



Federation  
of Veterinarians  
of Europe

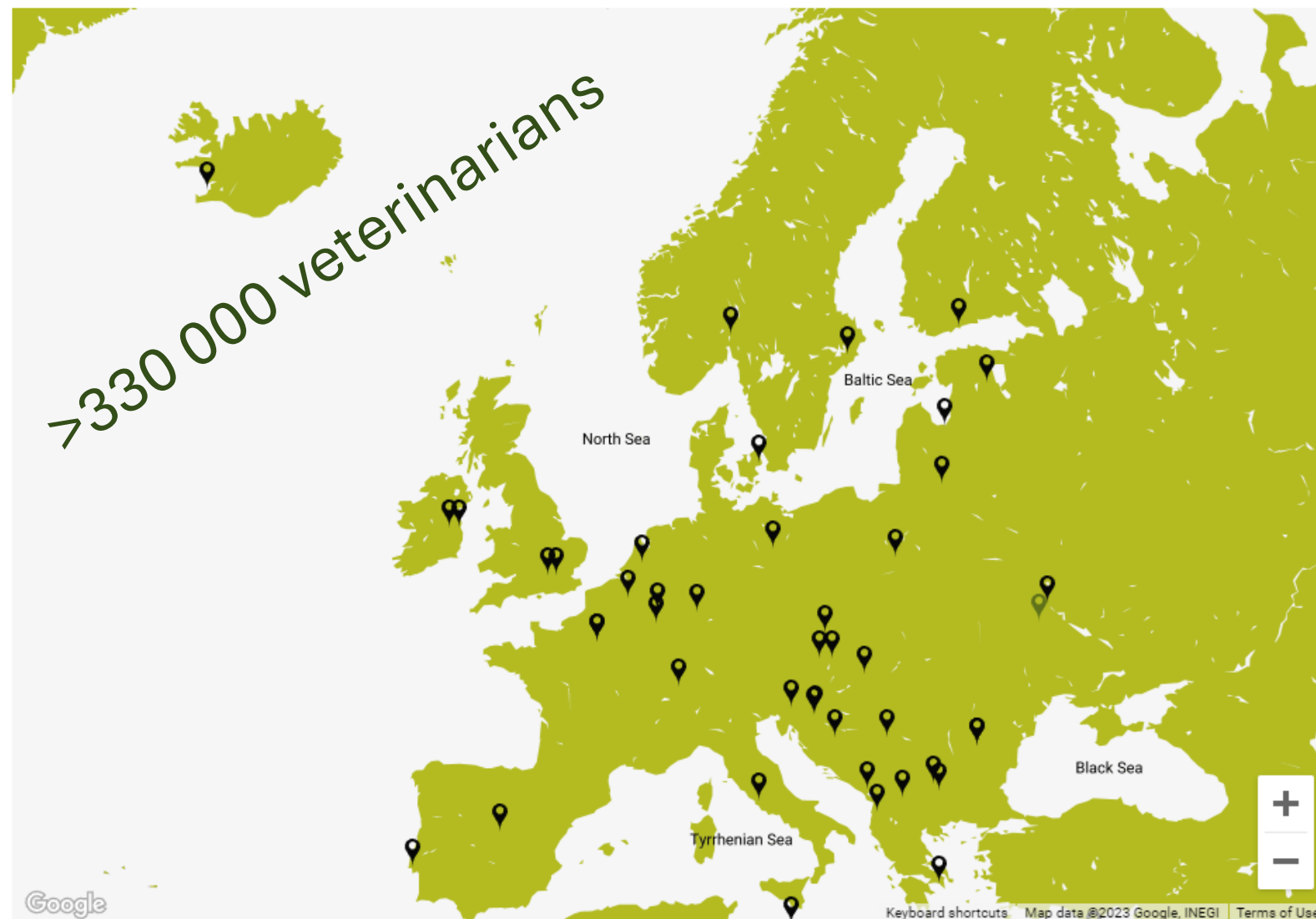
# Guides to improve the transport of animals

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# THE FEDERATION OF VETERINARIANS OF EUROPE



46 national associations

38 European countries

4 Sections

- UEVP (*Practitioners*)
- UEVH (*Hygienists – Public Health Officers*)
- EASVO (*Veterinary State Officers*)
- EVERI (*Education, Research, Industry*)

## FVE's mission

The European veterinary profession, represented by FVE, is a **science-led healthcare profession** of over 330,000 veterinarians. We champion animal health and welfare, public health, safe food, and sustainable livelihoods.

