

Implementation report as regards Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport within and outside the EU

2018/2110(INI) - 14/02/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 411 votes to 43, with 110 abstentions, a resolution on the implementation of Council Regulation No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport within and outside the EU.

Implementation and enforcement

Members regretted the fact that the degree of progress in implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 by Member States has been insufficient to meet the Regulation's main objective, which is to improve animal welfare during transport, particularly in relation to the verification of journey logs and the application of penalties.

Several policy recommendations were made, aimed at improving its implementation.

The Commission is called on to:

- ensure an effective and uniform enforcement of existing EU legislation on animal transport across all Member States;
- develop a harmonised EU sanction system;
- draw up a list of operators who have perpetrated repeated and serious breaches of the Regulation;
- develop harmonised procedures to grant approval to vessels and trucks and to take action to prevent the spreading of infectious animal diseases through transport, both within the EU and from third countries;
- develop geolocation systems to enable tracking of the animals' location and the duration of journeys in transport vehicles.

Member States were invited to make greater efforts to comply with the Regulation and in particular to:

- prosecute breaches of the Regulation, in particular repeated infringements, through vehicle confiscation and mandatory training for those responsible for animal welfare and transport;
- set up systems to prevent the repetition of infringements and to use their power to suspend or withdraw a carrier's authorisation;
- inform all other Member States concerned when they discover breaches.

Animal welfare strategy 2020-2024

Parliament also supported the new 2020-2024 animal welfare strategy and a clear definition of what constitutes fitness for transport and guidelines on how to assess it. It also wants a science-based update of EU rules on transport vehicles to ensure:

- sufficient ventilation and temperature control,
- appropriate drinking systems and liquid feed,
- reduced stocking densities and specified sufficient minimum headroom, and
- vehicles adapted to the needs of each species.

Data collection, inspections and monitoring

Parliament called on the Commission to establish common minimum standards for traceability systems applicable to all journeys made in order to better harmonise data collection and the assessment of the parameters monitored.

In addition, the number of risk-based unannounced checks should be increased. Inspections should be carried out uniformly throughout the Union and on an adequate proportion of the animals transported each year within each Member State, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the internal market.

The Commission should provide guidance to Member States on how the ***Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) can be used to support the preparation of risk analyses for inspections regarding the transport of live animals.***

Long journey times

Parliament insisted that the journey time for all animals being transported should be only as long as necessary and should be limited as far as possible. It suggested alternative strategies, such as local or mobile slaughter and meat processing facilities close to the place of rearing or on-farm slaughter, short distribution circuits and direct sales, replacing, when possible, the transport of breeding animals by using semen or embryos, and transporting carcasses and meat products.

Emergency slaughtering directly on the livestock and fattening farms should be allowed in the event that an animal is found to be unfit to be transported.

Control and training

Parliament called on the competent authorities of the Member States to ensure the presence of official veterinarians at EU exit points to verify that the animals are fit to continue their journey. Member States should also provide for awareness-raising and information activities, including solid, regular and mandatory training, educational content and certificates for all operators involved in animal transport.

Third countries

Members stated that unless transport standards in non-EU countries are aligned with the EU ones and properly enforced, the EU should seek to mitigate the differences through bilateral agreements or, if not possible, ban transport of live animals to these countries.

They also called for EU states bordering non-EU countries to provide rest areas where animals could be unloaded and given food and water while waiting to leave the EU.