

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: EU Proposes New Regulation on Animal Welfare During Transportation

Country: European Union

Post: Brussels USEU

Report Category: SP2 - Prevent or Resolve Barriers to Trade that Hinder U.S. Food and Agricultural Exports

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Report Highlights:

On December 7, 2023, the European Commission adopted a proposal for a new Regulation on the protection of animals during transport to replace Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. This proposal is the most advanced part of the EU's review of the animal welfare legislation under the Farm to Fork (F2F) strategy. The draft proposal shows that the Commission will seek to reduce maximum journey times for live animal, increase space allowances, amend the means of transport and transport conditions. This proposal also includes requirements for animals imported from third countries into the EU. The proposal would require additional training for inspectors, transporters, veterinarians and increase the administrative and financial burden throughout the process, including for trade with non-EU countries.

Overview:

In May 2020, the Commission announced in the Farm to Fork Strategy (F2F) that it would revise the animal welfare legislation, including a revision of [Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1/2005](#) on the protection of animals during transport. On December 7, 2023, the Commission adopted a [proposal for a Regulation of the Council and European Parliament on the protection of animals during transport to replace Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1/2005](#) as well as a legislative [proposal on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability](#). The two proposals are coherent with each other. The other expected reforms in the package include the animal welfare at farm level, at slaughter, and a voluntary label for animal welfare. These other three pillars in the animal welfare package are not included in the proposal and are likely to be handled by the next Commission, led by the Directorate for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE): https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-welfare_en

Changes to the Animal Transport Rules for Farmed Animals:

The proposal focuses on the following main objectives related to the welfare of animals during transport:

- reduce animal welfare problems linked to long journeys and repetitive unloading and re-loading linked to several rest periods;
- ensure that animals have more space when transported;
- improve the conditions of transport of vulnerable animals;
- avoid exposing animals to extreme temperatures;
- facilitate enforcement of EU rules on the protection of animals, including digitalization;
- better protect animals exported to non-EU countries;
- better protect cats and dogs transported in connection with an economic activity.

The proposed changes in the regulation focus on four elements, more specifically:

	<u>New Commission Proposal</u>	<u>EU Legislation in Force</u>
<u>1) Limited journey times and more rest breaks:</u>	Limit journey times to 9 hours for animals meant for slaughter and 21 hours for other animals, including mandatory rest and feeding periods. After this journey, the animals must be given 24 hours of rest outside the vehicle before the continuation of the journey. During rest, the animals must be fed and given water. After the 24-hour rest period, animals can be transported for one more stage of 21 hours (including a 1-hour rest after 10 hours), after which they must reach the final destination.	For short journeys limited to 8 hours, with long journeys (over eight hours) permitted under specific conditions. Different journey time limits are set depending on species after which animals need a 24-hour rest at a control post. The journey can then continue, with no limit on the number of subsequent long journeys.
<u>2) Increased space Allowances:</u>	The proposal identifies the minimum space that each animal must have, according to weight and species.	Specific square meterage allocated per animal category based on species, weight, or age, mainly outlined in tables in the

		Regulation's Annex I.
<u>3) Enhanced conditions for exports to non-EU countries:</u>	<p>Stricter rules for the transport of animals by sea (higher maritime safety standards for the vessels and animal welfare trained staff on board).</p> <p>New independent audit and certification system for export of animals both by road and by sea.</p> <p>Proposal mandates certification for transport operators. An animal welfare officer is required on board during sea journeys. Vessels must meet high standards of maritime safety.</p>	<p>Operators must ensure EU welfare rules are followed until the destination, meaning that exports should follow the same time limits as journeys within the EU (for example, pattern of journey and rest periods should continue until the destination is reached).</p> <p>This also means that third countries are responsible for verifying this information upon import.</p>
<u>4) Temperature limits during transport:</u>	<p>Journeys must be limited to a maximum of 9 hours if temperatures are expected to be between 25°C and 30°C.</p> <p>Animal transport is only allowed at night when day temperatures exceed 30°C. If night temperature forecasts are above 30°C, animals will be allocated more space to prevent heat stress.</p> <p>The proposal protects animals from extreme temperatures (both hot and cold).</p>	<p>No set maximum ambient temperature for animal transportation.</p> <p>Transportation means must be designed, constructed, maintained, and operated to safeguard animals.</p> <p>Ventilation systems in road transport must maintain temperatures below 30°C, with a +/- 5°C tolerance for all animals.</p>

The proposal covers the vast majority of the 1.6 billion animals transported between EU Member States each year, mostly farm animals: pigs, cows, goats, sheep, poultry, rabbits, and horses. It also includes specific provisions for the transport of aquatic animals in the context of an economic activity. The proposal also expands and reinforces the rules for the transport of cats and dogs for commercial purposes.

Implications for EU and non-EU Stakeholders:

The EU's proposed measures for the protection of animals during transport would require additional training for inspectors, transporters, veterinarians and would increase the administrative and financial burden throughout the process. Various European stakeholders have expressed their concerns about the additional costs of several aspects of the proposal. Also, some of the rules in the Commission proposal are stringent and challenging to implement for certain Member States.

The EU's current proposal for the protection of animals during transport applies its standards to live animals that are imported to and exported from the EU, basically from the place of departure¹ in the non-EU country to the destination in the EU or even outside the EU if transshipping. The extension of these EU animal standards to imported live animals from third countries undermines the sovereignty of the EU's trading partners to establish their own measures for the protection of animals during transport.

Next Steps:

The publication of this proposal in December 2023 initiated the beginning of a lengthy legislative process, and the European Commission [completed its final feedback period](#) on April 12, 2024. The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, as co-legislators, are now assessing the Commission's legislative proposal. Amendments to the legislative proposal are done separately by the Parliament and Council; however, negotiations will eventually occur to find institutional agreement before the proposals are adopted as official EU law. This process can take between 18 months to two years. With the upcoming European elections in June 2024, the file will most likely not be finalized by the end of this year and is expected to proceed in the course of 2025.

Attachments:

No Attachments.

¹ 'Place of departure' means: (a) the place where an animal has been accommodated for at least a week prior to departure and where it is first loaded onto a means of transport; or (b) an assembly center if the animal has been collected within a distance of no more than 100 km.