

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002618/25
to the Commission
Lynn Boylan (The Left)
(30 June 2025)

Subject: Protection of unweaned calves during long journeys

In June 2022, the Commission undertook an audit of Ireland related to the protection of unweaned calves on long journeys ⁽¹⁾.

In its recommendations, the audit report states:

‘The [Irish] competent authorities are requested to provide, within 25 working days of receipt of the report, details of the actions taken and planned, including deadlines for their completion (“action plan”), aimed at addressing the recommendations’ set out in the audit, including in relation to ensuring ‘that unweaned calves are fed on roll-on roll-off vessels in compliance with the maximum feeding intervals, as required by Point 1.4(a) of Chapter V of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1/2005’.

1. Have the Irish competent authorities provided an action plan to implement the recommendation on feeding calves during transit, and if so, what progress has been made to ensure compliance with the regulation?
2. If Ireland has not provided an action plan, what steps is the Commission taking in respect of this failure?
3. In the case of continued non-compliance, what steps will the Commission take in respect of Ireland’s failure to ensure that unweaned calves are exported in accordance with the feeding requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005?

Submitted: 30.6.2025

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

The Irish competent authority presented their action plan addressing the audit recommendations on 31 January 2024. The action plan has been published on the Commission’s website ⁽¹⁾. In response to recommendation number 4, concerning the feeding of unweaned calves on roll-on roll-off vessels after a total of 19 hours of travelling, the action plan includes a research project on possible technical solutions to safely feed calves with milk replacer on board trucks during the ferry voyage.

The welfare of unweaned calves during long-distance journeys remains a matter of concern for the Commission, the Member States, and the wider public. The Commission is monitoring ongoing efforts by the Irish authorities to address the shortcomings identified in the audit report. The Commission has met with the Irish authorities on several occasions and has urged them to take the necessary steps to ensure full implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit-report/details/4700>.
⁽¹⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit-report/details/4700>.