

THE DEPENDENCE OF THE EFFECTIVE BORDER CONTROLS ON APPROPRIATE RESOURCES DEPLOYMENT AND ENHANCED INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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Summary: *The presentation will discuss the requirements for veterinary border checks and procedures as a key pillar for preventing the introduction of any risks to human and animal health into a country originating from imports or transits of live animals and products thereof. To a certain extent also rules on animal welfare during transport of live animals have been taken into account considering the possibility of bottlenecks at the veterinary border inspection posts.*

Specific criteria and conditions for efficient and effective veterinary border checks are already laid down in specific chapters of the OIE Codes.

Veterinary border checks need an all-inclusive legal framework and require a competent and credible Veterinary Service both at central and border post level. In addition, an adequate infrastructure for carrying out the veterinary border checks is required, which should be based on a long-term strategy and be properly resourced. Furthermore, harmonised procedures for performing the veterinary border checks should be in place, be transparent and based on scientific evidence.

Continuous training and provision of expertise as well as the exchange of information are essential components for the successful protection of a country importing or allowing transit.

The presentation will describe and analyse the responses from the Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe to the questionnaire prepared by the OIE on the current state of implementation and enforcement on veterinary border checks and procedures.

From this thorough analysis, it seems possible to conclude that further actions by the Member Countries and the OIE are required to enhance the international cooperation in this matter.

Key words: *trade in animals and animal products – Europe – veterinary border control – Border Inspection Post – Central Competent Veterinary Authority – OIE*

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1. Introduction

A key pillar for preventing the introduction of possible health risks into a country are efficient veterinary checks on live animals, products of animal origin and certain feeding stuffs, on any other means that might have the capability to carry an agent of animal diseases and any other health risks to humans or animals at the border of a country when those commodities are imported into or transiting through the country.

Both, commercial cargo and items brought in by travellers in their bags or sent by mail (non commercial items) can present the same serious risks. In this context, particular attention should also be paid to the safe disposal of kitchen waste (waste of products of animal origin) from international means of transport (ship, aircraft, truck, train or bus).

It should be noted at this point that veterinary border control is a key factor to ensure that live animals and products of animal origin entering a country are safe and meet the specific import/transit conditions laid down by legislation.

Imported live animals and products of animal origin present the highest level of risks as they can transmit serious human and animal diseases or carry other risks. Therefore it is necessary to subject them to specific controls at their point of entry. A consignment of live animals or products of animal origin should only enter a country if it has satisfactorily undergone the specific veterinary checks and a 'Veterinary Entry Document' has been issued for release into free circulation.

In order to carry out these checks there must be an appropriate infrastructure, sufficient administrative and technical capacity and must be adequately funded.

In its 2010 *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* [2], Section 5 ("Trade measures, import/export procedures and veterinary certification"), the OIE has laid down the general principles for veterinary border checks at Border Inspection Posts (BIPs).

Based on the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, Chapter 3.1, the OIE has elaborated guidelines on the principles as regards legislation ensuring the fundamental quality of the Veterinary Services. These guidelines also cover border controls, import and export regulations. In the OIE *Guidelines on veterinary legislation*:

- It is recommended that veterinary legislation should cover the definition of the competent authority, penalties and sanctions, powers of the competent authority, the intervention by inspectors and their powers and obligations, as well as the elements concerning administrative and enforcement actions and financing for the performance of veterinary intervention².
- The OIE has listed those elements which should be addressed by veterinary legislation concerning imports³.

All these elements are applicable for the adoption of legislation ensuring efficient border checks.

Moreover, the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* specifies in Article 3.1.3 that, in the context of risk assessment for imports and exports⁴, OIE Member Countries have the right to carry out an evaluation of the veterinary service of the other Member Country which obviously would also include the arrangements for border checks.

Similar rules have been laid down in the OIE *Aquatic Animal Health Code* [3].

The OIE Regional Commission for Europe⁵, at its meeting of 25 May 2009 in Paris, focussed on the following three issues:

2 Part I: General recommendations; 2.4; 2.6 to 2.12

3 Part II: Technical recommendations; 11.1

4 Chapter 2.1 of the *Code*, entitled "Import risk analysis"

5 The OIE Regional Commission for Europe is composed of 53 member countries

- the importance of border control;
- the importance of international cooperation and information exchange; and
- the provision of assistance to countries with weaker Veterinary Services to enable them to meet international standards regarding border control.

The Regional Commission agreed on the proposal to combine these issues into one technical item included on the agenda of its 24th Conference⁶ with the following title: “The dependence of the effective border controls on appropriate resources deployment and enhanced international cooperation, including information exchange”.

In February 2010 the authors were invited by the Director General of the OIE to elaborate a questionnaire which was then sent out by the OIE Headquarters to the member countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe. The questionnaire was in English, French and Russian. In July and August 2010 the OIE Headquarters forwarded the replies of 42 of the 53 Member Countries to the authors for assessment and drafting of the report.

The replies were encoded in a database. From this database the results were analysed and expressed in a number of charts shown in section 3 of the report.

The conclusions are presented in section 4 of the report.

2. The questionnaire

Taking into consideration the OIE *Guidelines on veterinary legislation* [4] relevant for veterinary border checks and controls, the questionnaire was designed to obtain an updated inventory of the state of veterinary border facilities and procedures of the Member Countries with the view to facilitating their cooperation within the European region of the OIE and, where necessary, to assist them.

The design of the questionnaire aimed to cover the issues of:

- the importance of border control;
- the importance of international cooperation and information exchange; and
- the provision of assistance to countries with weaker Veterinary Services.

Furthermore, based on the experience of Europe in veterinary border checks and procedures, the OIE could also draw some conclusions as regards to its guidelines for enhanced cooperation in commercial trade or movements of items of veterinary concern worldwide.

It was important to find out whether the Member Countries of the Europe Region of the OIE have:

- legislation in place to apply the OIE guidelines on border control;
- necessary infrastructure and resources to apply legislation effectively both on commercial cargo and non-commercial items of veterinary concern.

Accordingly, the questionnaire was divided into three parts assessing the state of play of:

- A. the legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures;
- B. the implementation and enforcement of legislation as regards commercial cargo; and
- C. the implementation and enforcement of legislation as regards non-commercial items.

The Member Countries were provided with a detailed explanation regarding the rationale as well as guiding notes for the proper completion of the questionnaire making reference to OIE relevant information. The guiding notes were based on information taken from *The EU Veterinarian* [1].

6 The 24th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe was held in Astana, Kazakhstan from 20 to 24 September 2010

Questionnaire (short version)

A. Legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures

1. Has your country adopted legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures?
 - 1.1. If yes, does the legislation cover the border checks on all categories of live animals (mammals, bees, aquatic animals)?
 - 1.2. If yes, does the legislation cover all kind of products of animal origin (meat, fish, seafood, milk, egg, honey, gelatine, wax, fat, hides, skins, fur, other animal by-products, biologicals, pharmaceuticals, feeding-stuffs, fertilizers)?
 - 1.3. If yes, does the legislation cover border checks on feedings stuffs of plant origin posing a potential risk to animals (such as hay, straw, contaminated feeds, etc.)?
2. In case of border checks on live animals, does the legislation cover the aspects of animal health, animal welfare, veterinary public health and others?
3. In case of border checks on products of animal origin, does the legislation cover the aspects of animal health, animal welfare, veterinary public health and others?
4. Does the legislation cover the aspects of commercial, non commercial items, travelling pet animals and kitchen waste from international means of transport?

B. Implementation and enforcement of legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures as regards commercial cargo

1. Has your country published a complete and up-to-date list of commodities which are subject to veterinary border checks?
 - 1.1. Is this list based on HS ('Harmonized System')⁷ nomenclature?
 - 1.2. Is this list based on CN ('Combined Nomenclature')⁸?
 - 1.3. Is this list based on other nomenclature?
 - 1.4. Is this list available in electronic format?
 - 1.5. Is this list incorporated in the customs clearance system?
2. Competent Authority
 - 2.1. Has your country only one Central Competent Veterinary Authority (CCVA) in charge of veterinary border checks?
 - 2.2. If no, please specify the other Competent Authorities in the country and indicate their area(s) of competence.
 - 2.3. Is there a direct chain of command between the CCVA headquarter and all veterinary Border Inspection Posts (BIPs)?
 - 2.4. What is the main role of the CCVA concerning veterinary border checks?
 - 2.5. Co-ordination of CCVA with other competent authorities involved in border control?
 - 2.6. Exchange of information about border risks between CCVA and other competent authorities involved in border control?
 - 2.7. Delegation of parts of veterinary checks to other competent authorities involved in border control?
 - 2.8. Sharing facilities between Border Veterinarians and other competent authorities involved in border control?
 - 2.9. Sharing administrative/technical equipment between Border Veterinarians and other competent authorities involved in border control?

⁷ HS: Harmonized System. Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System of tariff nomenclature. This is an internationally standardized system of names and numbers for classifying traded products developed and maintained by the World Customs Organization (WCO).

⁸ CN: Combined Nomenclature. It was established by the European Union on the basis of the HS, to meet the requirements both of the Common Customs Tariff and of the external trade statistics of the European Union.

3. Local veterinary border inspector
 - 3.1. Is the local veterinary Border Inspection Post (BIP) headed by an official veterinarian?
 - 3.2. Is he/she supported by technical and administrative staff?
 - 3.3./3.4. Which actions is the official veterinarian at the BIP empowered to carry out?
 - 3.5. Is a training plan for the BIP staff available?
 - 3.6. Frequency of the training of BIP staff?
 - 3.7. Does the official veterinarian of a BIP at road have regular contact with his/her opposite colleague of the neighbouring country?
 - 3.8. Does the official veterinarian have actual information about consignments which were classified as risky at other BIPs and thus rejected?
4. Procedures
 - 4.1. In case import licenses are required for import or transit, how many days before arrival of the consignment are required for issuing the licence?
 - 4.2. Is there a pre-notification requirement to announce the arrival of the consignment before it arrives at the border?
 - 4.3. Does the importer have to deliver an import or transit declaration?
 - 4.4. Are the certificates for import or transit based on template models?
 - 4.5. If yes, are the certificate templates stored in a database?
 - 4.6. If yes, does importer have access to the database?
 - 4.7. If yes, does the official veterinarian have access to the database?
 - 4.8. Where is the documentary check carried out?
 - 4.9. By whom is the documentary check carried out?
 - 4.10. Where is the identity check carried out?
 - 4.11. Who carries out the identity check?
 - 4.12. Where is the physical check (and sampling) performed?
 - 4.13. Who carries out the physical/sampling check?
 - 4.14. Is the outcome of the checks documented?
 - 4.15. Is there a veterinary certificate issued and handed out to the importer indicating the results of the checks and the decision taken about consignment?
 - 4.16. Does the Customs officer need to check the certificate prior to customs release of veterinary consignments intended for?
 - 4.17. Who issues such a certificate?
 - 4.18. Location of veterinary Border Inspection Posts (BIPs)?
5. Infrastructure of Border Inspection Posts (BIPs): Percentage of BIPs generally in line with the recommendations for an appropriate facility?
6. Equipment of Border Inspection Posts (BIPs): Percentage of BIPs generally in line with the recommendations?
7. Quarantine stations for live animals in your country:
 - 7.1. As regards live animals, is your country recognising quarantine carried out in the country of origin?
 - 7.2. As regards live animals, is your country requiring an isolation period at destination?
8. Resting facilities for live animals
 - Fully functioning resting posts for farm animals
 - Fully functioning sanctuaries (rescue centre) for non farm animals

9. Inspection fees
 - 9.1 Which authority defines the fees?
 - 9.2 What are fees collected for?
 - 9.3 What is the fee structure based on?
10. Communication: How are headquarters of the CCVA and the BIPs on the spot linked?
11. Time of alert in case of risky consignments?
12. Data processing and documentation: Is a central database available for the processing/evaluating of data related to veterinary border checks?
13. Statistics
 - Total number of consignments per year in all BIPs of your country?
 - Number of BIPs?
14. International cooperation
 - 14.1. Do you mainly issue general import/transit conditions/permits?
 - 14.2. Do you mainly issue specific import/transit conditions/permits?
 - 14.3. Do you communicate your import/transit conditions to the CCVA of exporting countries by displaying them on your website?
 - 14.4. Do you provide the relevant model veterinary certificate per commodity on your website?
 - 14.5. In case of rejection of a consignment or part thereof, how do you inform the CCVA of the exporting country?
 - 14.6. Do you organise regular meetings on BIP issues with the CCVA of your neighbouring countries?
15. Control of waste (kitchen waste) of international means of transport
 - 15.1. Is the Competent Authority in charge of this waste?
 - 15.2. Is the official veterinarian of the BIP or the competent local veterinary authority in charge of the supervision and monitoring of the disposal procedures concerning this waste?
 - 15.3. Is there a legal framework in place for control and final disposal of waste?
 - 15.4. Are records about the disposal kept?
 - 15.5. Which method of disposal is used for this waste?
16. Veterinary checks in free zones, free ports, free warehouses, customs warehouses, ship suppliers: Is the official veterinarian empowered to carry out inspections inside those areas or buildings?

C. Implementation and enforcement of legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures as regards non commercial items

1. Is the CCVA in charge of legal and/or administrative measures concerning the check of travellers' bags or international mail?
2. Is the official veterinarian in charge of performing the checks in the relevant point of entry?
3. Are the checks in the entry points based on risk assessment?
4. What are the methods applied for the identification of items representing a risk?
5. Do you provide detailed information about the veterinary rules applicable in this field?
6. Is the CCVA in charge of legal and/or administrative measures concerning the check of pet animals accompanying the traveller?
7. Is the official veterinarian in charge of performing the checks in the relevant point of entry?
8. Is an electronic list of all entry points into your country with the contact details of the official veterinarian available?
9. Do you provide detailed information about the veterinary rules applicable for travelling pet animals on the internet?

3. Member Countries replies to questionnaire

As previously mentioned, the replies to the questionnaire from the individual Member Countries were encoded in a database.

The responses to the questionnaire were divided into four groups of countries:

- European Union Member States;
- EEA/EFTA⁹ countries;
- EU candidate countries; and
- the rest of the Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe.

It must be highlighted that although Liechtenstein and San Marino did not send specific reports their answers have been considered as being incorporated in the reports for Switzerland and Italy respectively, as it is understood that the veterinary services of these latter countries are responsible for the border controls of the former ones. Actually, by virtue of the Customs Union Treaty of 1923, Liechtenstein became part of the Swiss Customs Territory and, according to Article 4 of the Treaty, the Swiss customs legislation is applicable in Liechtenstein¹⁰. A similar situation exists for San Marino and Italy.

An excellent response rate of over 80% was obtained, with 9 countries not responding (excluding San Marino and Liechtenstein).

The answers to the questionnaire were very good. Some Member Countries gave additional explanations, however some Member Countries did not answer all the questions. This means that on occasions the total numbers given does not match the total of Member Countries responding.

The results of the assessment have been expressed in a number of charts. In the heading of each chart, reference is made to the number of the corresponding question(s) in the questionnaire.

Overall, 26 out of 27 EU Member States, all 5 EEA/EFTA, 2 out of 3 EU-Candidate Countries and 11 out of 18 from “the rest of the Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe” replied, i.e. a total of 44 countries, 2 of which, Liechtenstein and San Marino, are covered by Switzerland and Italy, respectively.