As One Health–One Welfare leaders, veterinarians protect animals, people, and the environment for a healthier tomorrow.



# Animal transport = important FVE agenda point for decades



Lead the developed multi-stakeholder fitness for transport guides



Core group of Animal Transport Guides Project diseases



Multiple FVE positions, background documents on animal transport



Research: EFSA transport opinions, Commission transport subgroup, etc

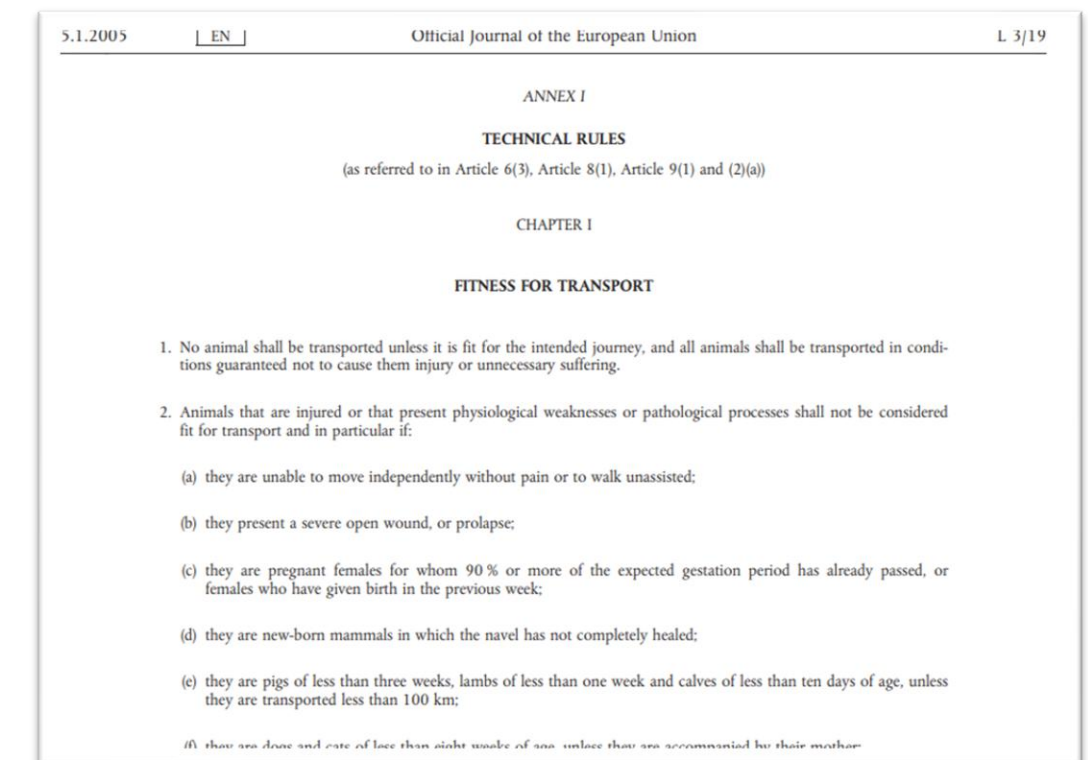


# 1. Multi-stakeholder fitness for animal transport guidelines

**'No person shall transport animals or cause animals to be transported in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering to them.'**

## Council Regulation EC 1/2005 Article 3

ANNEX I  
TECHNICAL RULES  
CHAPTER I  
FITNESS FOR TRANSPORT







## Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Pigs



**For Pigs**

## Praktyczne wytyczne na potrzeby oceny zdolności dorosłego bydła do transportu



**For Adult Cattle**

## Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Equidae (Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and their Hybrids)



**For Horses**





# How to read the signs?

For quick reference, we have used **✗**, **?** and **✓** and colour coding at the top and bottom of the page, to help you distinguish between the different parts of the guide.



**Non transportable**



**Possibly transportable but further assessment is needed**



**Transportable**



**Warning - take note**



**Quotation of legislation**

## 1) Inability to move

This means an animal is unable:

- To move without pain
- To walk unassisted
- To stand up (These animals are commonly called "downers" ) or
- To remain up or
- To walk or
- Likely to lose its balance during transport

See definitions on pages 7 & 8



Pic: Animals' Angels



Downer animal: animals lying down, unable to get up or to remain up

Animal likely to lose balance during transport



Pic: Yves Willemann



Inflammation: the left foreleg is swollen and red. This animal is unable to move without pain.



