

# Protection of animals during transport

2012/2031(INI) - 12/12/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 555 votes to 56, with 34 abstentions, a resolution on the protection of animals during transport.

An alternative motion for resolution, tabled by the Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL was rejected in plenary by 421 votes to 226, with 15 abstentions.

The adopted resolution takes note of the Commission report presenting the state of implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, which contains the conclusion that the Regulation has had a positive impact on the welfare of animals during transport, but notes that **severe problems during animal transport persist, due mainly to poor compliance and implementation in the Member States.**

Parliament calls on the Commission:

- to ensure an **effective and uniform enforcement of existing EU legislation** on animal transport across all Member States and to adopt measures to secure full and uniform monitoring of adherence to the transport conditions;
- to present a **full evaluation of all the economic, environmental and social costs and benefits incurred by the transport of animals**, including a comparison between the transport of animals for slaughter and the transport of carcasses and food products, as well as the effect of transport on the price of meat products, paying particular attention to the outermost regions and involving all stakeholders;
- to implement an extensive **consumer information campaign** on the subject of the European regulations on animal welfare, providing continuous information on the changes being required of European producers for the purposes of raising the profile of their work and improving the added value of their production;
- to propose a **considerably shortened maximum journey limit for all movements of horses for slaughter**, and insists furthermore on a thorough, science-based review of welfare standards for horses, if necessary accompanied by legislative proposals, including a reconsideration of vehicle design standards, space allowances and water provision;
- to demand, in its bilateral trade negotiations with third countries, **implementation of the EU's animal welfare rules** and to defend the internationalisation, within the framework of the World Trade Organisation, of the Community provisions on the subject;
- to make legislative proposals before 1 January 2014, aimed at creating **an EU-wide common framework for data collection and control through satellite navigation**, based on the uploading of data in real time;
- to undertake research into how new and existing technology can be applied in livestock vehicles to regulate, monitor and **register temperature and humidity**, which are essential elements for controlling and protecting the welfare of specific categories of animals during transport;
- to increase the number of **unannounced Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) spot inspections** focused on animal welfare and the transport of animals;
- to ensure that **veterinary controls** on animals to be transported take place at the end of their transport.

Parliament acknowledges **Written Declaration No 49/2011** of 30 November 2011 supporting an eight-hour journey limit for animals to be slaughtered, but recognises that such a demand alone has no scientific basis and that animal welfare during transport in some instances depends more on proper vehicle facilities and on the proper handling of animals. It, nevertheless, asks the Commission and the Member States to

**lay down guidelines for best practice** with a view to improving the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, and to reinforce control mechanisms in order to guarantee animal welfare.

The report insists on **a reconsideration of the issue of limiting the transport time of animals destined for slaughter to eight hours** taking account of loading time, irrespective of whether this takes place on land or at sea, with some exceptions taking into account geographic conditions in the outermost regions, provided that it is confirmed by scientific research results and that the rules on animal welfare are complied with. Members point out that it should be possible to extend transport times, **in the event of unforeseeable transport delays** (traffic jams, breakdowns, accidents, diversions, force majeure, etc), while complying with animal welfare principles.

The Member States, for their part, are called on:

- to **strengthen controls across the entire production chain** in order to halt practices that infringe the Regulation and worsen the conditions for the transport of animals, such as allowing overstocked vehicles to continue their journeys, or permitting control posts with inadequate facilities for resting, feeding and watering the animals to continue in use;
- to introduce effective, proportionate and dissuasive **sanctions** for infringements of the Regulation, pursuant to Article 25 thereof.

Drawing attention to the differing levels of penalties and sanctions for the same infringement in different Member States, Members call for **a greater harmonisation of sanctions** across the EU to ensure better enforcement of the Regulation. The Commission is requested to present, before 1 July 2013, a report analysing the penalties for serious infringements relating to animal welfare in road transport in all Member States, comparable to its report on penalties in the area of social rules in road transport.