

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001983/25
to the Commission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(16 May 2025)**

Subject: TRACES — Regulation (EU) 2016/429 — Cross-border hobby pedigree poultry breeding

Under Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688, supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429, payable certificates for official health checks have applied to all cross-border consignments of kept birds between Member States since 2021. The costs involved range between EUR 70 and EUR 250. Those costs place a considerable burden on hobby keepers when attending animal shows and have cut cross-border participation to almost zero. They also pose obstacles within the EU that threaten the preservation of rare and old breeds. In the case of pedigree poultry shows, documentation is provided by the show management: the animals are ringed and the corresponding keepers' addresses and registration numbers are recorded.

1. Does the Commission intend to cut red tape for cross-border pedigree poultry consignments for the purposes of registered animal shows and do away with the obligation to carry out veterinary health checks?
2. Does the Commission agree that the commercial transport of commercial poultry — which involves large quantities, high frequency and long distances — differs from hobby pedigree poultry breeding, meaning the TRACES requirements should not apply to hobby keepers?
3. What steps does the Commission intend to take to support breeders of traditional poultry breeds transported across borders, or would breeders' self-declarations and corresponding documentation, along with animal show documentation, be an appropriate replacement for TRACES in the hobby sector?

Submitted: 16.5.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(22 July 2025)**

The relevant EU legislation considers the perceived problems raised by certain hobby keepers concerning intra Union movements of pedigree birds (defined as captive birds in the EU legislation).

The EU has laid down harmonised animal health requirements that also apply to captive birds as they can transmit serious diseases like highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) or Newcastle disease, which can have devastating effects on European birds' populations, and may present risks to human health.

Participation to exhibitions also pose specific and not negligible epidemiological risks as evidenced by recent HPAI outbreaks at a bird exhibition.

Since its adoption in 2020, Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688 ⁽¹⁾ has been amended several times considering inputs from bird hobby keepers.

The revisions introduced provisions simplifying the movements of captive birds between Member States without jeopardising the overarching aim of the harmonised rules.

For example, for the movements of captive birds from one Member State to an exhibition in another Member State, it is possible to collect the birds from several operators in a single registered establishment for certification, decreasing considerably the certification costs for each operator. The level of certification costs is set by Member States' competent authorities.

In addition, for near-border movements of live animals between neighbouring Member States ⁽²⁾, those Member States may decide to set up agreements to grant derogations from the general requirements for movements while implementing risk mitigation measures, to facilitate intra-Union movements of captive birds where such movements are, for instance for recreational use or exhibitions, close to their common border.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as regards animal health requirements for movements within the Union of terrestrial animals and hatching eggs — ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2020/688/2025-01-09.

⁽²⁾ Article 139 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health (Animal Health Law) — ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/429/2021-04-21>.