⁹ EEA: European Economic Area; EFTA: European Free Trade Association

¹⁰ As well as any other Swiss federal legislation whose application is necessary for the proper functioning of the Customs Union.

Table 1.– Overview of responses

Responding		Responding	
European Union Member States		EEA/EFTA Member States	
Austria	Yes	Iceland (EEA/EFTA)	Yes
Belgium	Yes	Liechtenstein (EEA/EFTA)	No, but covered by Switzerland
Bulgaria	Yes	Norway (EEA/EFTA)	Yes
Cyprus	Yes	San Marino	No, but covered by Italy
Czech Republic	Yes	Switzerland (EFTA)	Yes
Denmark	Yes	EU candidate countries	
Estonia	Yes	Croatia	Yes
Finland	Yes	Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	No
France	Yes	Turkey	Yes
Germany	Yes	Other countries, member of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe	
Greece	Yes	Albania	No
Hungary	Yes	Andorra	No
Ireland	Yes	Armenia	Yes
Italy	Yes	Azerbaijan	Yes
Latvia	Yes	Belarus	No
Lithuania	Yes	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Yes
Luxembourg	Yes	Georgia	Yes
Malta	No	Israel	No
Netherlands	Yes	Kazakhstan	Yes
Poland	Yes	Kyrgyzstan	No
Romania	Yes	Moldova	Yes
Portugal	Yes	Montenegro	No
Slovakia	Yes	Russia	Yes
Slovenia	Yes	Serbia	Yes
Spain	Yes	Tajikistan	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Turkmenistan	No
United Kingdom	Yes	Ukraine	Yes
		Uzbekistan	Yes

A. Legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures

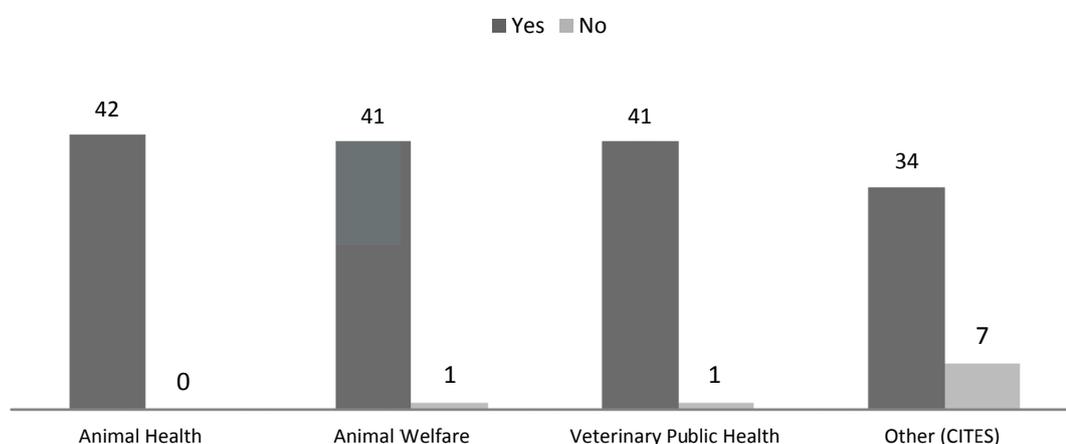
A 1.– Indication of how many Member Countries have complete legislation on border checks

For live animals it should be highlighted that 1 country (Russia) is missing veterinary border control legislation on Animal Welfare; 1 country (Tajikistan) on Veterinary Public Health; and 8 countries (Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Norway, Russia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Ukraine) on other rules such as CITES¹¹.

Concerning products, all Member Countries except Iceland have legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures covering all categories of products of animal origin (meat, fish, sea food, milk, eggs, honey, gelatine, wax, fats, hides and skins fur, other animal by-products, biologicals, pharmaceuticals, feeding stuffs, and fertilizers). Armenia did not respond to this question.

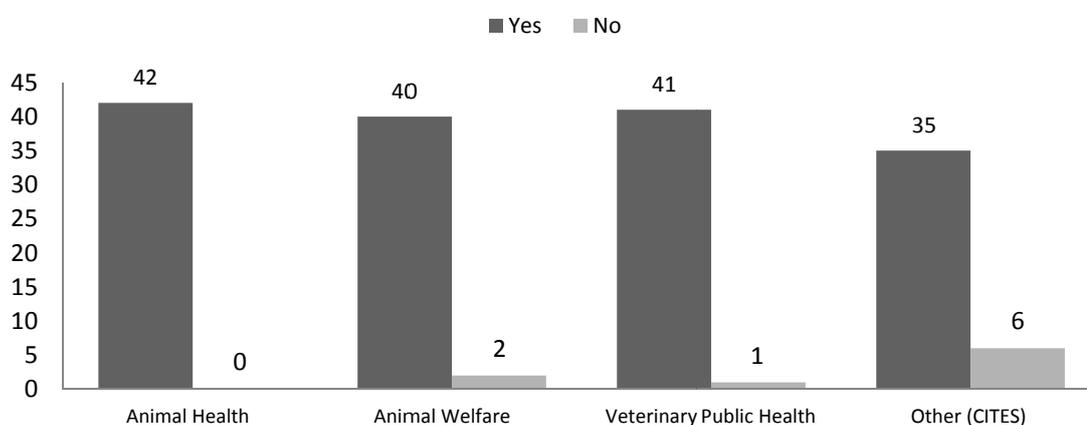
Concerning hay, straw and contaminated feeds of plant origin all countries except 1 (Armenia) have these products covered by legislation.

A 2.– Indication of how many Member Countries have legislation on veterinary border checks for live animals, covering the aspects of animal health, animal welfare, veterinary public health or others



A 3.– Indication of how many Member Countries have legislation on veterinary border checks for products, covering the aspects of animal health, animal welfare, veterinary public health or others

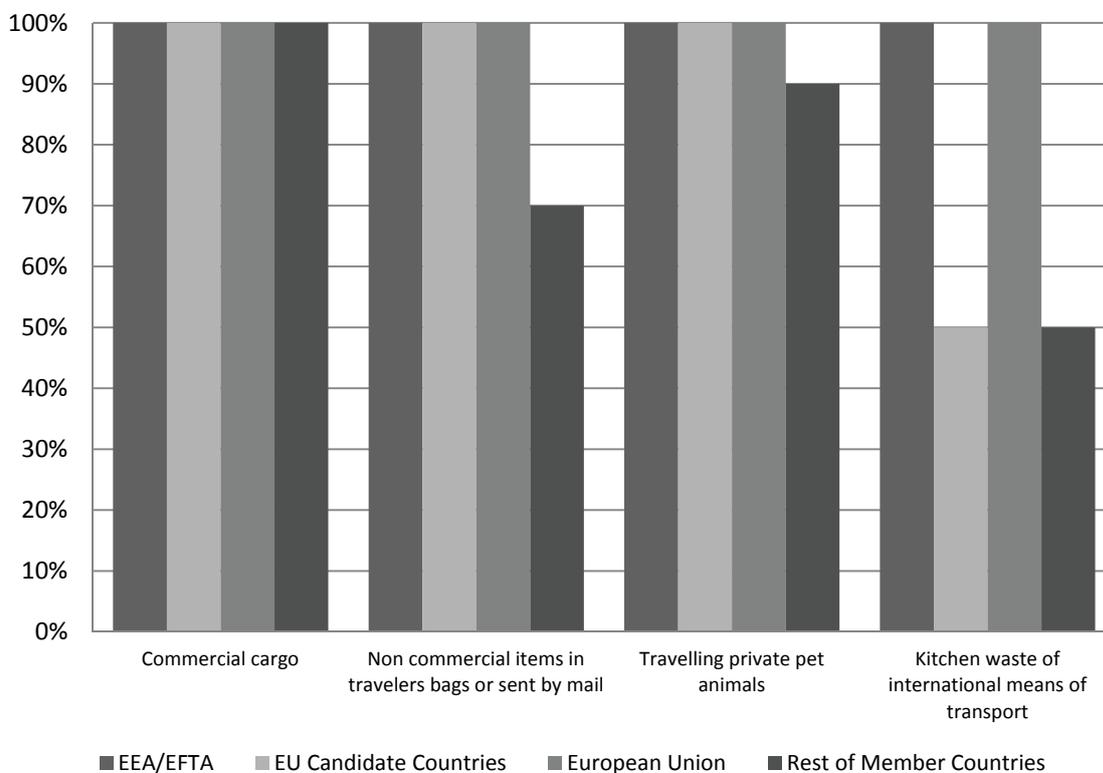
Russia and Turkey are missing legislation on animal welfare; Tajikistan on veterinary public health; and Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Norway, Russia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Ukraine on other rules such as CITES.



11 CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

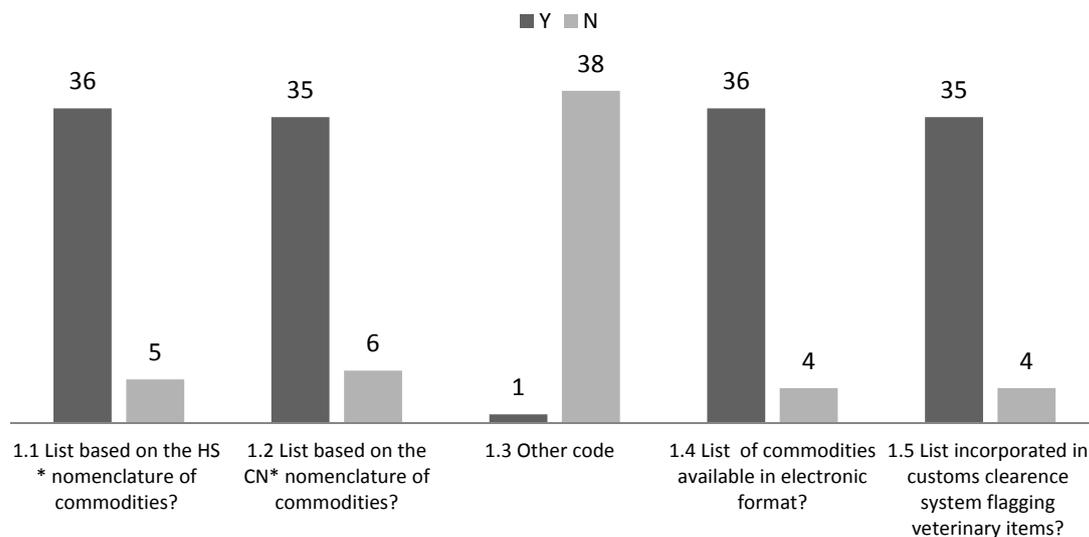
A 4.– Indication of how many Member Countries have legislation on commercial, non-commercial consignments, kitchen waste of international means of transport and pet animals, split between EEA/EFTA, EU-Candidate Countries, EU and the rest of the Member Countries

Proportion of Member Countries where legislation covers...

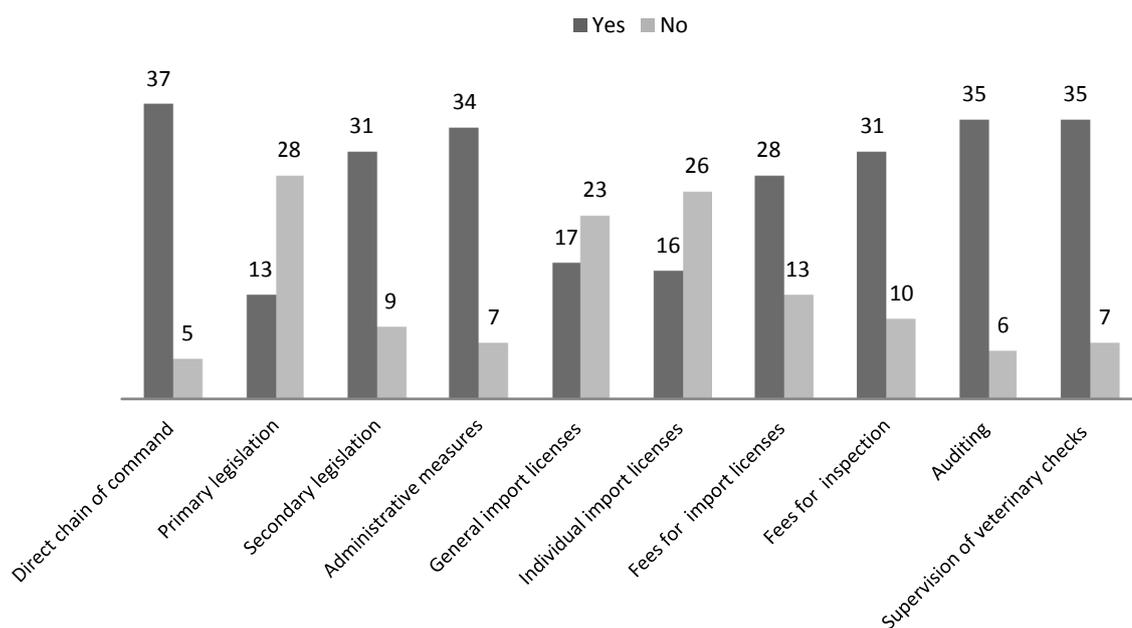


B. Implementation and enforcement of legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures as regards commercial cargo

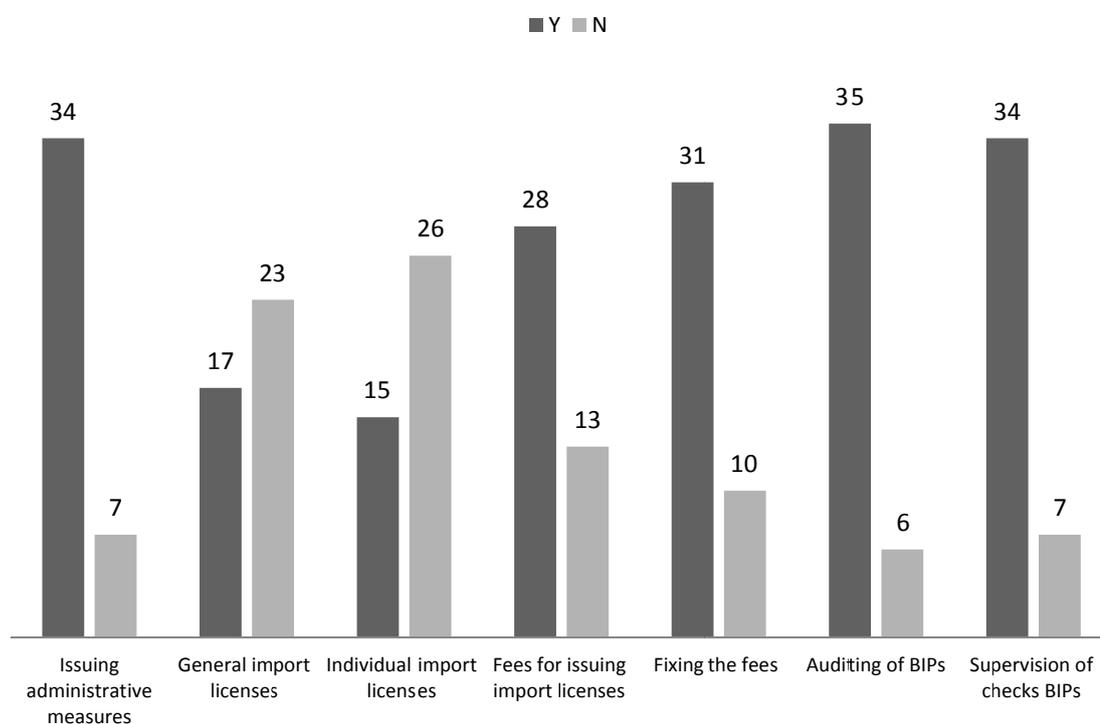
B 1.– Indication of how many Member Countries have an e-list of veterinary commodities with link to customs database and based on HS/CN Codes



