European countries to support the mandatory recording of the quantities of all antimicrobials used in livestock farming, to be communicated to the competent national authorities and made public by them on an annual basis;
- all European countries to develop and implement national strategies and action plans for countering antimicrobial resistance;
- all European countries to encourage antimicrobial stewardship by farmers;
- European countries to share and implement best practice in animal husbandry with the aim of creating systems in which animals stay healthy without the excessive use of antibiotics.

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