

5. Rabies

5.1. Rabies in animals

According to Council Directive 64/432/EEC rabies is a compulsory notifiable disease in cattle and pigs. In most Member States rabies is a notifiable disease on clinical suspicion in all animal species.

Approved eradication programmes of rabies were implemented in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Finland, France, and Luxembourg in 2003 (2002/943/EC). Italy was included in previous years, but not since 2002. Co-financing of the European Commission is granted for the purchase and distribution of vaccine and baits.

Rabies cases were reported in the same 5 Member States (Austria, Denmark, The Netherlands, Germany and Spain) of the European Union as in the previous years. In addition, in Finland an infected horse was identified, which was imported. No data from France are available, there in 2002 rabies has been reported.

In Finland, Ireland, Italy, Sweden and Norway (mainland) no domestic cases of rabies were recorded since reporting commenced in 1994. For the fourth year in row no cases of rabies were detected in Belgium. In Austria, cases of rabies were detected in the domestic and wildlife population in previous years, during 2003 only one infected horse was detected. In Germany, rabies was detected in wildlife only.

As each year, so far, Spain reported cases of rabies in dogs in Melilla (North Africa).

In Denmark, Germany and The Netherlands rabies was detected in bats during 2003. No bat cases were reported on the mainland of Spain and in Great Britain during 2003.

During 2003, there was a slight decrease in the total number of reported cases in Germany. The trend is given in Figure RA 2. The sylvatic rabies virus was detected in one Federal State during 2003, in five Federal Länder both European Bat lyssavirus 1 and 2 infections have been detected.

In Table RA 1 the situation for the years 1999 to 2003 is summarised. The number of rabies cases reported in 2003 in domestic animals and wildlife can be seen in Table RA 2. The overall trend is shown in Figure RA 1. As the data on wildlife are based on investigations of clinically suspicious animals, the data have to be interpreted carefully.

In Tables AN - 5.1.1 to AN - 5.1.3 all investigations reported by the Member States are given.

New Member States

Four New Member States reported data on rabies in animals on a voluntary basis. Cases of rabies in animals were detected in Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia, whereas all animals were negative in Cyprus.

Positive cases were notified in domestic animals (cattle, dogs, cats, horses, goats) and wildlife (foxes and others) but not in bats.

5.2. Rabies in humans

In 2003, no case of rabies in humans was reported in the European Union and Norway. In 2002, one human death from European Bat lyssavirus (EBL) occurred in a registered bat handler in Scotland.

In 2001, one case of rabies in humans was reported in the United Kingdom in a visitor from the Philippines.

Table RA 1. Rabies in animals, 1999 – 2003

	1999				2000				2001				2002				2003			
	TOTAL	Domestic Animals	Wildlife except bats	Bats	TOTAL	Domestic Animals	Wildlife except bats	Bats	TOTAL	Domestic Animals	Wildlife except bats	Bats	TOTAL	Domestic Animals	Wildlife except bats	Bats	TOTAL	Domestic Animals	Wildlife except bats	Bats
Austria	+	+	+	n.a.	+	-	+	-	+ ⁴	+ ⁴	-	-	+	+	+	-		+	-	-
Belgium	+	+	-	n.a.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	n.a.	-	-	-	n.a.		-	-	n.a.
Denmark	+	n.a.	n.a.	+ ³	+	n.a.	n.a.	+	+	-	-	+	+	+ ³	-	+		-	-	+
Finland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		+ ⁴	-	-
France	+	n.a.	n.a.	+ ²	+	-	-	+	+	+ ⁴	-	+	+	+ ⁴	-	+		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Germany	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		-	+	+
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.		-	-	n.a.
Ireland	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.		-	-	-
Italy	+	+	-	n.a.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
Luxembourg	+	+	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	n.a.		-	-	n.a.
Portugal	-	n.a.	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	n.a.	-	n.a.		-	-	n.a.
Spain	+	+ ¹	-	+	+	+ ¹	+	+	+	+ ¹	-	-	+	+ ¹	-	+		+ ¹	-	n.a.
Sweden	-	-	-	n.a.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
The Netherlands	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	+		-	-	+
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+		-	-	-
Norway	+	-	+ ⁵	n.d.	-	-	-	n.d.	-	-	-	n.d.	-	-	-	n.d.		-	-	n.d.

+ Rabies detected in investigations

- rabies not detected in investigations

n.a. No information available

n.d. No investigations performed

¹ North Africa

² Imported from Belgium

³ The case of rabies in bats and in sheep were all caused by the European bat lyssavirus and not the sylvatic type (genotype 1 lyssavirus)

⁴ Imported animal

⁵ Wild fox at the archipelago of Svalbard

Figure RA 1. Rabies cases in animals in the European Union, 1994 – 2003

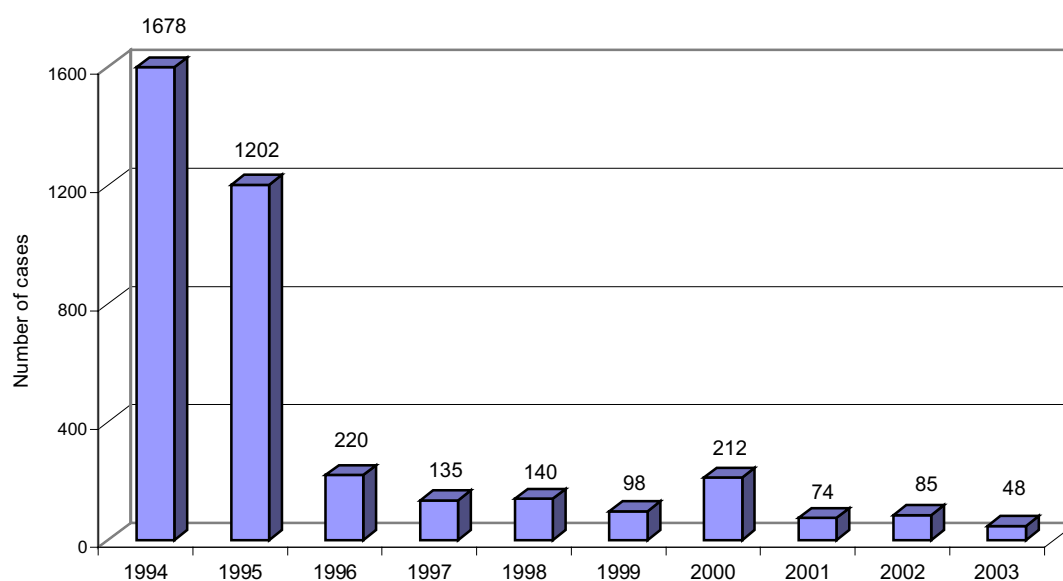


Table RA 2. Rabies cases in animals, 2003

	Domestic animals							Wildlife							Subtotal	Total
	Dog	Cat	Cattle	Horse	Sheep, goat	Others	Subtotal	Fox	Badger	Marten	Deer	Bats	Others	Subtotal		
Austria	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Denmark	0	0	0	n.a.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	3	
Finland	0	0	0	1 ²	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
France	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0	0	0	
Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	2	0	1	13	0	37	37	
Spain	1 ¹	0	0	0	0	0	1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0	0	1	
The Netherlands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	7	7	
Great Britain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Σ	1	0	0	2	0	0	3	21	2	0	1	23	0	47	50	

¹ North Africa

² Imported animal

³ Infected with European bat lyssavirus

Figure RA 2. Rabies cases in Germany, 1995 - 2003

