Animal welfare during transport

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Proposal for a Regulation on the protection of animals during transport and related operations

What is changing and why?

The European Commission proposes to introduce stricter rules to protect animals during transport. The new rules will include animals transported from non-EU countries.

For transporters of animals, this would mean:

- having to apply to one EU Member State for authorisation to be able to transport animals to the EU
- ensuring the conditions in which animals are transported are at least equivalent to those set out in the Regulation.

These detailed requirements cover, for example:

- the fitness of animals for transport
- the quality and safety of transport vehicles and equipment
- time limits for journeys
- how animals must be fed and watered
- the space allowed to animals
- the temperature of transport vehicles.

For non-EU competent authorities, this would mean:

- having to certify in official health certificates that journey plans for animals exported to the EU are at least equivalent to the requirements in the Regulation
- the competent authority at the place of departure must review the journey log prior to departure and approve it in the TRACES system.

Actions

Transporters and competent authorities in non-EU countries should undertake a first assessment of the proposed animal welfare rules. Feedback on this proposal closed on 12 April 2024 (see Animal welfare – protection of animals during transport).

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Timeline

The European Commission's proposal will be discussed by the European Council (made up of the EU Member States) and the European Parliament. This process will not be completed until 2026 at the earliest. The new rules will apply 2 years after they are finally approved and published.

For more information see the full record on the AGRINFO website – where you can also view the latest AGRINFO Update newsletters and search the database.

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