B 2.1. and B 2.3.– Indication of how many Member Countries have got one CCVA with direct chain of command to the border posts (BIPs), and main role of CCVA concerning checks

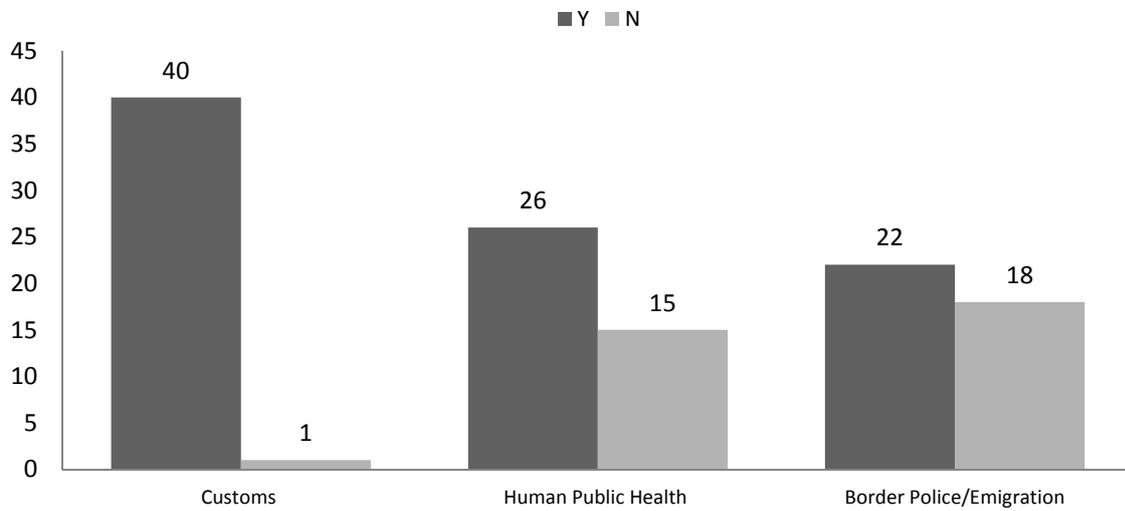


B 2.4.– Main roles of the CCVA concerning veterinary border checks

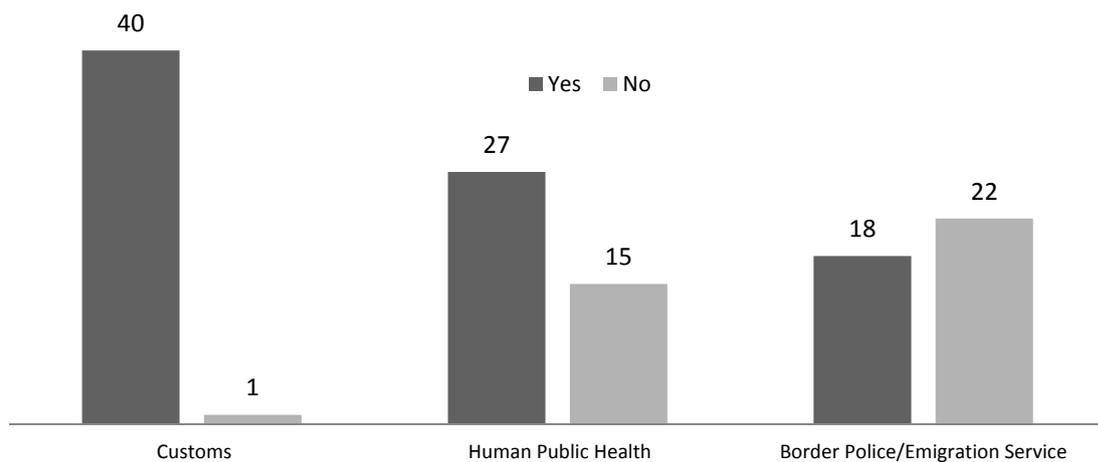


B 2.5 to B 2.9.– Relationship between CCVA and other Competent Authorities as regards coordination, exchange of information, delegation of parts of veterinary checks, sharing facilities and equipment

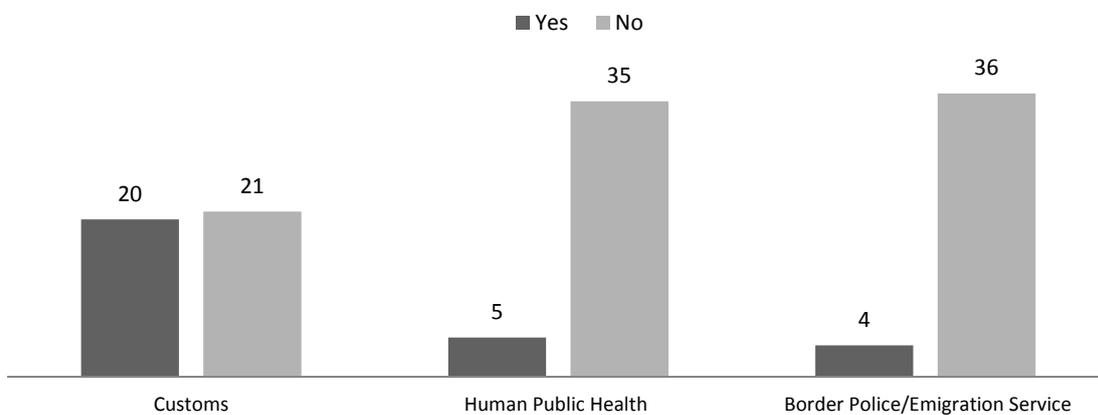
B 2.5.– Coordination between CCVA and other Competent Authorities



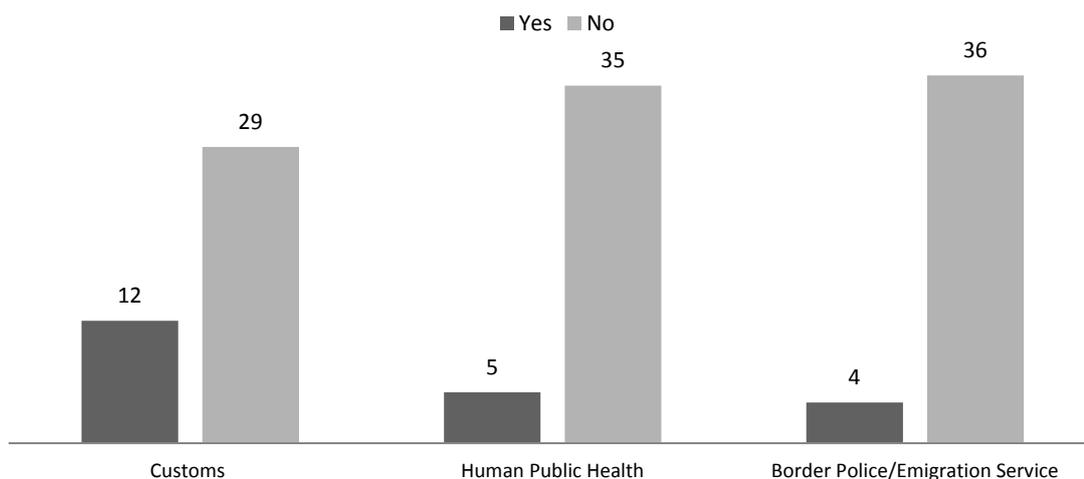
B 2.6.– Information exchange between CCVA and other Competent Authorities



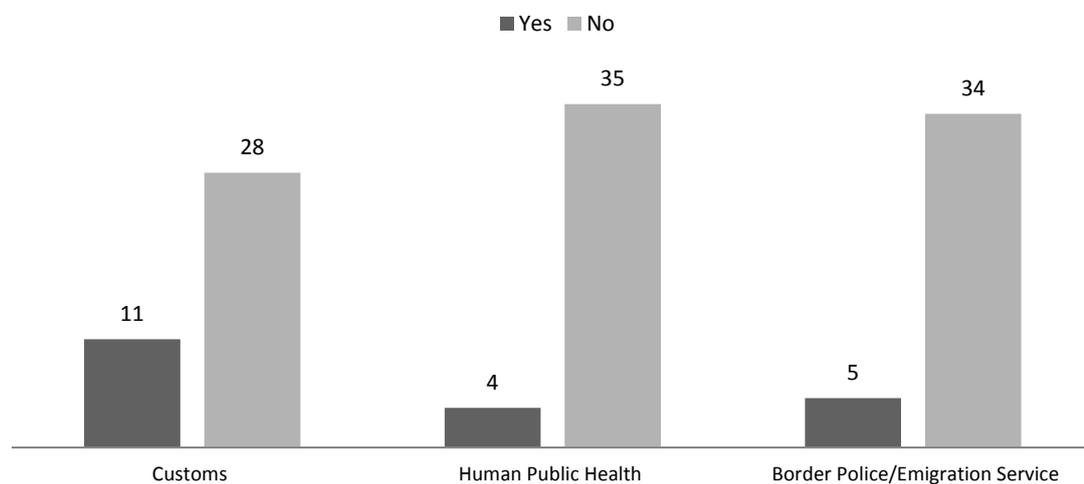
B 2.7.– Delegation to other Competent Authorities



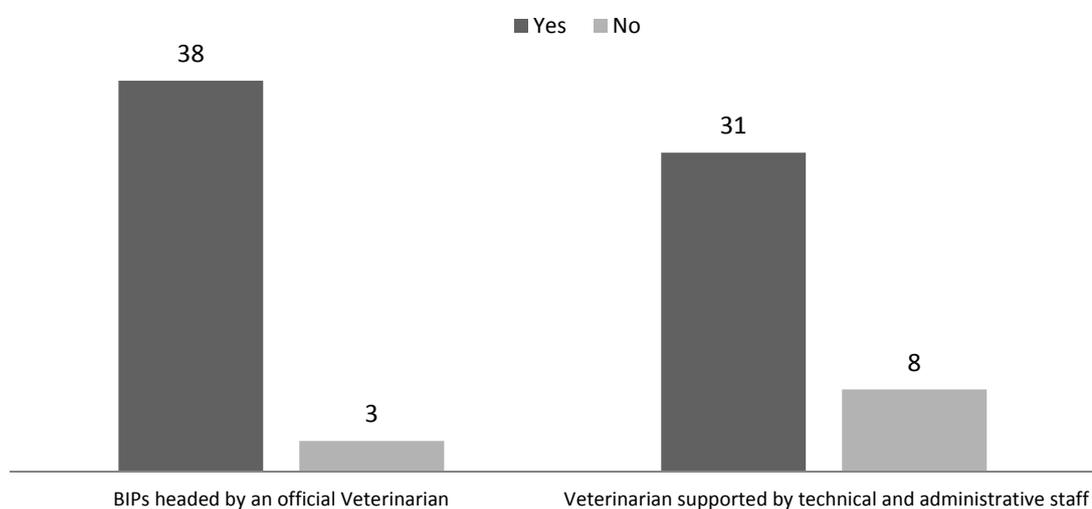
B 2.8.– Sharing of BIP facilities with other Competent Authorities



B 2.9.– Sharing administrative/technical equipment with other Competent Authorities

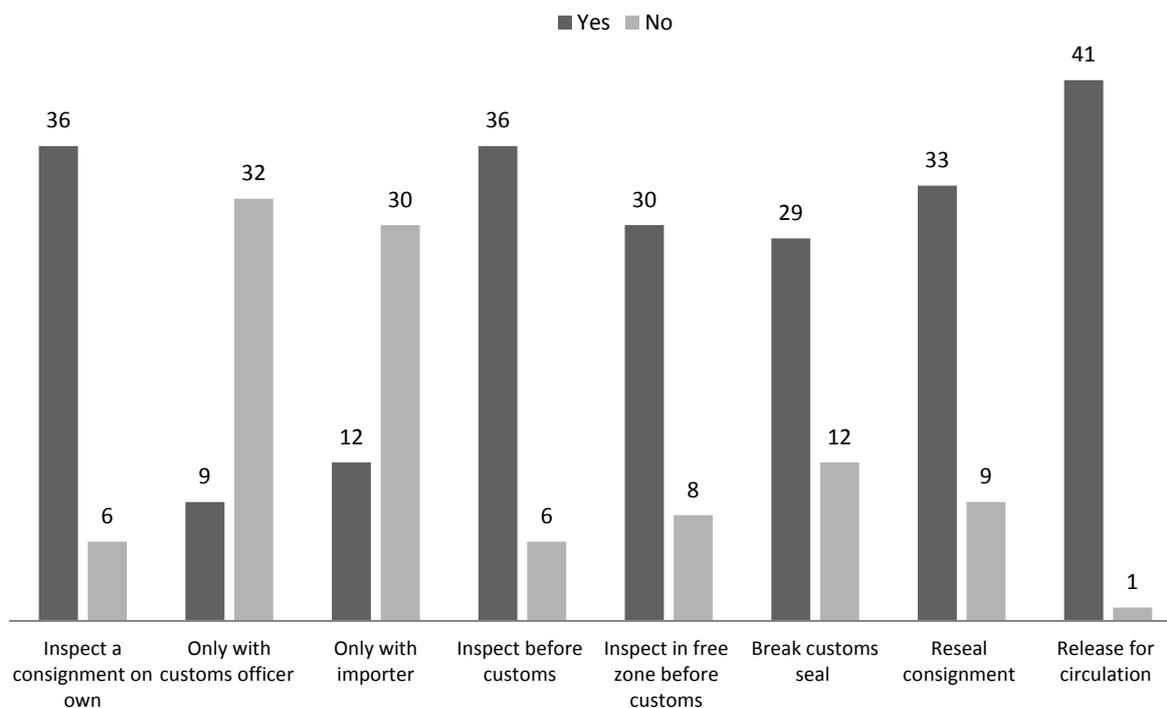


B 3.1 and 3.2.– Number of Member Countries with official veterinarian heading the local BIP and support staff available at BIP

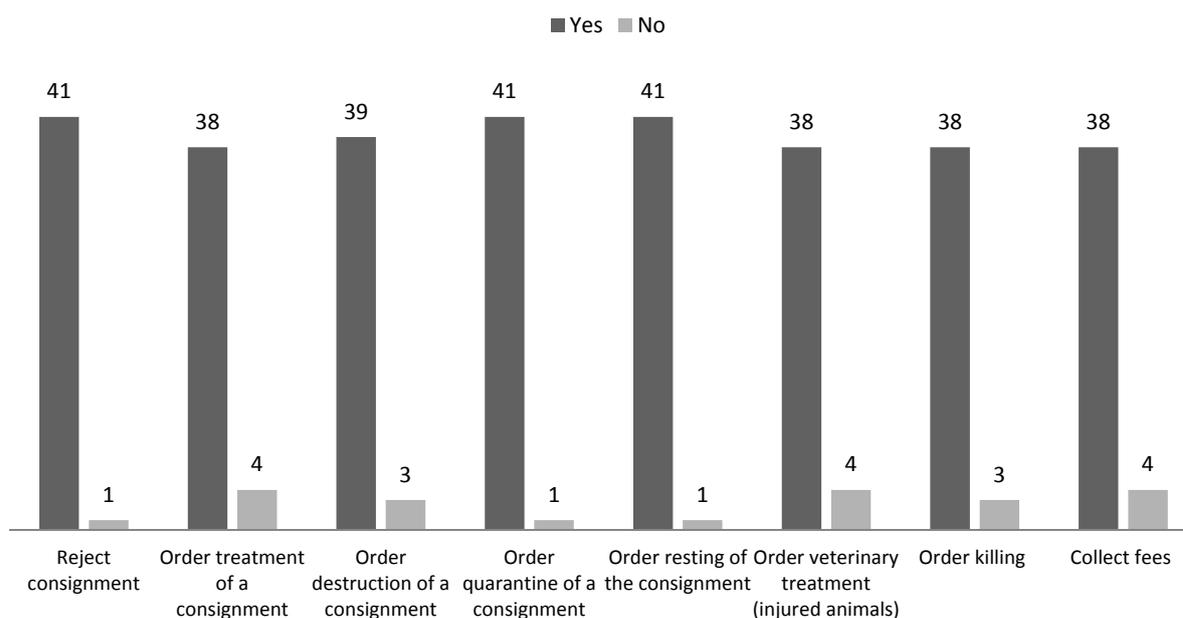


B 3.3.– Aspects of powers of Official Veterinarian covering inspection of a consignment only by Official Veterinarian, only in presence of Customs Officer, only with the importer, inspection prior to customs declaration, inspection in the free zone prior to customs declaration, breaking of customs seal, resealing with veterinary or customs seal, releasing a consignment for circulation, rejecting a consignment, treatment of consignment, destruction of a consignment, quarantine of live animals, resting of live animals, treatment of live animals, killing of live animals and collection a fees for inspection or other measures taken.

