

## **Damning investigation reveals brutal treatment of European exported livestock (confidential)**

Animals International with Tierschutzbund/Animal Welfare Foundation (TSB/AWF) have conducted a landmark six month investigation during the second half of 2016 documenting on video horrific documenting the handling and slaughter of European cattle and sheep travelling to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and the Palestinian territories. This six month long investigation, which took place in the second half of 2016, gathers evidence revealing clear breaches of both European regulations and international agreements and horrendous animal suffering.

### **Statistics around EU livestock exports**

Every year, well over 1 million cattle and sheep throughout the European Union (EU) are exported by sea and road to Turkey, North Africa, and the Middle East despite these countries having no laws that protect animals from brutal treatment. Even though the European Commission and livestock exporting Member States have long been made aware of the extreme cruelty such animals are being subjected to, both have been actively seeking to increase the export of EU animals. In 2015 the European livestock export value increased 25,2% compared to 2014, and increased further in 2016. In the first nine months of 2016 EU export of live animals increased to 17,2 % in comparison to the same period in 2015<sup>1</sup>. Meanwhile, 2015 Eurostat data confirms that more than 90% of animals (expressed in tons) exported from EU to Middle East have been going to the countries where Animals International and TSB/AWF carried out their investigation (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian territories, Israel and Egypt), which alarmingly represents the 60% of the total EU animals export.

### **Animal transport cruelty exposed**

The investigation proves the journey for animals being sent from Europe to the Middle East often lasts several days, if not nearly a week, and the animals suffer from severe exhaustion, dehydration, injuries, disease, and even in death. Not even the old, weak, or newly born are spared this adversity. Many of these animals are also already worn-out even before their journey begins, weakened by years of production in confinement, with brittle or broken bones. While travelling, young calves are prevented from being weaned by their mothers, remain unfed, are forced to stand for hours at a time in over-crowded trucks, and thus entirely shattered. All appear to undergo the same ordeal.

Another 5 year study carried out between 2010-2015 by Eyes on Animals and TSB/AWF demonstrated 70% of live export trucks inspected at the Bulgarian border (a major exit for EU animals) were breaching the EU Transport Regulation. The team found animals, such as sheep, starving, without water, parked in direct sunlight, and waiting 5 days before continuing their journey. Packed tightly together, young lambs were trampled to death while the elders were left standing on their carcasses.

### ***Scandals in shipping***

The latest investigation released by Animals International and TSB/AWF reveals animal cruelty still exists in EU animal export through shipping too. Old vessels that were never conceived to transport livestock are still being used and no veterinarian officer is on board to treat sick or injured animals. Of consequence, dead animals are only being found on ships once they arrive at their destination countries. Meanwhile, transport times over the Mediterranean sea last between 5 to 8 days: Animals are loaded on 35 years old vessel after having already spent several hours, very often several days, on trucks and they are too sick and exhausted even to walk the ramp: there is evidence of animals rolling down while operators use the electronic prod in the anus.

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<sup>1</sup> Several increases in 2016 European livestock export has been registered to the Middle East (+190% to Israel, +76% to Egypt and +67% to Libya).

During the long journeys animals take by road, sea and subsequent road transport to their country of destination, they are exposed to numerous afflictions to their welfare due to poor infrastructure. The investigation shows countless EU animals suffering and dying on these voyages. At present no statistics are being captured to track the numbers.

### **Barbaric slaughtering methods**

The investigation provides evidence that the slaughtering of animals being sold from the EU to Third Countries is barbaric. The footage captured on the slaughtering routines these importing countries are using are in full breach of international standards. Such routines include terrifying fully conscious very large bulls by painfully dragging them up off the floor by one of their rear legs, and slashing their throat several times before they die in Turkish slaughterhouses. Similar footage shows partial hoisting of fully conscious cattle in Lebanese slaughterhouses and their torture with electric prods before their throats are slashed. There is evidence as well of petrified European animals being brutally restrained by ropes before having their throats hacked whilst fully conscious in the Palestinian territories and Egypt. Furthermore, the extended suffering of European animals has been caught on camera showing how full inversion slaughter boxes are used in Turkey, Ramallah and Egypt. In addition, the brutal handling and slaughtering of Portuguese and Romanian sheep was documented in the Palestinian territories and Jordan.

The mistreatment that has been documented in the Middle East not only breaches international agreements, but is not even in accordance with Islamic principles of reducing animal suffering to the minimum during their slaughter.

EU sent animals to those countries without any associated instruction as to how they must be treated and slaughtered. Countries such as Egypt are known to have some of the cruelest animal killing methods in the world, like cattle tendon slashing and eye stabbing to disable these animals before slaughtering them. Yet it is a major destination for cattle from the EU.

### **Inadequate EU animal regulation**

Under EU Regulation 1/2005 animals are being exported by European countries without any consideration as to whether the importing countries' infrastructure, handling and slaughter practices comply with basic international standards. Even if the majority of abattoirs in importing countries have no capacity or understanding to handle or slaughter animals humanely, no EU regulation ought to allow the animal cruelty that is occurring. Further still, the fact that so many lack even the most basic hygiene protocols means the resulting meat is in fact unfit for human consumption in the EU.

Despite in 2015 the Court of Justice judged - Zuchtvieh arrest - that the Transport Regulation 1/2005's provisions not only apply to the EU but rather to the entire journey of transporting European animals outside the EU until their final destination, still in Third countries there are not facilities to unload, feed, water, rest animals and to provide them with basic care. And yet the trade continues and so does the suffering, in disregard of the highest Court's Jurisprudence.

The way in which the trade of live animals is currently carried out in the EU is in clear breach of Article 13 of the Treaty on the Function of the EU (TFEU), which is a requirement to "pay full regard to" animal welfare in formulating and implementing EU agriculture policy. In addition, by facilitating and supplying live EU animals to countries that are consistently failing to meet standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) – the Commission is undermining the work of the OIE to improve animal welfare standards. Compliance with OIE standards is intended to form the basis of trade agreements between countries.

**Live exportation of animals from the EU to third countries is immoral and unnecessary. Live animal transports should therefore be phased out as soon as possible. The European Commission should develop an EU strategy with effective incentives to phase out all live animal transports, replacing them with carcasses and meat products. Meanwhile, the EC should take necessary steps to reduce consecutive transport hours as expected by society, and live animal transportation to destinations outside the EU should comply with the European Court of Justice's jurisprudence as well as OIE standards for slaughter conditions**