Pic: Yves Willemann

## 1) Difficulty with movement (Continued)



Animal resting a hind leg: this position of the leg can indicate a problem. Further assessment is needed: will the animal be able to put weight on this leg and to move without pain?

## 2) Surgical wounds (Continued)

**Open wound that has been stitched up:**



This wound is not fully healed; it has been stitched 2 days ago



**DO NOT TRANSPORT**



Example of a healed wound with no risk to be injured again

**FIT FOR TRANSPORT**



Pic: Zeev Noga





## 2. Animal Transport Guides Project



**IRU**  
Projects

**EUROGROUP**  
**FOR**  
**ANIMALS**

**FVE**

Financed by European  
Commission



# *The aim*



- To develop Guides to **Good and Better Practice** to support the clarification of parts of the Regulation e.g. 'sufficient' amount
- The species are: Cattle - Horses – Poultry – Pigs – Sheep



- To reach a large number of transport companies, drivers, competent authorities, farmers, NGO's and veterinarians



# The Guides







# The Guides

## 2. Journey planning and preparation

### 2.1 Introduction

Good preparation and planning for the transport of pigs is one of the keys to successful animal transport in terms of legislation, best practice and high standards of animal welfare and economic efficiency. **Planning promotes smooth execution** of transport and is needed to ensure that the involvement of the different parties is poorly synchronised. The overall animal transport process necessitates **well-structured integrated activities** according to defined sets of objectives, responsibilities and anticipation of **unexpected events** and problems and the provision of measures to supplement well defined Standard Operating Procedures are paramount. To address immediate animal welfare concerns, planning should include animal health (biosecurity), human health and safety aspects and economic importance of planning and preparation is also acknowledged by the fact that **journey logs with a planning section are obligatory for long journeys**.

From an animal welfare point of view, the 'preparation and planning' section covers the following aspects:

- o Planning the journey,
- o Vehicle preparation,
- o Animal related preparation,
- o Administration.

These aspects are described in the paragraphs below.

### 2.2 Planning the journey

The journey shall be as **smooth and quick as possible** in order to minimise transport stress. It shall be planned carefully to assure pig welfare throughout the whole transportation. As part of the planning for each journey, **arrangements shall be made to manage any delay, breakdown or other emergency** to avoid impaired welfare during all transport.

The journey shall be **planned and prepared carefully** after the agreement of the farmer or trader of the date and the place of departure and the destination. Journey plans involve written arrangements regarding start and end times, contingency plans, and details on consignment sheets or arrangements for rest stops, particularly for long-distance journeys.

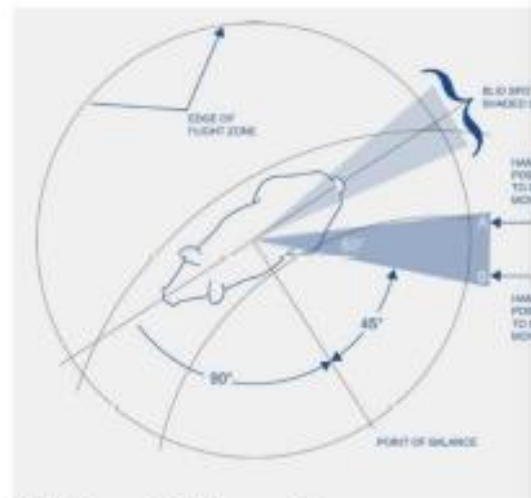
In particular, they shall include:

- o **description of the route of travel** and estimation of its duration,
- o **analysis of weather forecast,**



**Figure 3.6** Calm handling that makes use of the animals' natural 'flight zone' speeds up loading operations, improves animal welfare, and reduces the risk of injuries and bruises.

Another thing to be aware of is that pigs have wide-angle vision and they can see themselves. However, they have a blind spot located right behind them. If a handler positions himself in that spot, the animals can get nervous as they are not seeing the handler. **Handlers should always try to avoid that 'blind spot' when handling pigs.** See Figure 3.7.