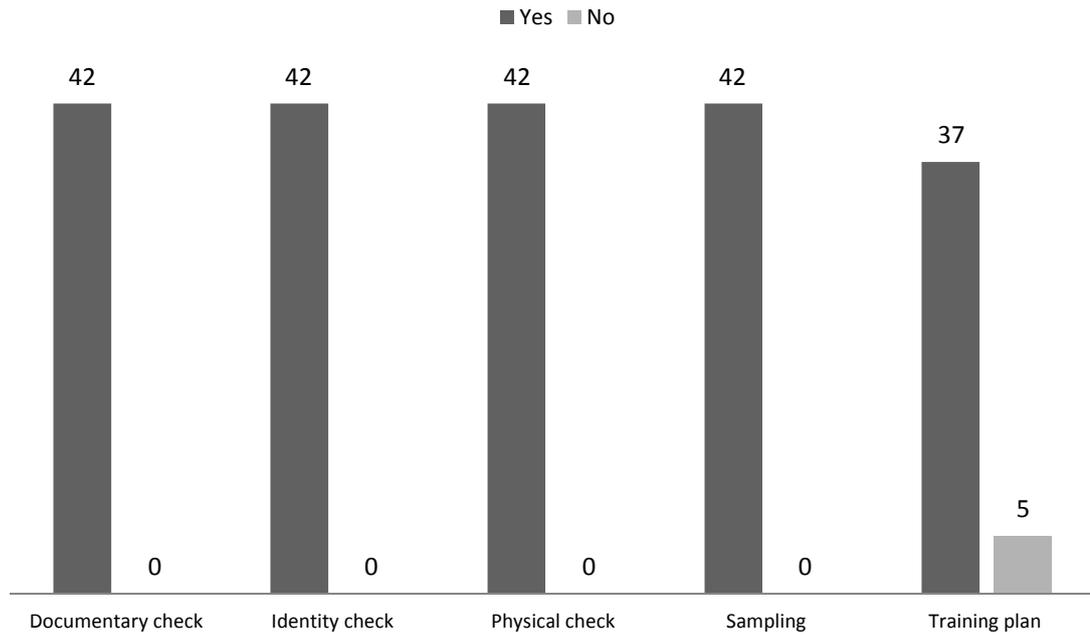
B 3.3 Part 1.– Empowerment of Official Veterinarian



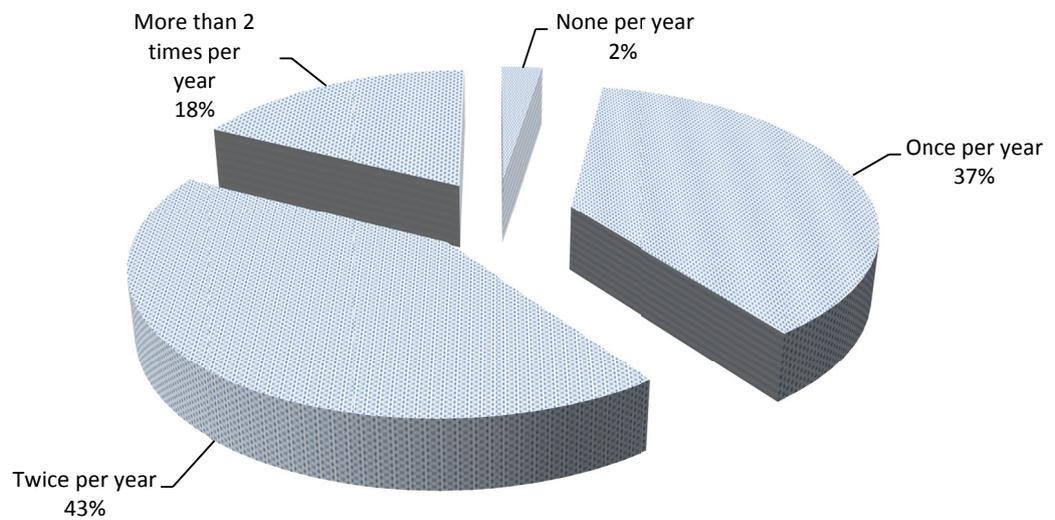
B 3.3 Part 2.– Empowerment of Official Veterinarian



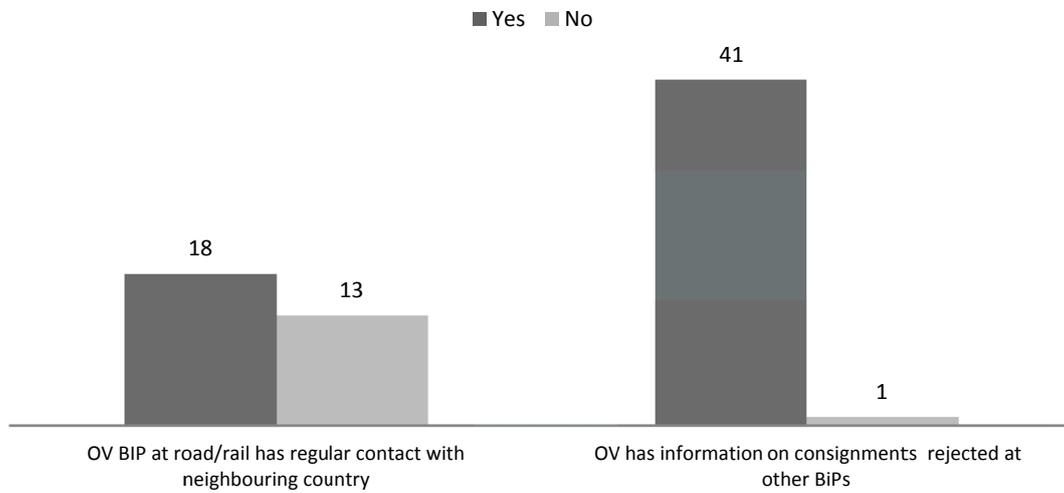
B 3.4 and B 3.5.– Empowerment of the Official Veterinarian at the BIP to carry out documentary, identity and physical checks including sampling. Availability of training plan for BIP staff.



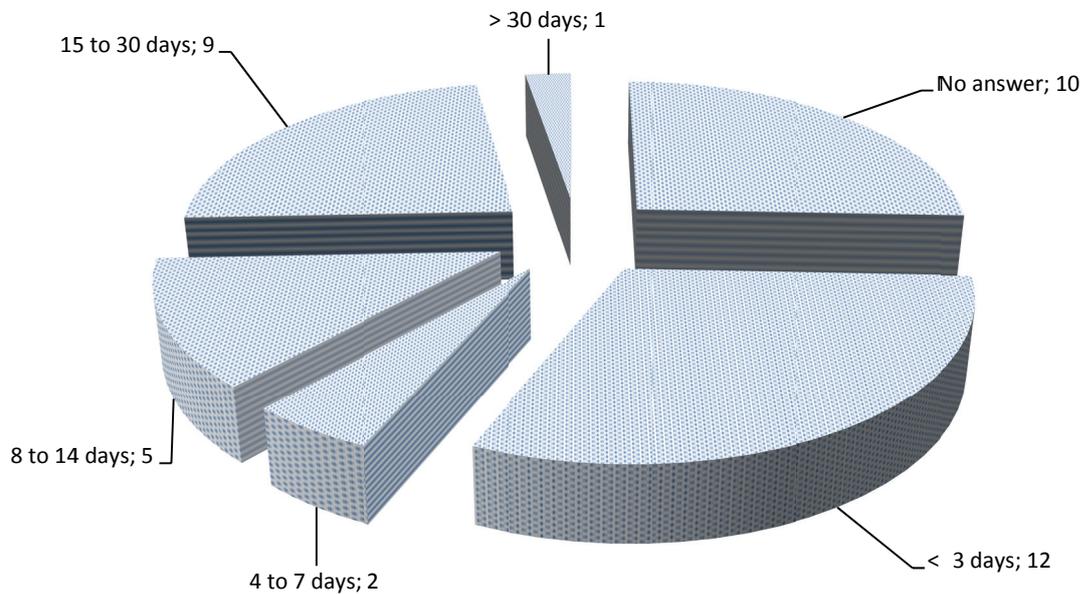
B 3.6.– Pie chart on frequency of training of staff at BIP



B 3.7. and B 3.8.– Number of Member Countries where the official veterinarians at road BIPs have regular contact with colleagues of neighbouring countries, and number of Member Countries where the official veterinarians have actual information about risky or rejected consignments at other BIPs

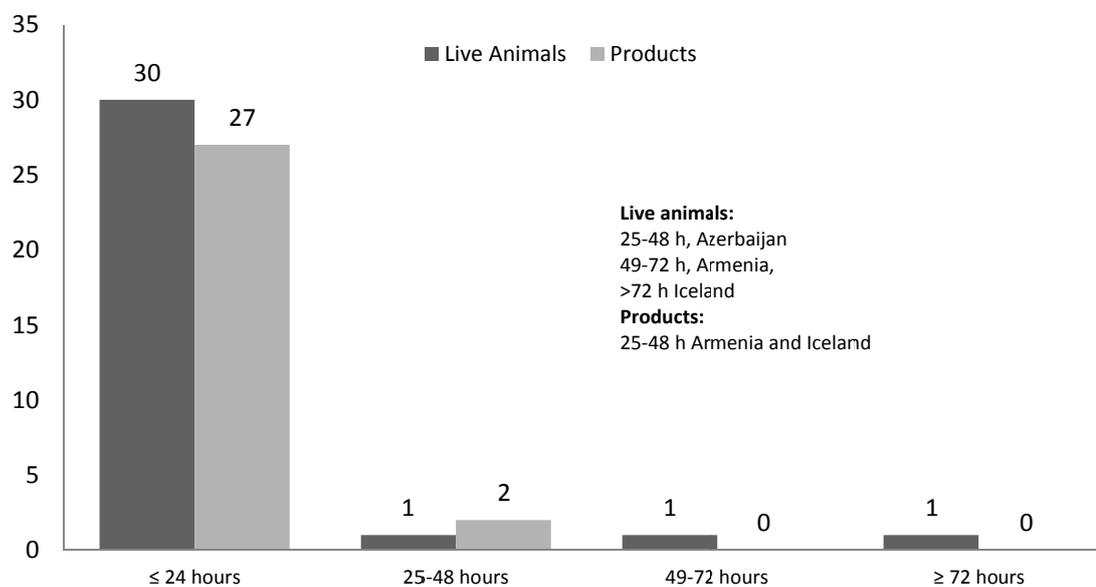
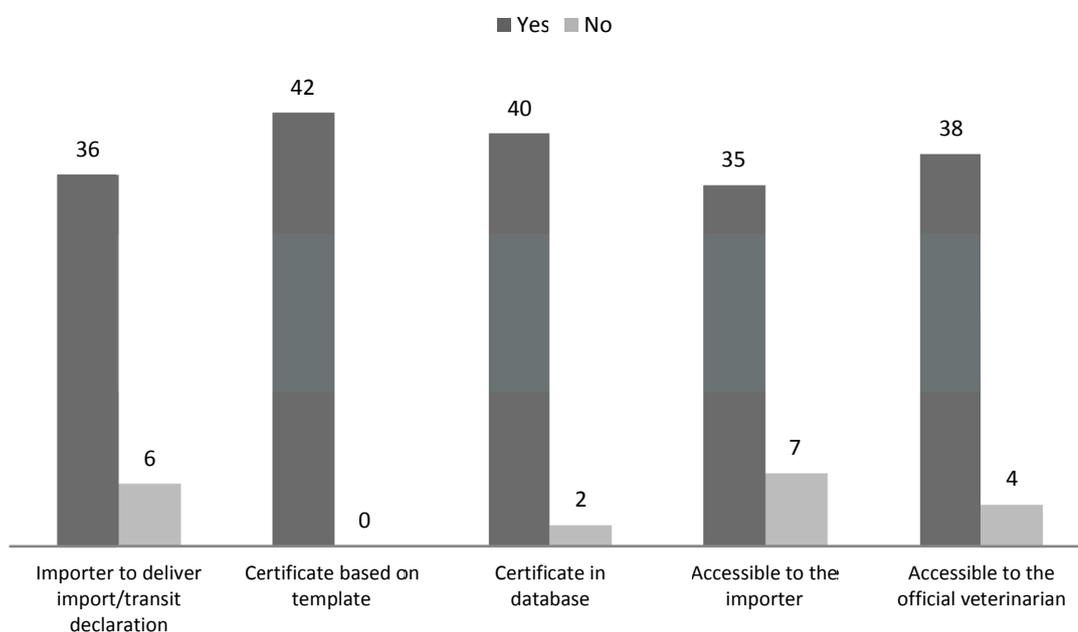


B 4.1.– Member Countries applying specific import license system and number of days required for issuing import/transit licences before arrival of the consignment.

