

Factsheet: ongoing, systematic breaches of Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 during long distance transport of animals

Background info about long distance transport of animals

Each year, billions of animals are transported within the European Union, and around 4 million sheep and cattle are exported to Third Countries such as Turkey, the Middle East, North Africa, Russian Federation and even as far as Uzbekistan by road and sea transport.

In the year 2007, Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 came into force and should protect animals during transport within the European Union and up to the first place of destination in the Third Country. For more than 10 years now, we and other NGOs are reporting on systematic breaches of the Regulation and ongoing animal welfare problems, many of them serious in nature. The Commission insists that the enforcement of Regulation 1/2005 has to be improved, but seems unable to actually enforce this law.

One of the tasks of the European Commission is to oversee that EU countries fully and correctly apply EU law. When a country fails to do so, the Commission may take legal action by launching an infringement procedure and eventually referring the case to the Court of Justice of the European Union for a ruling.

Still, the Commission seems to turn a blind eye to the suffering of animals during long distance transport, and their actions taken appear to be weak and ineffective.

Findings

Our findings illustrate the failure of the industry, the Member States and the EU Commission to protect the welfare of the animals during transport. We regularly observe major and systematic breaches of Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 during our investigations.

There are ongoing and major breaches of Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 regarding:

- the approval of long distance road vehicles,
- the approval of vessels for the sea transport of animals,
- the plausibility of route planning,
- compliance with maximum journey times,
- space allowances,
- headspace,
- transport during extreme temperatures,
- transport of unfit animals.

There are systematic breaches of Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 during:

- transport of unweaned calves and lambs,
- export to Third Countries by road and sea transport.

All of these infringements are resulting in constant breaches of Article 3 that states: “No person shall transport animals or cause animals to be transported in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering to them.”

Regulation (EC) 1/2005 is being ignored during transport of unweaned calves and lambs

The provisions of Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005, Chapter V, point 1.3. and Chapter VI, point 2.2. of Annex I for long distance transport of unweaned calves and lambs are regularly ignored. These fragile, young animals are still on a milk diet, with special demands on the quality of their food and the way it is offered to them. All of this cannot be fulfilled in transport vehicles, and as a result the young animals are regularly suffering from feed/liquid deprivation (please see our attached report “Long distance transport of unweaned calves and lambs”).

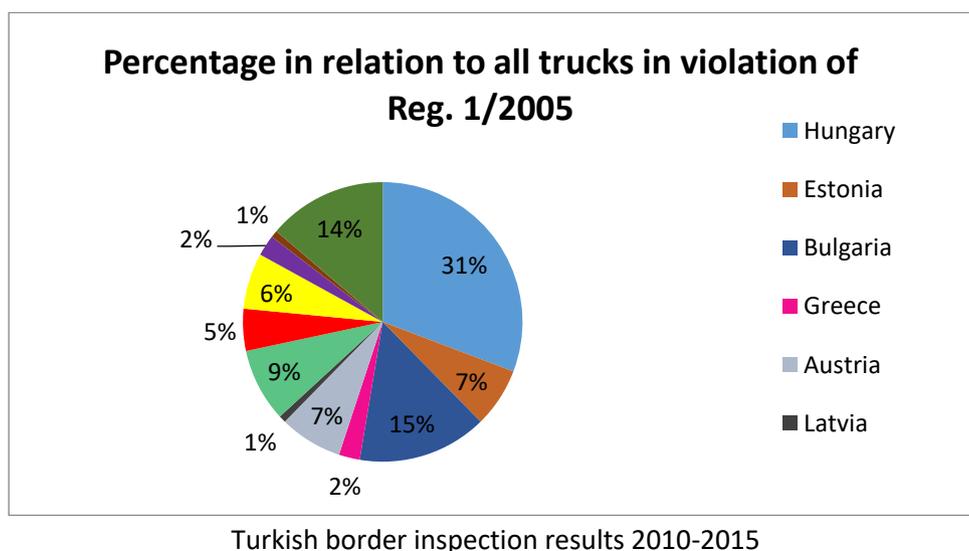
Regulation (EC) 1/2005 is being ignored during transport to Third Countries

