



Animal Welfare Teaching in European veterinary Faculties

Nancy De Briyne (Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) with the support of European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE))

The veterinarian is expected to be the animal welfare professional par excellence, having the full range of knowledge and skills required to assess animal welfare, identify problems and make recommendations for improvements. Consequently a veterinarian should be well educated in all aspects of both animal welfare and ethics. This study examined how and to what extent animal welfare is being taught during veterinary education in EU veterinary schools and faculties. Evaluation reports from 43 veterinary schools in 24 countries were analyzed. Overall, the study illustrates that the way animal welfare is taught differs greatly from school to school.

In some of the evaluated schools, animal welfare teaching is firmly embedded throughout the whole curriculum. In other schools, however, animal welfare is almost exclusively presented in terms of legislation rather than from an applied perspective. It is recommended that animal welfare is taught from an applied perspective (e.g. practical aspects of welfare on farms, during transport, or at slaughter) instead of addressing only the legislative aspects. Part of the teaching should be done in an interactive way promoting critical analysis of situations from different perspectives.



list of European veterinary schools with evaluation status (approved, not approved/visited) and date of last evaluation

<p>1. Albania</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural University of Tirana 	<p>17. Italy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria Bari (2001) Università di Bologna Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria (2005) Università di Camerino (2000) Università di Messina Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria (2001) Università di Milano Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria (1998) Università di Napoli Federico II Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria (2002) Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria Università degli studi di Padova (2008) Università di Parma Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria (2001) Università di Perugia Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria (2006) Università di Pisa Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria (1999) Università di Sassari Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria (1998) Università di Teramo (conditional approval 2007) Università di Torino Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria (1999) 	<p>26. Slovak Republic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Veterinary Medicine in Kosice (2005)
<p>2. Austria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veterinärmedizinische Universität Wien (2006) 	<p>18. Latvia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Latvia University of Agriculture Veterinār medicīnas fakultāte (2003) 	<p>27. Slovenia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Ljubljana (1998)
<p>3. Belgium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Université de Liège Faculté de Médecine Vétérinaire (2006) University of Ghent Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (2004) 	<p>19. Lithuania</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lithuanian Veterinary Academy Kaunas (2002) 	<p>28. Spain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona Facultat de Veterinària (2005) Universidad de Córdoba Facultad de Veterinaria (1999) Facultad de Veterinaria de Cáceres (1995) Universidad de León - Facultad de Veterinaria (2002) Universidad de Murcia Facultad de Veterinaria (2006) Facultad de Veterinaria de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (2000) Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Facultad de Veterinaria (2005) Universidad de Santiago de Compostela - Licenciado en Veterinaria (LUGO) (2008) Universidad Politécnica de Valencia - Departamento de Ciencia Animal (2004) Universidad de Zaragoza Facultad de Veterinaria (2006) University Alfonso Madrid
<p>4. Bosnia- Herzegovina</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Sarajevo 	<p>20. Netherlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universiteit Utrecht Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (2008) 	<p>29. Sweden</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Agricultural Sciences Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Uppsala (2007)
<p>5. Bulgaria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trakia University University of Sofia 	<p>21. Norway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Norwegian school of Veterinary science Oslo (2004) 	<p>30. Switzerland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vetsuisse (2007)
<p>6. Croatia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Zagreb Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (2002) 	<p>22. Poland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Akademia Rolnicza w Lublinie (2006) Uniwersytet Warmiński-Mazurski w Olsztynie - Wydział Medycyny Weterynaryjnej (1999) SGGW - Warsaw Agricultural University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (1999) Akademia Rolnicza we Wrocławiu - Wydział Medycyny Weterynaryjnej (1999) 	<p>31. Turkey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adnan Menderes University Ankara University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (2007) Firat University Elazığ (2007) Uludağ University Bursa (2004) University of Mustafa Kemal University of Istanbul (2008) University of Kafkas Kars (2008) Erciyes University School of Veterinary Medicine Kayseri University of Sakaik Konya (2008) University of Yuzcu Yil Van Kırıkkale University Harran University Urfa Mehmet Akif Ersoy University (MAKU) Burdur Öndükcü Mayıs University Samsun
<p>7. Czech Republic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of veterinary and pharmaceutical medicine Brno (2004) 	<p>23. Portugal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Escola Veterinária Vasco da Gama - Coimbra Universidade de Évora Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias - Lisboa Universidade Técnica de Lisboa - Faculdade de Medicina Veterinária Universidade do Porto (2002) Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro 	<p>32. Ukraine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Agricultural University Kiev Bila Tserkva State Agrarian University
<p>8. Denmark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University (2001) 	<p>24. Romania</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Bucharest (2000) Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Cluj- Napoca (2004) University of Agronomy and Veterinary Medicine Iasi Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Timisoara 	<p>33. United Kingdom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Bristol (conditional approval 2008) University of Cambridge Veterinary School (2005) University of Edinburgh Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (2005) University of Glasgow Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (2002) University of Liverpool Faculty of Veterinary Science (2005) Royal Veterinary College London (2000) University of Nottingham
<p>9. Estonia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estonian Agricultural University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Tartu (2004) 	<p>15. Hungary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Veterinary Science in Budapest (2004) 	<p>25. Serbia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veterinarski Fakultet - Beograd Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad
<p>10. Finland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Helsinki Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (1999) 	<p>16. Ireland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University College Dublin Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (2004) 	
<p>11. France</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> École Nationale Vétérinaire d'Alfort (ENVA) (2001) École Nationale Vétérinaire de Lyon (ENVL) (1998) École Nationale Vétérinaire de Nantes (ENVN) (2005) École Nationale Vétérinaire de Toulouse (ENVT) (1997) 	<p>13. Germany</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veterinärmedizinische Fakultät der Freien Universität Berlin (2007) Fachbereich Veterinärmedizin der Universität Gießen (2004) Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover (2008) Veterinärmedizinische Fakultät der Universität Leipzig (2008) Tierärztliche Fakultät der Ludwig-Maximilians Universität München (2002) 	
<p>12. FYROM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Skopje 	<p>14. Greece</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aristoteles University - Thessaloniki (2001) University of Thessaly 	

SOME SCHOOLS ARE MISSING IN THIS LIST SUCH AS IN TURKEY, UKRAINE, ETC.

