



**European Parliament
recommendation
in relation to the
protection of animals
during transport**

Analysis - January 2022

European Parliament recommendation of 20 January 2022 to the Council and the Commission following the investigation of alleged contraventions and maladministration in the application of Union law in relation to the protection of animals during transport within and outside the Union (2021/2736(RSP))

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Introduction

On 20 January 2022, the European Parliament [adopted](#)¹ the Recommendation which had previously been [approved](#) by the Committee of Inquiry on the Protection of Animals during Transport (ANIT) on 2nd December 2021.

The Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) [voted](#) on a series of [amendments](#) (AMs) and split votes. Regrettably, several of the recommendations [adopted](#) in Plenary are weaker than those carried in the ANIT Committee.

Plenary vote: changes to the ANIT Recommendations

Some of the important calls raised by the ANIT Committee were approved by the Plenary: species-specific provisions for horses, cats and dogs, fish, and poultry; 4 hours maximum journey time for poultry and end-of-career animals; and a call to the European Commission to prepare by 2023 an action plan to shift to meat/carcasses and genetic material trade.

However, on some key topics MEPs rejected progressive amendments and opted for a consensual but weaker approach. A table summarising the main results of the plenary vote, divided by topic, is provided below.

- **Vulnerable animals:** The call for more research in order to establish the correct age and conditions for the transportation of unweaned animals remains; however **the Plenary watered down ANIT's call to ban the transport of all very young animals below the age of 35 days**, and called for an age-limit for transport (i.e 4 weeks of age) only for calves. MEPs also **rejected an amendment (AM) that would have banned the transport of gestating animals when the 40% of the gestation period is reached**, and only "stressed" that the transport of pregnant animals should be avoided and limited to 4 hours in the last third of gestation.
- **Export to third countries and maximum journey time:** Despite the evidence collected through hearings and workshops, the Plenary did not support an amendment calling for eight hours maximum journey time for all live transports, a proposal that would have *de facto* supported a call to reduce live exports. For the European Parliament the **eight hours maximum journey time should remain applicable only to animals destined for slaughter when transported via road and air, thus leaving behind breeding animals and all the animals transported via sea**. Considering this and the proposed **definition of "journey time"**

¹ The Recommendation was approved with 557 votes in favour, 55 votes against, 78 abstentions.





that excludes the loading and unloading activities, the EP decided not to change a system where animals can still be transported on long and very long journeys.










Conclusions







Eurogroup for Animals believes that the already weak Recommendation approved by the ANIT Committee was watered down further in Plenary. The amendments that could have had considerable positive impact on the welfare of the animals transported, as well as those supporting a systemic change, did not receive the support needed and expected.







Eurogroup for Animals trusts the European Commission is fully committed to revise the Transport Regulation in accordance with the EU basic principles that animals are sentient beings, and we look forward to seeing a plan to shift to a meat, carcasses and genetic material trade.





Summary of the EP’s main recommendations on the transport of live animals




The EP calls for:	Is this good?	Topics
<p>[Paragraph 103] Defining “unweaned animals” with a clear minimum age in weeks;</p> <p>[Paragraph 102; 104] More research on the needs of young and unweaned animals (i.e journey time, optimal space allowance, the right age, appropriate drinking devices, appropriate milk replacers, proper feeding management in collection centres, feeding intervals during transport and optimal conditions for raising the animals at the farm of origin), and fitness for transport assessment;</p> <p>[Paragraph 104] Considering that the transport limitation for these animals in the future regulation, also taking into account the need for actions to ensure that all animals receive proper care at the farm of origin;</p> <p>[Paragraph 104] Not allowing the transport of unweaned animals below four weeks of age only in case of calves being transported.</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p> Unweaned animals should not be transported, regardless of their species.</p>	<p>Unweaned animals</p>

<p>[Paragraph 110] Avoiding the transport of gestating animals and calls on the Member States' authorities to ensure that pregnant females above the maximum gestation period allowed by Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 are not transported;</p> <p>[Paragraph 110] Restricting to a maximum of four hours the transport of pregnant animals in the last third of gestation;</p> <p>[Paragraph 110] Developing more accurate methods for determining gestational age and assessing fitness for transport according to the stage of gestation.</p>	<p></p> <p> Pregnant animals should not be transported as soon as they reach 40% of the gestation period.</p> <p></p>	<p>Pregnant animals</p>
<p>[Paragraph 111] Avoiding long-distance transport of end-of-career animals, only permitting it for transporting them to the closest available species-appropriate slaughterhouse;</p> <p>[Paragraph 111] EU initiatives to enhance mobile, local and regional slaughterhouses, to ensure that a maximum limit of four hours' transport of end-of-career animals can be attained in the future.</p>	<p></p> <p></p>	<p>End-of-career animals</p>
<p>[Paragraph 46; 114] A Commission legislative proposal that includes specific provisions within Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 to properly protect poultry and rabbits;</p> <p>[Paragraph 114] Specific containers for poultry, allowing the birds to stand in their natural position and to have enough air circulating above their heads, with rules for a proper handling;</p> <p>[Paragraph 114] Only transport poultry and rabbits to the closest available species-appropriate slaughterhouse;</p> <p>[Paragraph 114] Promoting EU initiatives and</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>Poultry and rabbits</p>