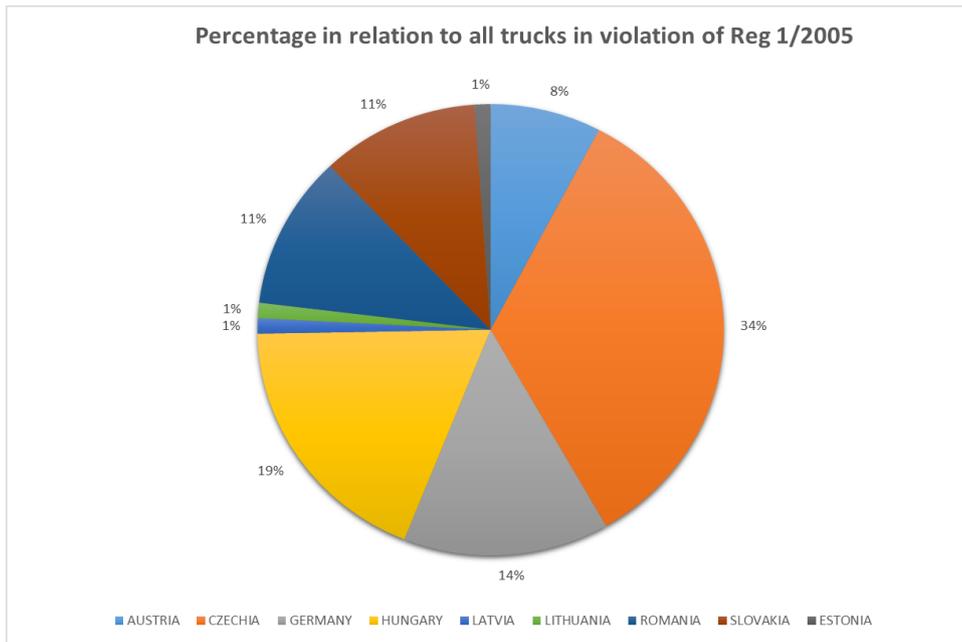
During long distance transport to Turkey and the Middle East, we found regular breaches against the requirements of Regulation 1/2005 such as substandard vehicles and vessels, animals in overcrowded conditions, insufficient headroom leading to injuries and lack of ventilation, insufficient water and feed supply, unfit animals suffering and dying during the journey, others giving birth. All this is aggravated by extreme hot temperatures and long delays at the Turkish border, where there is no infrastructure for the import of animals.

Over a period of eight years (2010-2017) we provided evidence that 70 % of all inspected EU transport consignments by road to Turkey were in violation of Council Regulation 1/2005.

Even though the EU Commission and the Member States have been informed over the last years (see Doomed Journey I and II reports and complaints of our lawyers Conte & Giacomini) about the massive animal suffering involved during these journeys, the trade was not suspended, not even during the hottest months of the year and despite regular delays at the border.

The following graphics illustrate that violations of the Regulation are persistent in certain Member States.