01 Introduction

The promotion and protection of animal welfare is one of the core competences of a well-educated veterinarian. The veterinary profession in particular, is in an excellent position to assess animal welfare, to identify causes of sub-optimal welfare and to make recommendations for its correction. To do so, veterinarians need to be taught during their undergraduate training the full range of knowledge, critical thinking and skills to assess animal welfare. OIE, the World Organisation for Animal Health, urged all Veterinary and Agricultural Science Faculties to include the teaching of animal welfare in their curriculum (OIE ref SK/CC 60.2448). This study examined to what extent and how animal welfare is taught during undergraduate veterinary education in European veterinary faculties.

In about 100 establishments in Europe, of which 73 are in the European Union, it takes 5-6 years study to become a veterinary surgeon. Within the EU, mutual recognition of

veterinary diplomas has been established by law. This means that EU citizens, who have obtained their veterinary degree and the right to practice in their country of residence, may also practice in other Member States without the need for further examination. Directive 2005/36/EC⁽¹⁾ on the recognition of professional qualifications provides a list of the subjects - amongst which are animal ethology and protection - that must be taught within the veterinary curriculum to make the veterinary qualification eligible for 'automatic' recognition. In order to verify that veterinary teaching establishments satisfy the necessary criteria (as defined by the above mentioned Directive), an evaluation system has been in operation since 1986; for some years now, it has been administered jointly by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) and the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE).

(1) <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32005L0036:EN:HTML>

02 Methodology

Most of the veterinary faculties in the European Union and several non-EU countries have been evaluated at least once under the evaluation system. Each evaluation team prepares a detailed report which looks into all the relevant aspects of undergraduate teaching.

Evaluation Reports from 43 faculties were examined in order to analyse the relevance given to animal welfare in the objectives/mission statement of the establishment and the presence of animal welfare teaching in the curriculum (number of hours contributed,

in which semester(s), form of teaching, content of teaching). All comments given by the evaluation team regarding the animal welfare culture in the establishment were also taken into account. This approach allowed the description and quantification of animal welfare teaching aspects in veterinary teaching establishments and enabled certain conclusions to be drawn, regarding both the teaching of animal welfare in European veterinary faculties and the importance of animal welfare teaching in the evaluation system.

03 Results

Results of the evaluation system:

According to the latest update (June 2008) of the evaluation of veterinary schools in Europe, 46 teaching establishments from 23 European countries have been evaluated and approved (fully or conditionally), 20 have been visited but were not approved and more than 30 have not been visited in the last 10 years.

Veterinary Schools in the EU

- Visited and approved: 46
- Visited and not approved: 20
- Not visited: 30 (estimate)



Reviewing Animal Welfare Teaching in the 43 faculties examined, the following conclusions can be reached:

■ Attention paid to animal welfare teaching differs greatly between schools e.g. number of hours specifically dedicated to it in the curriculum varies from none up to 56 hours (average 23);

- Many schools have increased their efforts in Animal Welfare teaching in recent years;
- Animal Welfare teaching is firmly embedded throughout the whole undergraduate study in some EU veterinary faculties (mentioned in core objectives; special Ethics and Animal Welfare Committee; specific department/unit and dedicated teaching staff)
- However, in a substantial number of other European veterinary faculties, animal welfare science does not feature prominently. Often it is presented principally in terms of legislative aspects given in a theoretical manner, and neither from an applied perspective (e.g. practical aspects of welfare on farms, during transport, or at slaughter) nor in an integrated way (linking animal health, welfare and public health).
- In a small number of European schools, animal welfare is addressed in an inadequate and/or fragmented manner in teaching (number of hours and/or in quality of education).
- In addition, in a small number of teaching establishments, housing, husbandry and disease control provisions at the farm(s) and clinics associated with the Faculty need to be improved.

It should be noted that comparing evaluation reports - which give a snapshot view - can be quite difficult. Only a limited number of parameters on animal welfare are systematically recorded in every veterinary faculty, while other issues are only recorded when one of the evaluators has a special interest in animal welfare teaching.

04 Recommendations

- Teaching establishments should include a reference to animal health and welfare in their core objectives and mission statement.
- Animal welfare - and the interrelation between animal health, animal welfare and public health - should be taught in an integrated manner throughout the whole curriculum (not only in the pre-clinical courses).
- Animal welfare teaching should not only address the legislative aspects but be approached from an applied perspective (e.g. practical aspects of welfare on farms, during transport, or at slaughter). Part of the teaching should be done in an interactive way promoting critical analysis of situations from different perspectives.

- Animal welfare teaching should take a risk assessment approach, including animal-based and outcome-based parameters.
- The farm(s) and clinics associated with the faculty should function as role models, exhibiting current best practice in regard to animal welfare in order to demonstrate these concepts to students.
- A specific evaluation of the animal welfare and ethics teaching per faculty including the suggestion of recommendations for improvement could be beneficial.