**Figure 3.7.** Field of vision and flight zone of pigs

107. The time and stress involved in sorting and loading should be minimised, and a resting period should be applied in between the

times, availability of facilities, language spoken, service available for driver (sanitation, leisure facilities, etc.) and health service. A phone list of local medical practitioners, hospitals, police, fire department, veterinarians must be available.

- 216. Water supply to animals should be potable and not become contaminated. Any water storage tanks must be covered and capable of being disinfected if necessary. **Water supply systems should be capable of being flushed with a sanitizer if required.**
- 217. Storage of feed and bedding must be kept secure and not capable of becoming contaminated. **Tractors and other mechanical equipment used for feeding and bedding should be cleansed and disinfected after each use.**

### 6.5 Emergency

In case of emergencies occurring while animals are at the control post, the contingency plan of the control post and that of the transporter are activated.

**Good practices** during emergencies at control posts

- 218. If there are not enough pens according to the number of pens in the truck, **no more than two pens of the truck are mixed**. Behaviour is observed and injured or stressed animals are isolated.
- 219. If an animal shows **signs of colic** (e.g. profuse sweating, continuous rolling, turning head towards the belly, persistent movement and getting up and down violently, lying down frequently), which is one of the most common problems, **veterinary assistance** is sought immediately. It is avoided as much as possible to stress the animal.
- 220. If **several trucks arrive together** at a control post with animals of different sanitary status:
  - o The **competent authorities** are contacted for official recommendations, also when one or more trucks create a biosecurity hazard.
  - o Animals of **different sanitary status are isolated** in different areas of the site.
- 221. If a local **sanitary crisis** occurs when animals are expected at the control post:
  - o The **competent authorities** are contacted for official recommendations, also when one or more trucks create a biosecurity hazard.
  - o The **driver and the owner** of the transported animals are informed before the arrival. Mobile disinfection systems (wheel splash-boards) are used when the truck enters the control post.

**Better practices** during emergencies at control posts

- 222. **If animals need to remain** in the control post after the truck has departed, for instance because they are injured or otherwise unfit to be transported, they are kept in a **separate area**. The local competent authorities are informed of these animals. No pens are disinfected whilst animals are still inside them. Care is taken not to cause avoidable stress.



# Good vs Better



## Good practices = legislation

99. Birds should **not** be caught and carried by the neck and should not hit any object whilst they are carried.

## Better practices = beyond legislation

118. End-of-lay hens should be **caught individually by both legs** to avoid injury or suffering and the breast can be supported by the other hand.





ANIMAL TRANSPORT GUIDES

# 17 Fact sheets







# Driver factsheet

## Maximum: journey time and temperature



1. Is your vehicle ready? Check roadworthiness, ventilation, cleanliness, partitions, locks, flooring surface (bedding), lighting, (un)loading equipment and vehicle markings

2. Do you have the documents?  
• Certificate of competence  
• Vehicle approval  
• Contingency plan  
• Animal identification  
Keep in mind the time



1. Park your vehicle close to the (un)loading area shielding it, where possible, from extreme weather conditions

2. Biosecurity on mind the 'clean' and check (un)loading cleanliness



5. Handle the animals in a calm way, do not rush. Ensure immediate and adequate treatment for injured animals

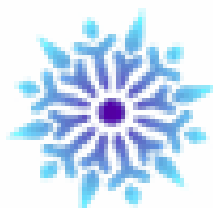
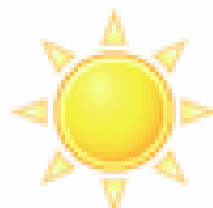
Inspect the

If in doubt, check



Species	Max. journey time
Cattle	<u>Adult</u> : 14 hours + 1 rest + 14 hours <u>Unweaned calves</u> : 9 hours + 1 rest + 9 hours
Pigs	<u>Adult</u> : 24 hours <u>Piglets</u> : 9 hours + 1 rest + 9 hours
Poultry	No maximum journey duration
Horses	<u>Adults</u> : 24 hours <u>Foals (&lt; 6 months, with mare)</u> : 9 hours + 1 rest + 9 hours
Sheep	<u>Adults</u> : 14 hours + 1 rest + 14 hours <u>Unweaned lambs</u> : 9 hours + 1 rest + 9 hours

After these maximum journey times, animals must be unloaded, fed and watered and be rested for at least 24 hours; except poultry