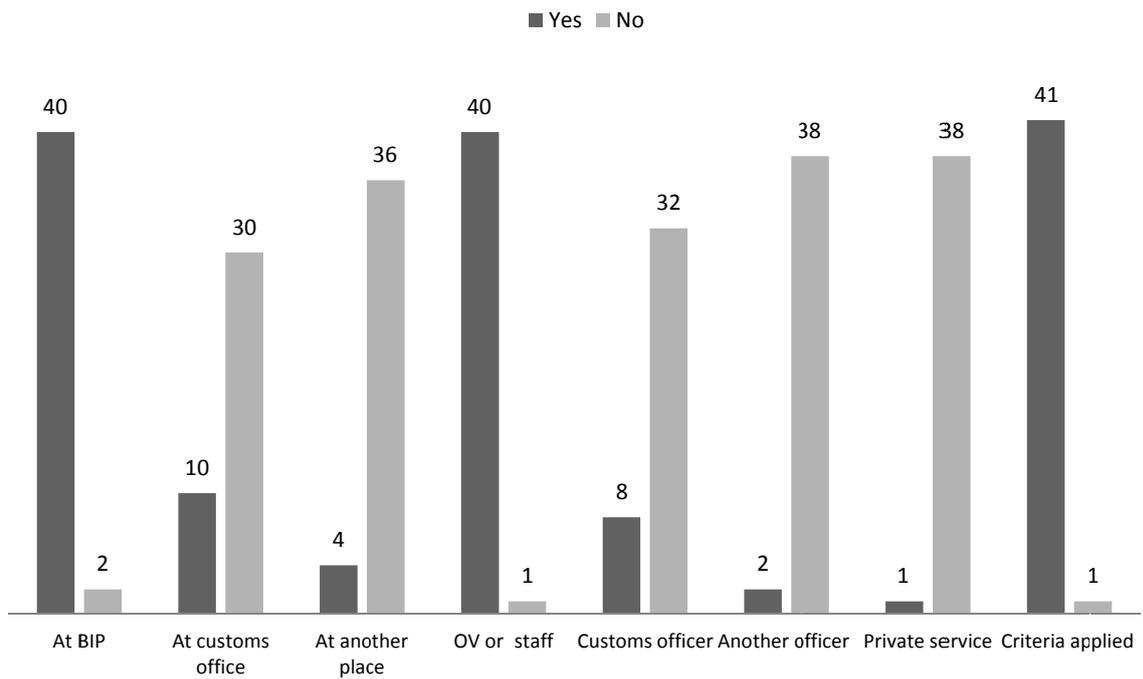


B 4.2.– Time for pre-notification at BIPs required before the arrival of the consignment

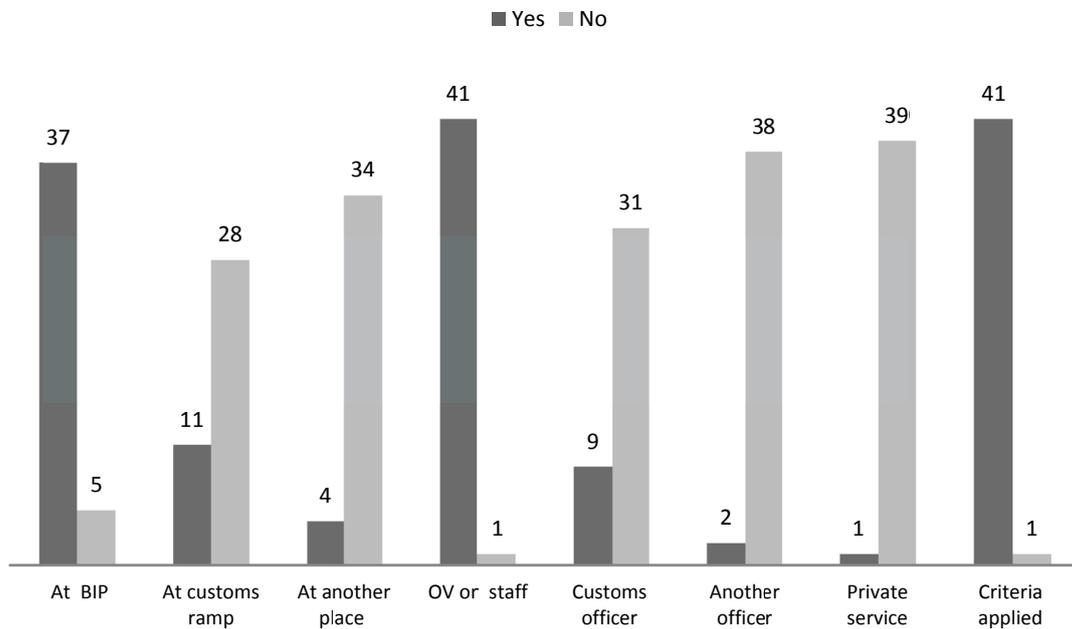
A pre-notification period is required by 34 countries, and not required by 7 countries.

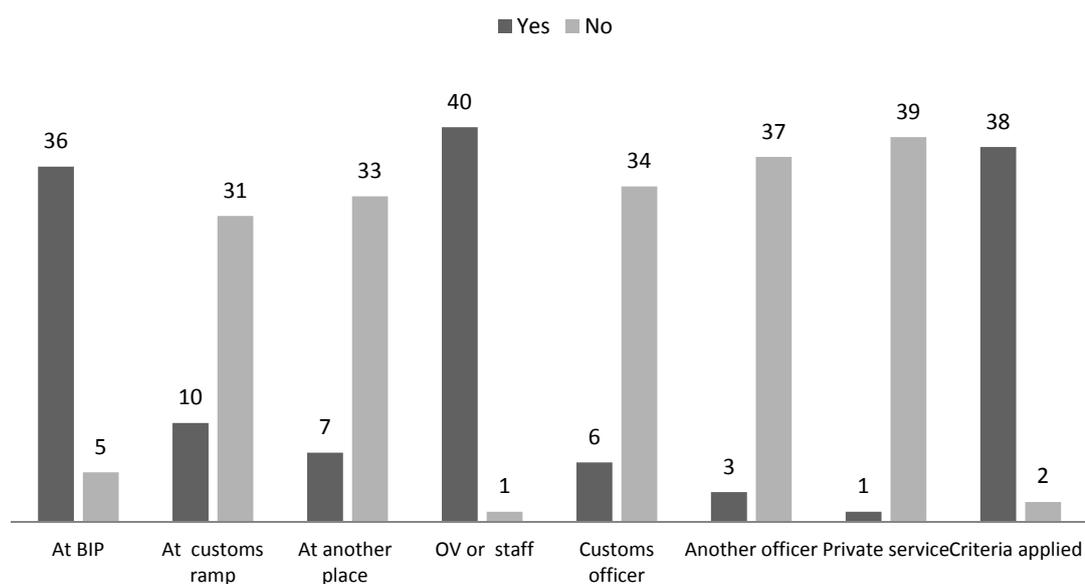
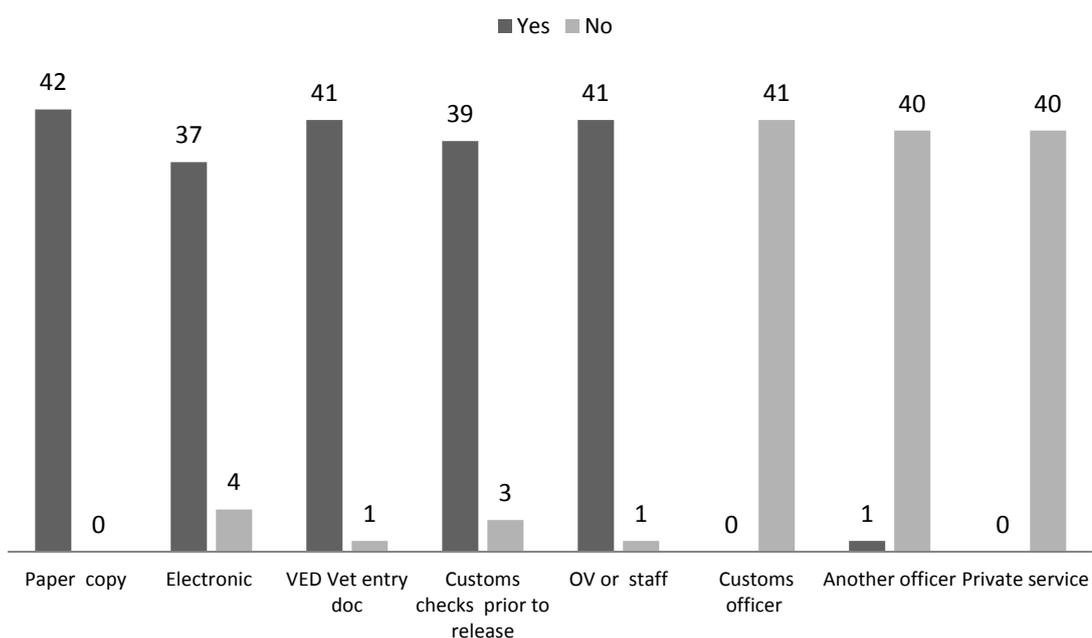
*B 4.3. to B 4.7.– Import/transit declaration and availability of certificates on database*

B 4.8. and B 4.9.– Documentary checks covering the aspects by whom and where



B 4.10. and B 4.11.– Identity checks covering the aspects carried out by whom and where



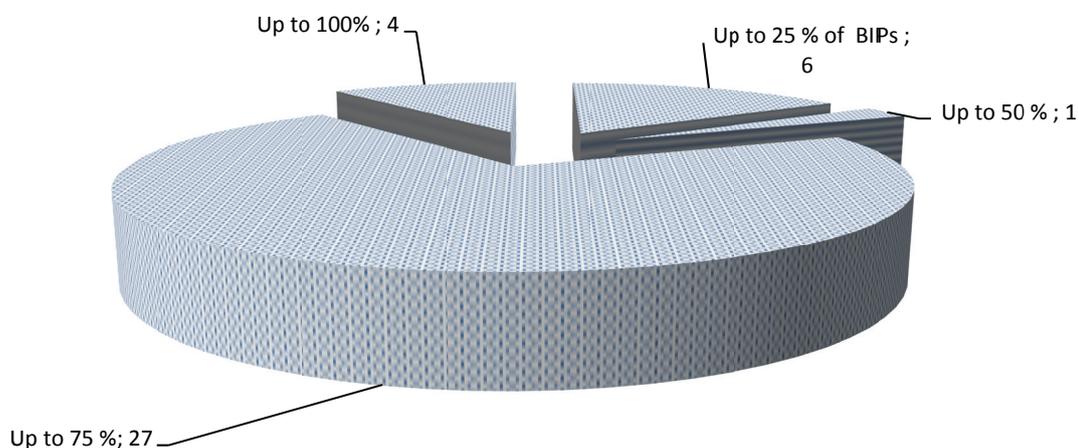
B 4.12. and B 4.13.– Physical checks covering the aspects carried out by whom and where*B 4.14. to B 4.17.– Outcome of checks/documentation and issue of veterinary entry document and by whom**B 4.18.– Location of veterinary BIPs*

	Number of BIPs
International Airports	198
Sea/river/canal ports	247
Road	225
Rail	95
Inside the country	557

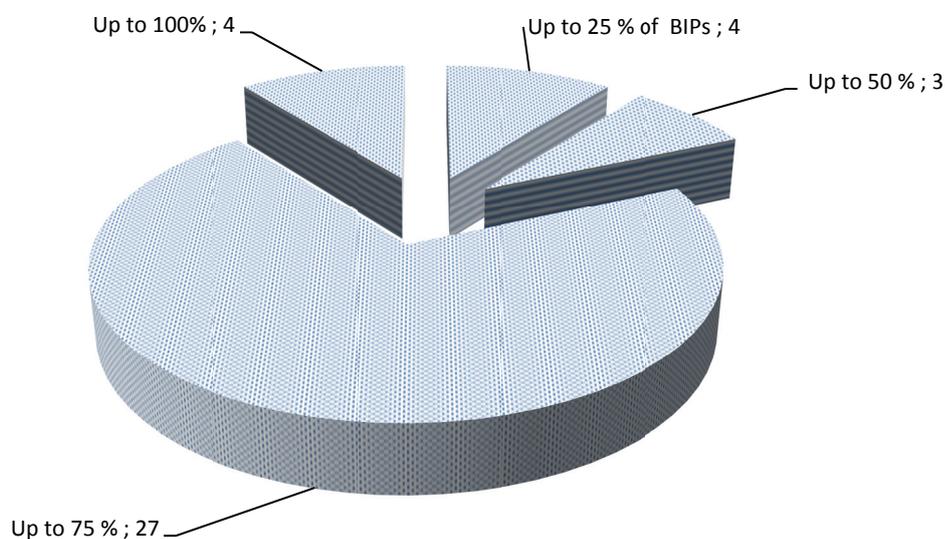
B 5. and B 6.– Infrastructure and equipment of BIPs

It should be highlighted that only 14 Member Countries have fast lane with direct access to the BIP facilities available for livestock vehicles.

B 5.– Appropriate infrastructure



B 6.– Appropriate equipment

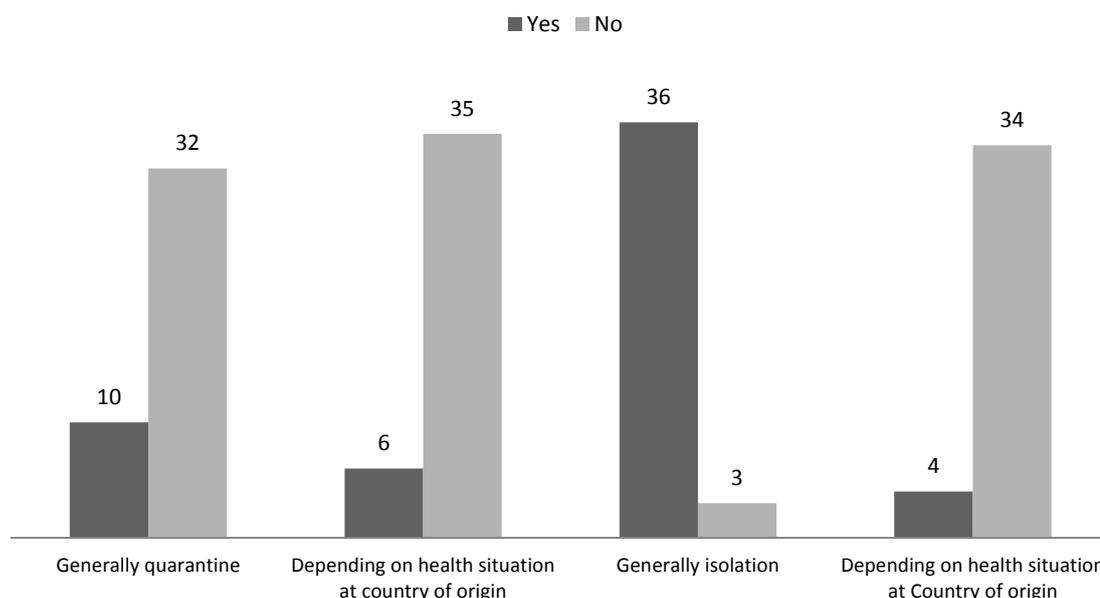


B 7.1. and B 7.2.– Quarantine stations and resting facilities

There are 8 countries with a total of 20 fully functioning quarantine stations for farm animals and there are 19 countries with a total of 28 fully functioning quarantine stations for non-farm animals.

It should be noted that the European Union has 1 quarantine station outside of Europe on the island of St.-Pierre-and-Miquelon, which has not been included in the totals.

Member Country recognises quarantine prior to import generally depending on health situation of country of origin, and allows quarantine/isolation at the destination generally depending on health situation of country of origin.



