



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY
Directorate G – Crisis management in food, animals and plants
The Director

Brussels,
SANTE G2/YSL/ise (2020) 2545616

Subject: Petition “Transport of animals to third countries under Covid-19 situation”

Dear Petitioner,

Thank you for the interest you have expressed for the welfare of animals during transport. Please be assured that the Commission takes your concerns very seriously.

The coronavirus crisis highlights the challenge of protecting the health of EU citizens whilst avoiding disruptions to the free movement of persons, and the delivery of goods and essential services across Europe.

The Commission is committed to protect public health and, at the same time, the functioning of the internal market. The Commission has adopted guidelines for border management measures to protect health and ensure the availability of goods and essential services, which stress the need to ensure unobstructed transport of essential goods including livestock.

Indeed, the transport of live animals constitutes an essential part of the food supply chain, both within and outside the EU.

Any sudden interruption of this trade will inevitably disrupt the food supply chain and complicate the life of our citizens and businesses that are presently suffering. This is not a risk that the Commission is ready to take at this point in time, taking into account that Member States are also unlikely to support such measures.

The Commission services are constantly in contact with the competent authorities of the Member States, as they are primarily responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the EU legislation.

Ms Olga Kikou
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Since the beginning of the crisis, very few Member States have introduced restrictions on live animal transport. Most disruptions to animal transport are due to additional checks, which have the effect of slowing down the traffic. Member States are therefore asked to designate priority lanes for freight transport (e.g. via ‘green lanes’). The Commission has also issued practical advice on how to implement the abovementioned guidelines, in order to keep goods moving across the EU during the current pandemic(C (2020) 1897 final).

As a result, I am glad to inform you that the situation at the internal borders of the EU has improved significantly.

I would also like to reassure you that the Commission will continue to monitor the situation across the EU and it will not hesitate to intervene, if needed.

I would be grateful if you could share this response with the other petitioners.

Yours sincerely,

Bernard Van Goethem