

Comissioner Health and Food Safety
Stella Kyriakides
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Zurich, 27 November 2024

Urgent Appeal: Immediate Ban on Live Animal Transports to High-Risk Countries

Dear Ms. Kyriakides,

The Stiftung für das Tier im Recht (TIR; Foundation for the Animal in the Law) is a non-profit organization specializing in legal animal protection. The main purpose of its activities is the continuous improvement of the human-animal relationship in law, ethics, and society.

The recent tragedies at the EU's external border with Turkey, where dozens of cattle (including pregnant ones) from the EU suffered agonizing deaths, underscore the urgent need for a ban on live animal transports to countries with inadequate animal welfare standards.

This incident is part of a series of similar cases where animal transport was stranded at borders or at sea, leading to massive animal suffering. Even when animals reach their destination, they often face cruel fates due to slaughter methods that are considered cruel and prohibited in the EU.

Considering these recurring incidents, a Union-wide ban on the transport of farm animals to high-risk animal welfare states such as Turkey or certain North African countries is essential. The EU Commission has recently put forward proposals for a comprehensive revision of the 20-year-old transport rules. These include:


- Limiting transport duration to a maximum of nine hours for animals for slaughter
- Stricter regulations for exports of live animals from the EU, including better controls in third countries
- The use of digital tools to improve enforcement of transport regulations

While these proposals are a step in the right direction, current incidents show that further measures are necessary:


- Binding emergency plans for crisis situations at EU external borders must be developed and implemented immediately.
- Live animal transport to high-risk animal welfare states must be completely banned to prevent such tragedies.
- The EU must take responsibility for its animals beyond its borders and not shift this responsibility to third countries.

We appeal to you to advocate strongly for a swift and consistent implementation of these reforms. The welfare of animals must be the top priority.

Sincerely,



Dr. iur. Vanessa Gerritsen
Member of the Executive Board



RA MLaw Laura Baumann
Legal Research Associate