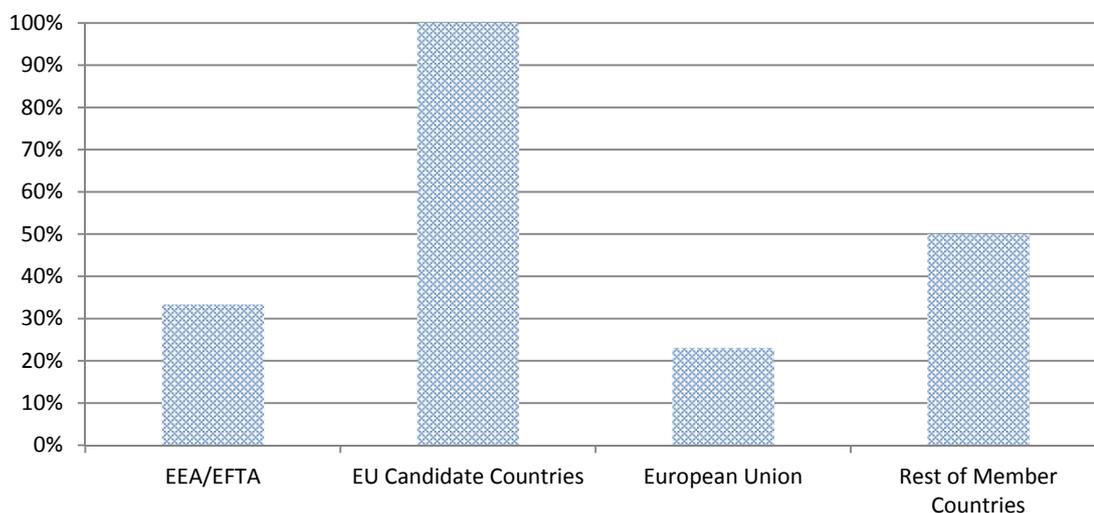
B 8.– Resting facilities for live animals

A total of 129 fully functioning resting posts for farm animals were reported in a total of 19 Member Countries. A total of 77 fully functioning sanctuaries (rescue centres) for non farm animals were reported in a total of 12 Member Countries, however a number of responding countries stated that they have no information on sanctuaries, which are not under the responsibility of the Veterinary Services.

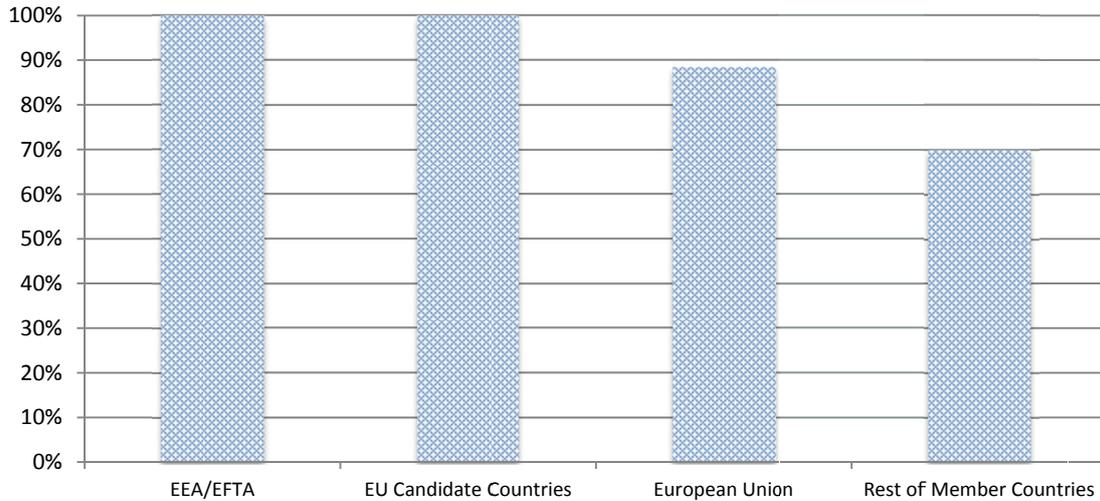
B 9.2.– Information on collection of fees covering the import licence, the inspection of the commodities, the routine sampling, the sampling in case of suspicion, the destruction of treatment of commodity, the quarantine, the issuing of a veterinary certificate.

In view of the importance of this section, the countries have been separated into four groups (EU, EU candidate countries, EEA/EFTA and the rest of the Member Countries) and an overview showing all the fees collected is provided.

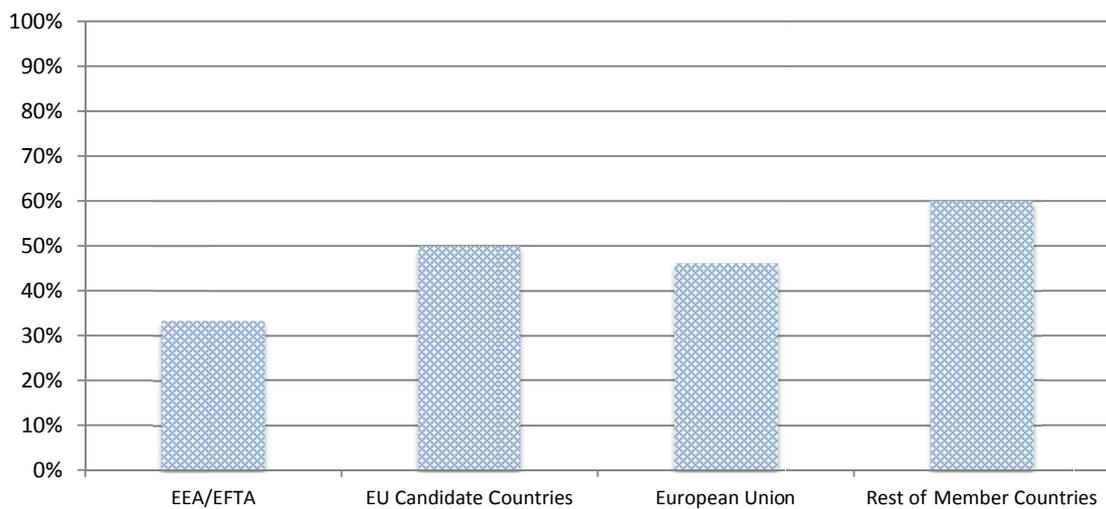
B 9.2. a.– Proportion of Member Countries where fees are collected for the import licence



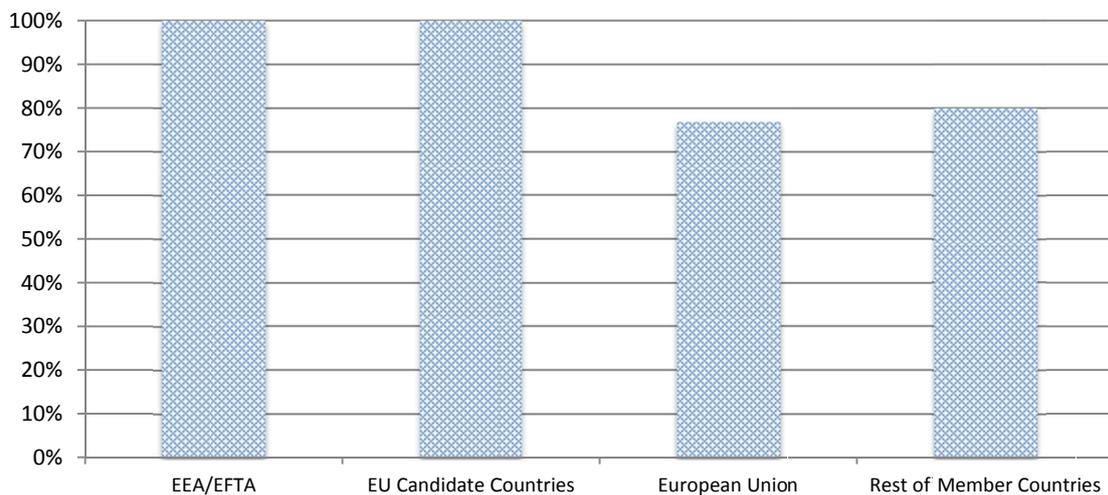
B 9.2. b.– Proportion of Member Countries where fees are collected for inspection of the commodities



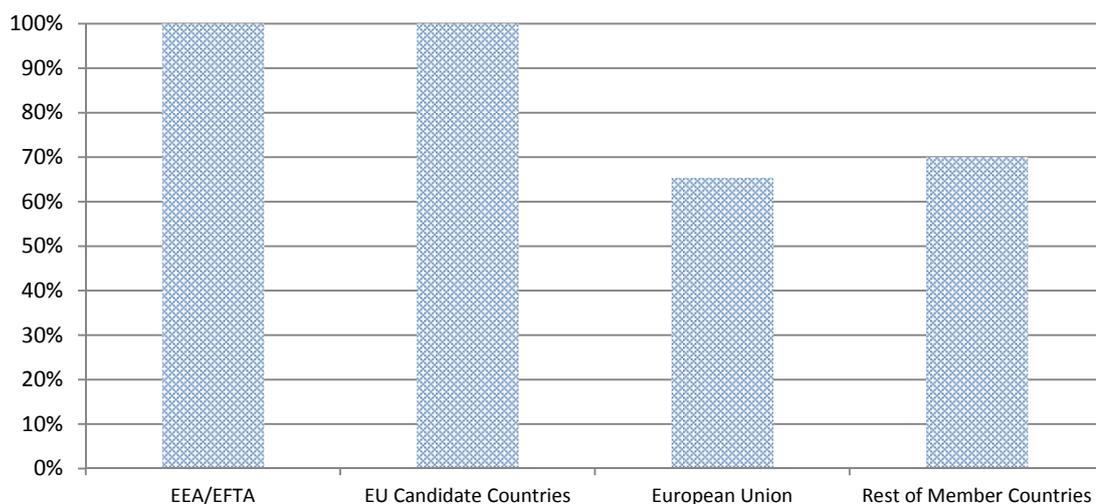
B 9.2. c.– Proportion of Member Countries where fees are collected for routine sampling



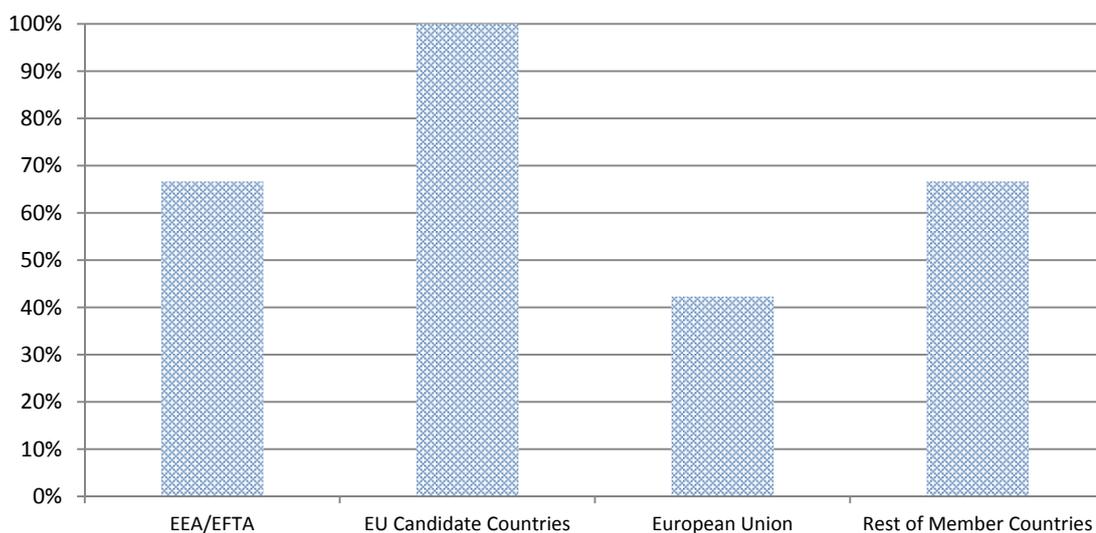
B 9.2. d.– Proportion of Member Countries where fees are collected for sampling in case of suspicion



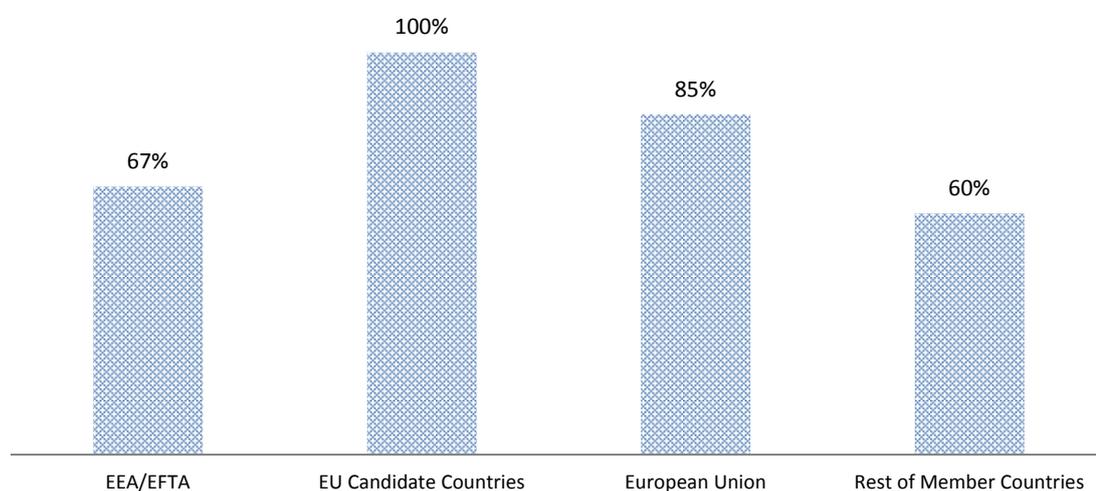
B 9.2. e.– Proportion of Member Countries where fees are collected for destruction or treatment of commodity



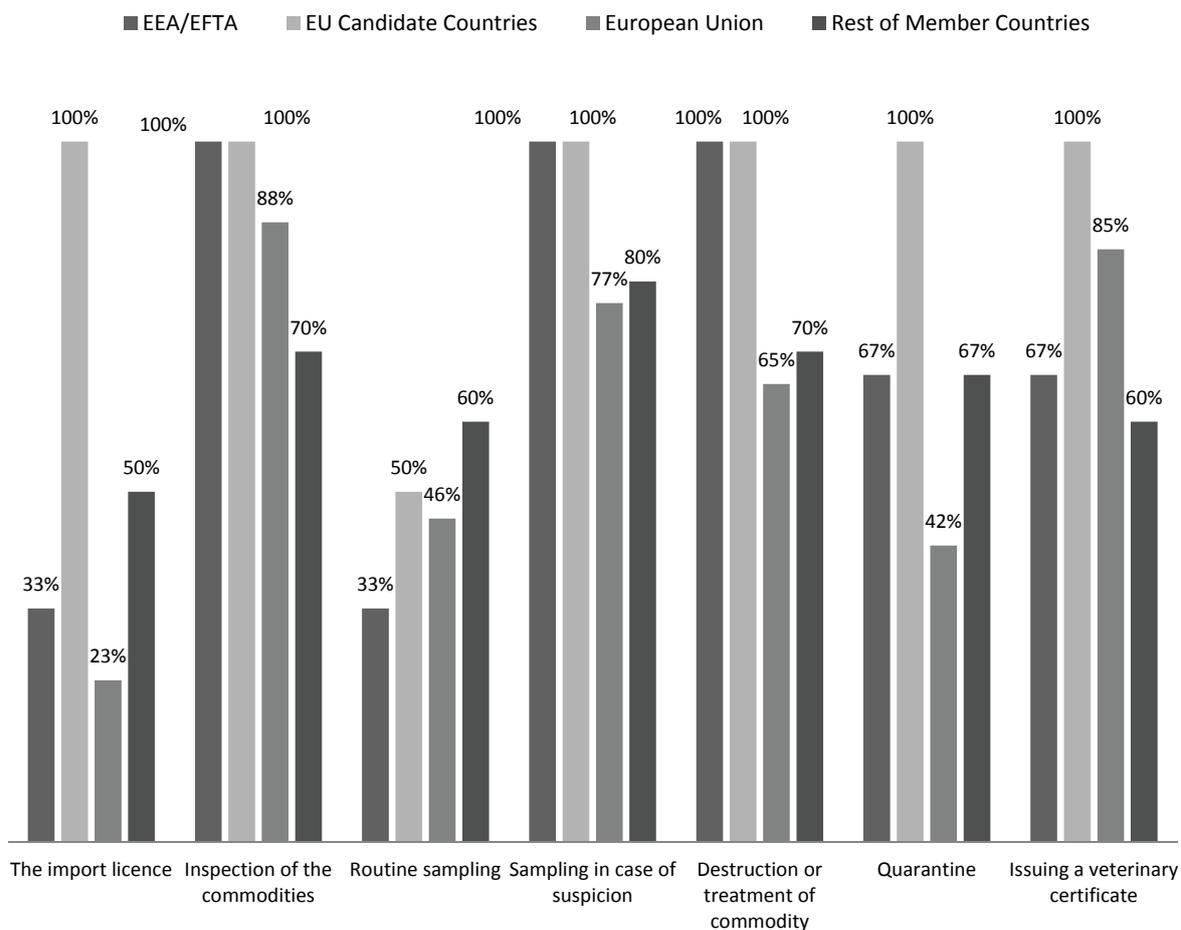
B 9.2. f.– Proportion of Member Countries where fees are collected for quarantine