Turkish border inspection results 2017

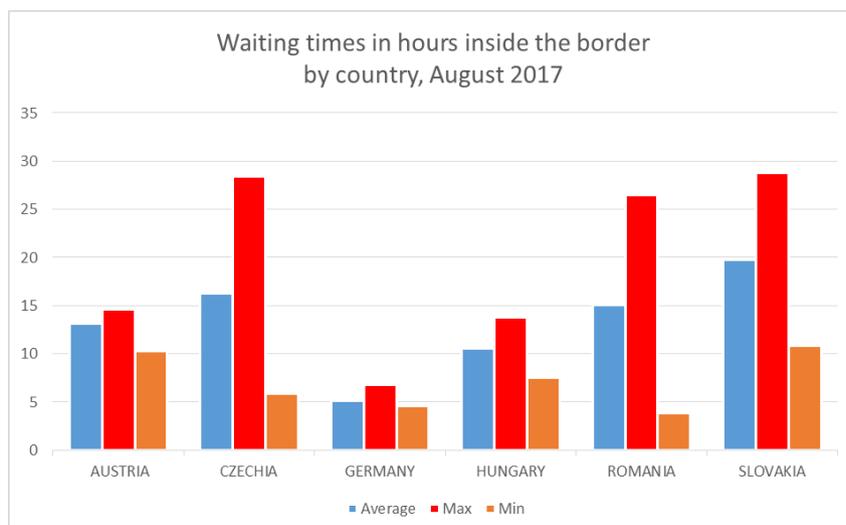
Our findings are supported by FVO reports. The latest mission report, Ares(2018)68850 - 05/01/2018, on a mission in Hungary in June 2017 states for example:

“The measures in place do [...] not provide assurances that these journeys are correctly planned and carried out in line with animal welfare requirements to prevent causing unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to the animals.”

“Inadequate route planning causing extended journey times is the major non-compliance detected in Hungarian exports to Turkey. “

“Consignments are sent to non-EU countries when climate conditions are extreme (hot) in lorries whose ventilation systems are not capable of keeping animals in the required range of temperatures. These two factors are causing unnecessary suffering to animals during long transport by road to non-EU countries.”

“There has been inadequate progress in rectifying the above deficiencies and others which were already reported during the last audit to Hungary on animal welfare during transport in 2011.”



Waiting times at the border of Kapikule/ TR resulting in exceeded journey times

During the last two years, our teams have investigated the sea transport of animals from EU ports to Third Countries and have been on different walk-on-walk-off vessels (please see our dossier “Animal Welfare overboard” - attached on data stick).

The vessels we inspected had been converted from originally car ferries and cargo ships to livestock carrier vessels. We found them poorly designed and maintained and their construction poses many risks for injuries. During investigations we observed animals struggling on steep ramps exceeding the required inclination of 26 degrees, unfit animals being loaded and brutal handling of animals during loading procedures.

Beside the fact that these vessels should not have been approved for the transport of animals under Article 19, the Member States of exit regularly fail to verify compliance of the vessels with Article 20 and to ensure the animals’ fitness for transport and that loading operations are carried out in compliance with Article 21 (2) of Regulation (EC) 1/2005.

Enforcement of Regulation (EC) 1/2005 is poor within the European Union, but once the animals leave the EU and enter Third Country territories it is impossible for the Member State and EU authorities to monitor and influence the animals’ welfare, or compliance with the Regulation.

We are appealing to the European Parliament to take action and to remedy the failure of the Commission to guarantee enforcement of EU law on the protection of animals during transport.

With the following links you can get further information on the topic:

ZDF documentary on export and slaughter of EU animals in Third Countries: <https://www.zdf.de/dokumentation/37-grad/37-geheimsache-tiertransporte-100.html>
 broadcasted on 21.11.2017 (ZDF), 14.1.2017 (Phoenix), 22.1.2017 (3sat)

The Myth of enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, Documentation by Animals’ Angels: https://www.animals-angels.de/fileadmin/user_upload/1_DATEN_AB_2014/4_AA_PRESS/Animals_Angels_Myth_of_Enforcement.pdf

Information on data stick:

1. Compendium EU export of live animals (Dossiers: “Doomed journey I & II”, Turkey investigation 2017, Report on transport of animals by sea “Animal Welfare overboard”)
2. Dossier on long distance transport of unweaned animals
3. Videos
 - a. Doomed Journey 1 (5-years EU-Turkey)
 - b. Doomed Journey 2 (2016-06-29 Doomed Journey)
 - c. Unweaned Animals (2016-05_EU calf project)

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