investments to ensure a maximum limit of four hours' transport for these animals.		
<p>[Paragraph 46; 113] Including science-based provisions to properly protect fish and aquatic animals during transport;</p> <p>[Paragraph 113] Preparing a detailed checklist for pre-transport planning and preparation, specific provisions concerning water quality parameters, density, handling during loading and unloading, and post-transport welfare controls.</p>	 	Fish
<p>[Paragraph 115] Researching the needs of companion animals as required by the Regulation (EC) No 1/2005;</p> <p>[Paragraph 115] Introducing detailed science-based provisions on the commercial movement of companion animals, paying particular attention to the separation of animals and space allowances, stacking, bedding, a suitable temperature and humidity range to ensure animal welfare, as well as proper training for the personnel responsible for handling and transporting the animals.</p>	 	Cats and dogs
[Paragraph 116] Considering horses in the revision process by proposing species-specific requirements in the revised Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.		Horses
[Paragraph 100] Developing specific rules on optimal temperature ranges in transport vehicles, taking account the humidity as well as the different needs specific to species, age and category, as well as the physiological status of the animal, intra-species breed variations, age, sex and environmental adaptations, and the temperature regulation of the animals.		Temperatures

<p>[Paragraph 131] A Commission’s list of third countries applying rules at least as protective as those in the EU, where export of live farm animals may be directly authorised based on an international agreement;</p>	<p> Export to non-EU countries should be banned regardless of the duration, conditions and purposes of the exports.</p>	<p>Extra-EU transport</p>
<p>[Paragraph 87] No maximum journey time for sea transport;</p> <p>[Paragraph 117] Measures enabling a shift to a meat, carcasses and genetic material trade, where appropriate, to replace the need for sea transport.</p> <p>[Paragraph 117] Introducing dissuasive measures, to prevent dead animals from being discarded in the sea or on transport routes in accordance with the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (the Marpol Convention);</p>	<p> Sea transport to Third Countries should be banned; maximum journey time set for Intra-EU road transport should also apply to intra-EU sea transportations.</p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>Sea transport</p>
<p>[Paragraph 15] Revising the definitions of place of departure and place of destination in order to reflect the actual times of the whole transport process from the farm of origin to the farm of destination or place of slaughter;</p> <p>[Paragraph 91] A definition of ‘journey time’ as the entire time of movement excluding the time of loading into a means of transport, and unloading from the means of transport, once arrived at the final destination;</p>	<p></p> <p> Journey time should be defined as the entire time elapsing from the “beginning of journey” until the “end of journey” including loading and unloading of animals. In case of sea and air transport the journey time includes the time animals spend on the road from the farm to the harbour or airport, and from the harbour or airport to the final destination, as well as</p>	<p>Journey time</p>

<p>[Paragraph 38] Commission and the Member States' funding mechanisms to ensure that local slaughterhouses are economically viable, close to farms and evenly distributed from a geographical perspective;</p> <p>[Paragraph 87] Eight hours maximum journey time only for domestic animals going to slaughter via road and air;</p> <p>[Paragraph 108; 109] Supporting local rearing, short supply chains and mobile slaughter in remote areas to reduce the transport time for animals;</p> <p>[Paragraph 88] Revising the provisions regarding the maximum length of the journey, taking into account animal-based evidence and species, age, and category-specific needs.</p>	<p>the part of the journey animals spend on the vessels and the roll-on/roll-off time.</p> <p></p> <p> Species-, age-, and category-specific maximum travel time - within a maximum travel time of 8h - should be set for all the animals being transported, regardless of the means of transport used.</p> <p></p> <p></p>	
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<p>[Paragraph 8; 9] A fair and adequate period of transition to a more efficient, economical and ethical system that favours the transport of semen or embryos carcasses and meat rather than animals, wherever possible; This replacement would be in line with the Farm to Fork strategy's main objective of building more resilient and sustainable short food supply chains;</p>		<p>Meat/carcasses and genetic material trade</p>
<p>[Paragraph 10] A Commission's plan, no later than 2023, identifying the driving forces behind animal transport and proposing concrete policy and regulatory actions, and setting a precise timeline and milestones, with the aim of mitigating those forces, and reducing the need to transport live animals;</p>		
<p>[Paragraph 10; 17] Directing different funds, including from the common agricultural policy (CAP), for this objective, to encourage and enable farmers and transporters to perform this transition efficiently.</p>		

Additional readings:

[Committee of Inquiry on the Protection of Animals during Transport - Recommendations Analysis](#)

[Live transport: time to change the rules](#)

[A strategy to reduce and replace live animal transport](#)

EUROGROUP FOR ANIMALS

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