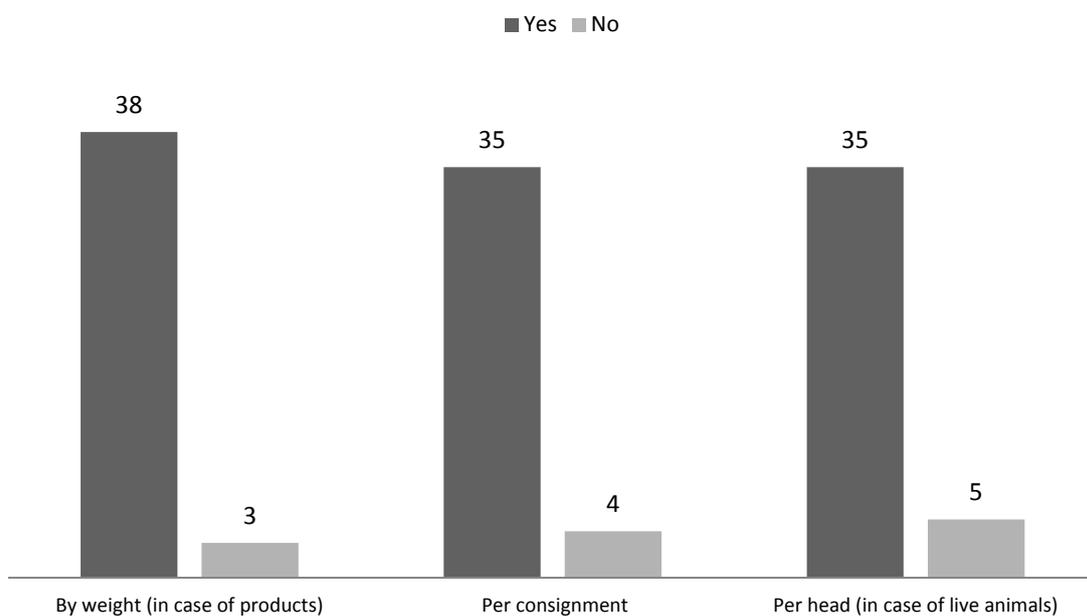
B 9.2. g.– Proportion of Member Countries where fees are collected for issuing a veterinary certificate



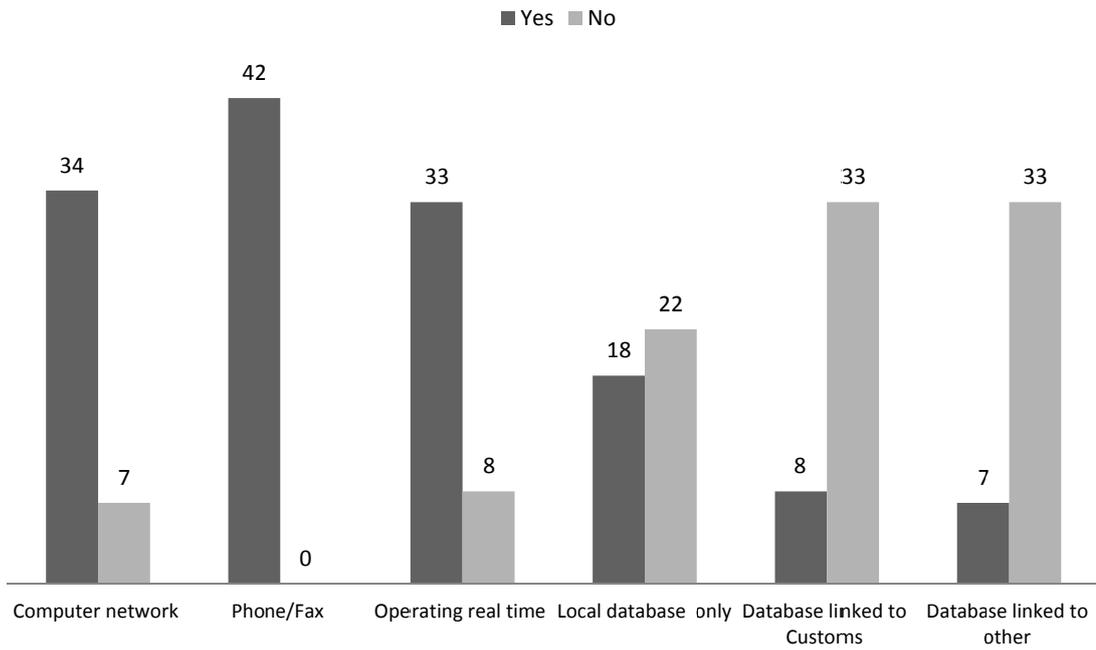
B 9.2. h.– Overview of proportion of Member Countries where fees are collected for...



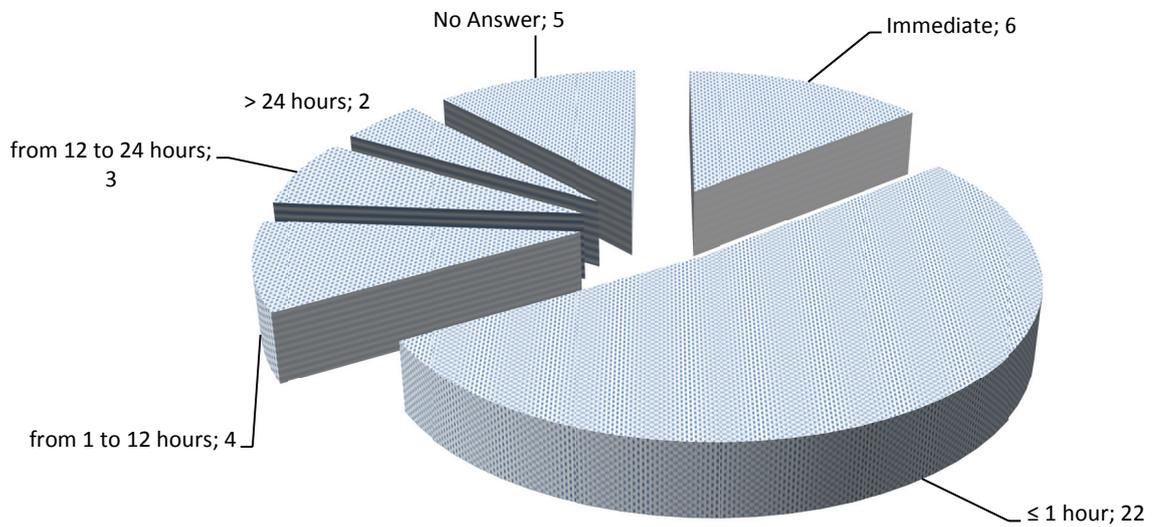
B 9.3.– Calculation method for inspection fees



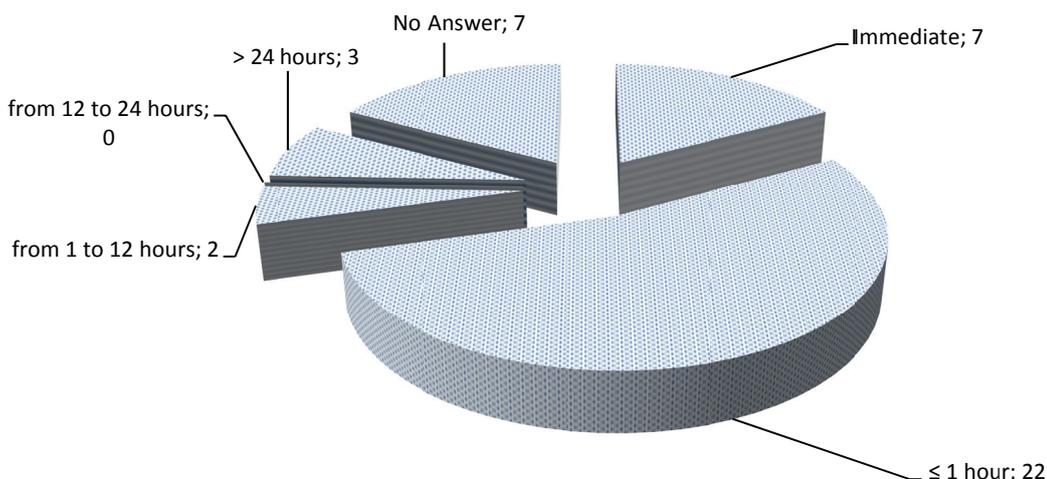
B 10. and B 12.– Communications (how are headquarters of the CCVA and the BIPs linked) and data processing (central database availability)



B 11. Part 1.– Time necessary to send information from the CCVA headquarters to all BIPs in case of risk consignment



B 11 Part 2.– Time necessary to send information to the CCVA headquarters in case of risk consignment

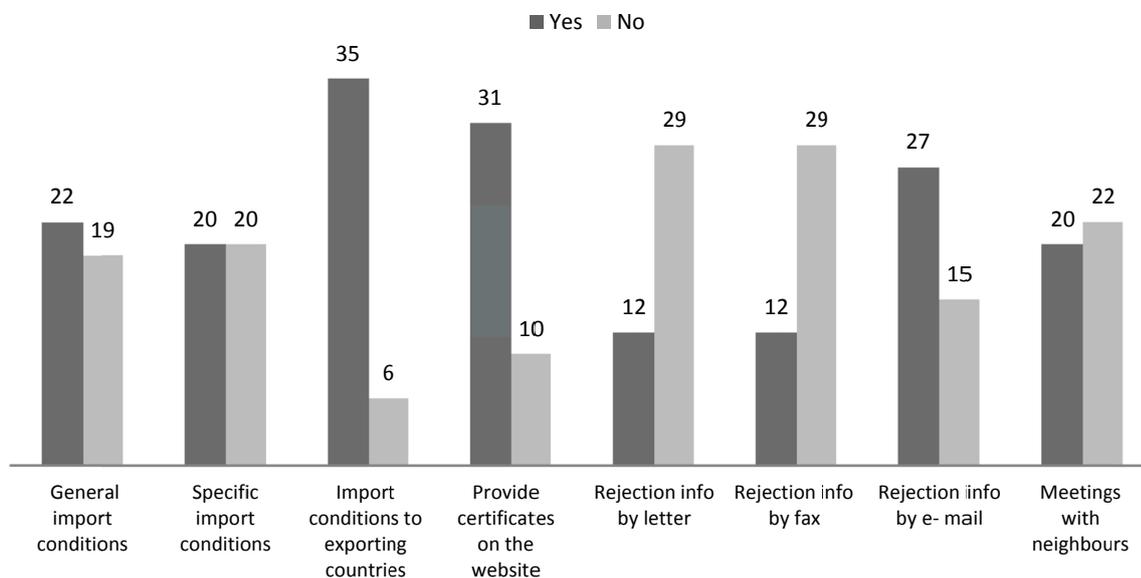


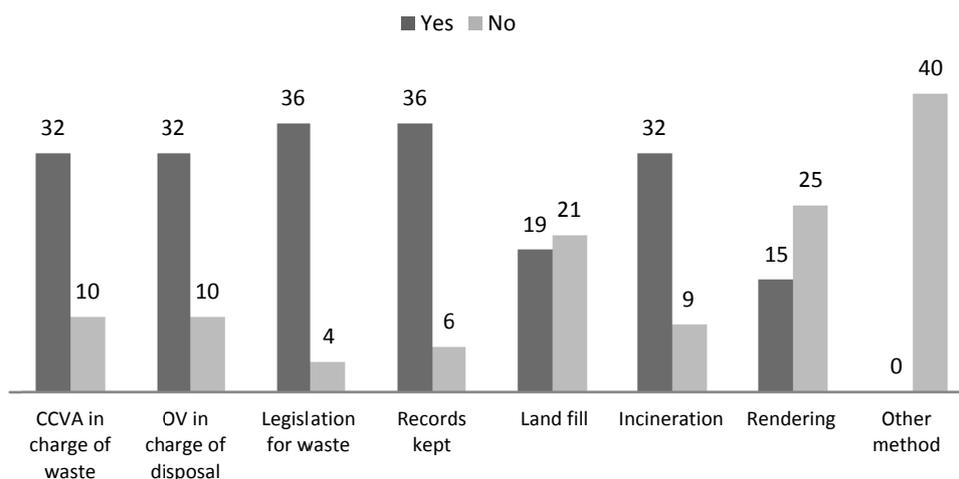
B 13.– Statistics

The total number of rejected consignments in 2009 notified by 35 Member Countries was equal to 27,780. The total number of consignments is given below.