- Control temperature inside and adjust ventilation!
- Make sure the animals are well fed and watered
- In case of vent flaps / side covers, open them
- All livestock (or journeys) not more than 30 degrees
- Avoid loading wet animals
- Control temperature inside and adjust ventilation!
- Make sure the animals are well fed and watered
- In case of vent flaps / side covers, use them without impeding air circulation

### Livestock Weather Safety Index

Dry Bulb Temp (°C)	Relative humidity (%)					
	50	60	70	80	90	100
25,6	22,2	23,3	23,9	23,9	25	25,6
26,7	23,3	23,9	25	25,6	26,1	26,7
27,8	23,9	24,4	25,6	26,1	27,2	27,8
28,9	25	25,6	26,7	27,2	28,3	28,9
30	25,6	26,7	27,2	28,3	28,9	30
31,1	26,7	27,2	27,8	29,4	30,6	31,1
32,2	27,2	28,3	28,3	30,6	31,1	32,2
33,3	28,3	28,9	30	31,1	32,2	
34,4	28,9	30	31,1	32,2		
35,6	30	31,1	32,2			
36,7	30,6	31,7				
37,8	31,1	32,8				

Good!

Alert

Danger

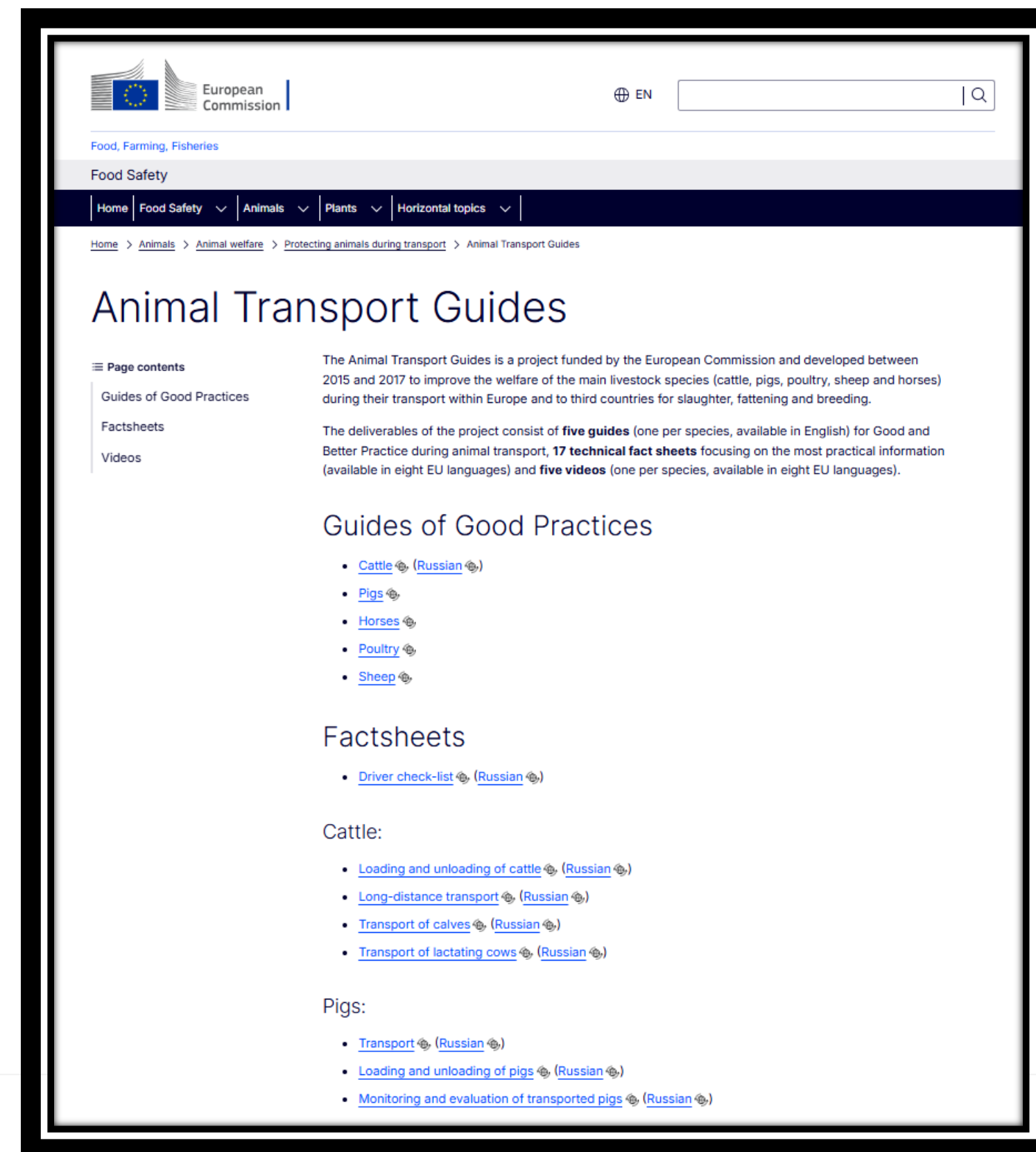
Emergency



The 5 guides and the 17 factsheets  
are available on the European  
Commission website:

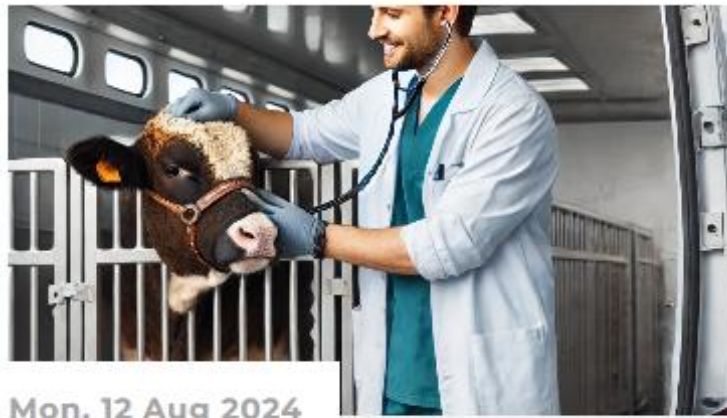
[https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/  
animal-welfare/animal-welfare-  
during-transport/animal-  
transport-guides\\_en](https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-during-transport/animal-transport-guides_en)

(extra languages are available upon request)





### 3. FVE Positions & Resources on Transporting Animal: check out <https://fve.org/?s=transport>



Mon, 12 Aug 2024

#### FVE's Positions on Animal Transport: Overview and Recent Developments

Over the past years, FVE has been actively engaged in shaping and improving the regulations surrounding the transport of...

[READ MORE](#)



Tue, 10 Jun 2025

#### FVE and EASVO Call for Risk-Based Supervision of Animal Loading During Transport

The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) and the European Association of State Veterinary Officers (EASVO) have...

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Thu, 31 Oct 2024