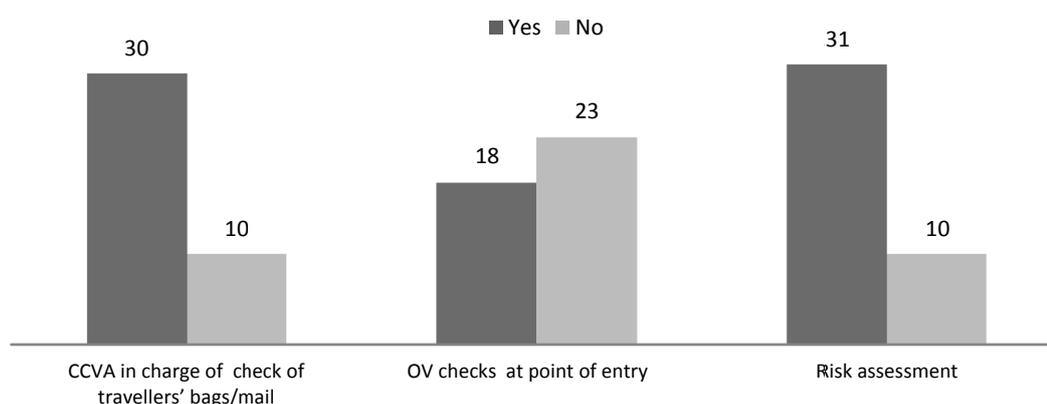


B 14.– International cooperation regarding conditions/permits, certificates, rejection, meetings

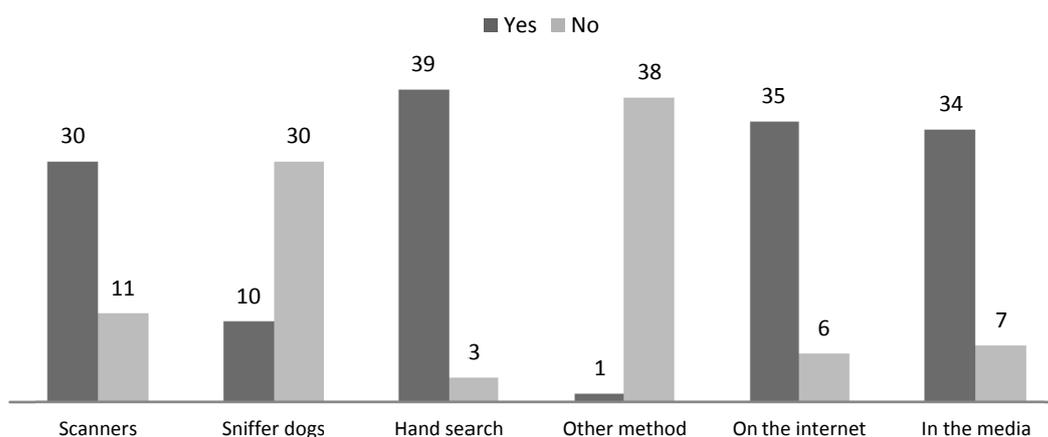


B 15.– Control on kitchen waste from international transport*B 16.– Number of Member Countries in which the Official Veterinarian is empowered to inspect consignments in free zones, free ports, free warehouses, customs warehouses and ship suppliers.***C. Implementation and enforcement of legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures as regards non commercial items**

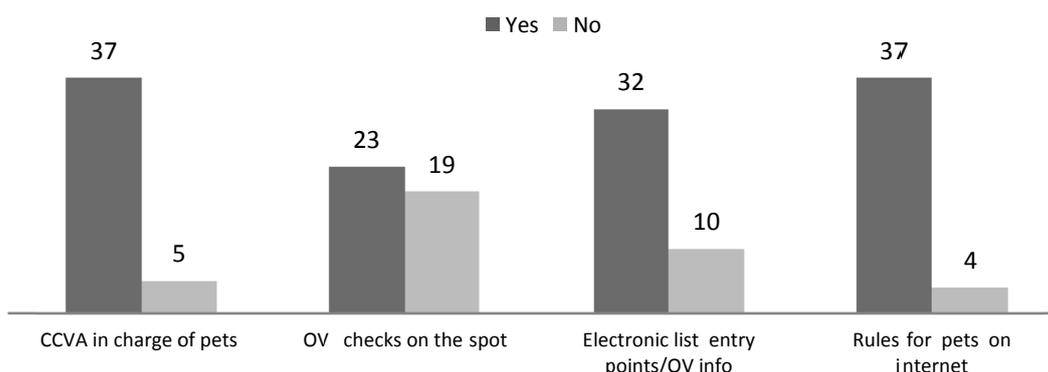
C 1. to C 3.– Aspects of checks concerning non commercial items (including passengers and mail) indicating whether the CCVA is in charge of legal and/or administrative measures, whether the Official Veterinarian is in charge of performing the checks on the spot at the point of entry and whether these spot checks are based on a risk assessment.



C 4. and C 5.– Methods applied for the identification of items representing a risk, such as scanners, sniffer dogs, hand searches or others, including whether information about the veterinary rules applicable in this field are put on the internet and/or included in the media.



C 6. to C 9.– Information as to whether the CCVA is in charge of the legal and/or administrative measures concerning the check of pet animals accompanying the traveller, whether the Official Veterinarian is in charge of performing these checks at the point of entry, whether an electronic list of all entry points with the contact details of the Official Veterinarian is available and is detailed information about the veterinary rules applicable for travelling pet animals available on the Internet.



4. Conclusions

4.1. Response rate to the questionnaire

This survey assessed the answers from 42 out of the 53 Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (i.e. more than 80% participation). This represents an excellent response rate, especially taking into consideration that the situation of Liechtenstein and San Marino was included in the replies of Italy and Switzerland.

No answers were received from Albania, Andorra, Belarus, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Montenegro and Turkmenistan.

4.2. Legislation on veterinary border checks

As regards the legislation enabling the Member Countries to carry out veterinary border checks, it was found that all countries have the legal base to cover the aspects of animal health both for live animals and for products of animal origin. Only one country has no legal base for certain products such as hay/straw, fertilizers, etc.

Concerning animal welfare and veterinary public health, the Veterinary Services of only few countries do not have the competence to carry out the border checks regarding those aspects.

In addition, a significant number of countries indicated they do not carry out veterinary public health checks on composite products. In 8 countries, the veterinary border services are not in charge of other rules such as CITES.

Considering the aspects of the legal base for border checks on commercial cargo, non commercial items brought in by travellers or mail, travelling pet animals, and control of (kitchen) waste of international means of transport, the situation is more varied between the EU Member States (EU MSs), the EEA/EFTA countries, EU Candidate Countries (EU CCs) and the other countries of the OIE Regional Commission of Europe. It appears from the answers that all countries have veterinary legislation to cover commercial cargo.

All of the EEA/EFTA countries, the EU CCs and the EU MSs have the legal base for checks on non-commercial cargo and travelling pets, whereas for the rest of the Member Countries, only about 70% and 90% cover those two aspects, respectively.

Whereas all of the EEA/EFTA countries and the EU MSs have legislation regarding veterinary border checks, only 50% of the EU CCs and the other Member Countries have legal rules for the control of kitchen waste from international means of transport such as planes, ships and trains.

4.3. Implementation and enforcement of legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures as regards commercial cargo

4.3.1. Identification of items of veterinary concern

In order to be able to identify items of veterinary concern to be covered by veterinary border checks by both Customs and Veterinary Services, most of the countries are applying the HS nomenclature that has been further developed in Europe to the CN nomenclature. Only Armenia, Tajikistan and Ukraine use other codes. Georgia and Uzbekistan did not indicate which code they are applying.

It shows, from the replies to the questionnaire, that the majority of the countries have a list of commodities in electronic format where the customs clearance systems flag the items of veterinary concern.

4.3.2. Competent Central Veterinary Authority

For an efficient implementation and enforcement of veterinary border checks on both live animals and products of animal origin covering the aspects of animal health and welfare as well as veterinary public health, the majority of the countries have established only one Competent Central Veterinary Authority (CCVA).

More than one CCVA exist in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Germany, Moldova, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Germany indicated that due to the federal system competences are split between the federal government (in charge of legislation) and the 16 *Länder* (in charge of enforcement of legislation and operating the Border Inspection Posts), but at both levels, the competences are within the veterinary services. Shared competences are applied with Customs in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Sweden; with Human Health Services in Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom; and with Border Police in Sweden.

A direct chain of command between the CCVA and the local BIPs is lacking in Azerbaijan, Belgium, Georgia, Germany and Lithuania.

Most CCVAs are linked with a direct chain of command to the BIPs and their main role is to issue administrative measures, supervise and audit the BIPs. Other key elements among the tasks of the CCVA are related to the license of imports and the establishment of fees for the import control system. Although the EU MSs are *per se* not working any longer with an import licensing system for harmonised items of veterinary concern, they are still in the position of applying this system on a few items not completely harmonized yet.

With regard to the CCVA's coordination and exchange of information with other services it is evident from the responses of the Member Countries that the cooperation with Customs Services is the closest in nearly all of the cases, followed by the Human Health Services and Border Police/Emigration Services. Again, this is also noticeable when veterinary tasks are delegated to other services or BIP facilities or when administrative and technical equipment are shared between the services on the border.

4.3.3. Local Veterinary Border Inspector

It is obvious from the replies that an official veterinarian supported by technical and/or administrative staff heads the majority of the BIPs. In 3 countries (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova) the BIPs are not under the responsibility of the official veterinarian. Luxemburg did not answer this question.

In addition, it seems that the official veterinarian nearly has the same powers in all countries. However, noticeable differences can be seen as regards veterinary inspection before customs, breaking the customs seal or resealing a consignment.

The local veterinary border inspectors are all charged to carry out the documentary, identity and physical checks including sampling when required.

In most countries there are training plans for inspectors, with an average training frequency of once or twice a year.

With regard to the international cooperation of local veterinary border inspectors, 18 Member Countries replied that they have contacts with their neighbours while 13 indicated that they did not have contacts. Out of these 13, 7 do not have neighbouring countries because of their geographical location. The same situation applies to the remaining 10 countries that did not respond. Whereas the situation concerning the actual information on consignments rejected at other BIPs is known in 41 Member Countries, only Armenia does not have this information.

4.3.4. Procedures

A third of those countries having indicated that they apply an import license procedure, require a period of up to 3 days for issuing the relevant document. However, there are 2 countries (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan) requiring 30 days or more for preparing the permit.

Regarding the pre-notification period before the consignment arrives at the BIP, the majority of the countries require up to 24 hours for both live animals as well as for products of animal origin. Exceptions are Armenia, Azerbaijan and Iceland demanding between 24 and more than 72 hours (Iceland for live animal consignments). In addition, the importer has to deliver an import/transit declaration in the majority of the countries.

Regarding the certificates for the commodity to be imported, the majority of the countries have indicated that these are based on templates, which are stored in a database which is accessible to the importer and the official veterinarian.

The official veterinarian applies the criteria (described in the guidance note to fill in the questionnaire) to carry out the documentary checks which are mainly performed at the BIPs. In a few countries they are carried out at the customs office or at another place by the customs or another officer or a private service. To a similar degree, this is also valid for the identity and physical checks. The results of the checks are documented regularly by a paper copy as well as electronically issued by the official veterinarian and only in one case by another officer. Prior to the release of the consignments customs checks have to be completed.

Considering the location of the overall 1,322 border inspection posts listed by the Member Countries, 198 (15%) are located at airports, 247 (19%) at ports, 225 (17%) at road, 95 (7%) at railway stations, whereas 557 (42%) are situated inside the countries.

4.3.5. Infrastructure and equipment of Border Inspection Posts

Taking into consideration the footnotes giving guidance to fill in the questionnaire regarding the appropriate infrastructure and equipment of the BIPs, 38 Member Countries have graded their facilities according to the degree of compliance: 31 of the countries evaluate their infrastructure and equipment as being compliant between 75% and 100%, while 7 countries believe that their situation is only at a compliance level of up to 50%.

4.3.6. Quarantine stations and resting facilities

In addition to the border inspection posts, 8 Member Countries operate fully functioning quarantine stations for farm animals and 19 Member Countries for non-farm animals. In addition, it is worth noting that the only EU-operated quarantine centre is in St-Pierre-and-Miquelon and is approved for both farm and non-farm animals.

In the context of animal welfare aspects during international transports, 19 Member Countries have organised fully functioning resting posts for farm animals and 12 Member Countries fully functioning sanctuaries (rescue centres) for non farm animals. Some countries indicated that these rescue centres were out of the veterinary control or responsibility of their services.

When importing live animals, most of the Member Countries require an isolation of the consignment at destination instead of a quarantine procedure carried out in the country of origin. It should be noted that isolation of animals during the pre-export testing period is usually carried out but this was not asked for in the questionnaire.

4.3.7. Inspection fees

The financing of various aspects of veterinary border checks, including veterinary actions, thereafter shows a very unhomogeneous picture between the EEA/EFTA countries, the EU candidate countries, the 'rest of the Member Countries' and even on occasion between the EU Member States for example, although there is EU legislation laying down fees for veterinary border checks. Hungary and Slovenia indicated they do not collect any fees. Bulgaria did not answer this part of the questionnaire.

4.3.8. Communication, time of alert, data processing and documentation

Efficient and effective veterinary border checks and procedures depend on using modern and fast communication tools as well as on data processing tools including data networks additionally linked with Customs services and other relevant stakeholders at the external border such as port/airport operators, airline/freight operators, importers, etc. Looking at the responses from the Member Countries, it is obvious that improvements could still be made in this area.

An important aspect is the time of alert of risk consignments between Headquarters and BIPs and vice versa to avoid that consignments rejected at one BIP are presented again at another BIP. A total of 29 Member Countries have pointed out that this exchange of information would take place immediately or within one hour.

4.3.9. Statistics

The analysis of the statistics on the number of consignments presented for import, transit and export per Member Country reveals that 5 countries provided no figures on their imports, 7 countries none on their transits and 23 none on their exports of veterinary commodities. The total number of veterinary consignments checked for import, transit and export in 2009 were 601,109, 174,432 and 130,131 respectively.

The total number of rejected consignments notified by 35 countries was equal to 27,780, thus giving a consignment rejection rate of just over 4.6%.

4.3.10. International cooperation

Looking at the various aspects of international cooperation (import and transit conditions, provision of template certificates, information about rejected consignments and meetings with the neighbouring countries), it appears that about half of the Member Countries use import conditions — either general or specific — and most of them provide their import conditions to their exporting countries or display the relevant template certificates on a website. In case of a rejection of a consignment, it seems that the exporting country is usually informed either by letter, fax or e-mail. Nevertheless, only half of the Member Countries have regular meetings on issues concerning veterinary border checks with their neighbours.

4.3.11. Control of waste (kitchen waste) of international means of transport

Taking into consideration the high risk of introducing agents through uncontrolled disposal of kitchen waste from international means of transport, 36 Member Countries have legislation regarding the control of waste. In 32 Member Countries, at least the CCVA and the official veterinarian are in charge of this issue. Waste is mainly disposed by incineration, brought to land fill or rendered. However, adequate control seems to be missing in a few countries.

4.3.12. Veterinary checks in free zones, free ports, free or customs warehouses and ship suppliers

The question of kitchen waste from international means of transport is often linked to the operation of free zones, free ports, free or customs warehouses and in particular ship suppliers and airline caterers. There are a considerable number of Member Countries where the Official Veterinarian is not empowered to inspect these specific areas.

4.4. Implementation and enforcement of legislation on veterinary border checks and procedures regarding non commercial cargo

Non-commercial items of veterinary concern brought in by travellers or sent by mail can present a very high risk for both animal and human health. About 30 Member Countries noted that their CCVA is in charge of these checks which are based on a risk assessment. However, only 18 countries carry out those checks by the Official Veterinarian at the point of entry.

As regards to the techniques applied for the identification of items representing a risk, the most frequently applied method is by hand search in 39 countries, followed by the use of scanners (30 countries) and sniffer dogs (10 countries). A total of 35 countries provide information on veterinary rules for non-commercial veterinary items on the internet and/or in the media.

Concerning the checks of pet animals accompanying travellers, 37 countries responded that their CCVA is in charge of this aspect of veterinary checks and that they provide detailed information about the veterinary rules applicable on the internet. However, the Official Veterinarian of only 23 countries performs checks on the spot. In 32 countries, electronic lists, including information about the official veterinarian, are available at the points of entry.

References

- [1] Batho H.L., *et al.* (2008).– The EU veterinarian: animal health, welfare & veterinary public health developments in Europe since 1957. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities (ISBN 978-92-79-06997-0)
- [2] OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) (2010).– Terrestrial Animal Health Code, 19th edition. OIE, Paris.
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