#### FVE calls to prevent suffering of animals during long distance transports

31 October 2024 The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) emphasises the urgent need to respect the welfare...

[READ MORE](#)



Wed, 26 Nov 2025

#### FVE's Priority Amendments for the proposal on the protection of animals during transport

Over the past years, FVE has been actively engaged in shaping and improving the regulations surrounding the transport of...

[READ MORE](#)



## Measuring is essential for improvement: need to define indicators

- *Animal-based indicators* are the **gold standard**, but they can be **challenging to collect**
- Welfare indicators should be among others:
  - **Reliable**
  - **Feasible**
  - **Standardised**
  - **Sensitive**
- **Examples of potential welfare indicators for transport**
  - Proportion of animals transported **within vs. outside** their thermal comfort zone
  - Mortality, injury, or morbidity rates during transport and on arrival
  - Ratio of **controls in CoO, CoD, CoT** (*animal welfare, administrative, vehicle-related*)
  - Proportion of animals transported for slaughter on **short vs. long journeys**
  - Proportion of consignments with **verified compliance at destination**
  - Ratio of sufficient two-way communication for all exports and non-compliances
  - Ratio of journeys that followed journey plan (e.g. outside journey times, weather forecast, other )





# Take home Messages

**Animal transport is a necessary part of agriculture.**

But animals are living, sentient beings entrusted to our care.  
They can feel fear, pain, and distress.  
They depend entirely on us.

**Good transport is an act of responsibility, compassion, and professional integrity.**

We owe them care, competence, and respect at every step of the journey.

**We have the knowledge, the tools, and the guidance to do this well.**

For cross-border transport, **collaboration and communication are essential.**  
And this platform — and this meeting — is a powerful example of that shared commitment.

## CONTACT US

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