

EN

E-004785/2025

Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.5.2026)

The welfare of unweaned calves during long-distance transport, including by means of roll-on roll-off vessels from Ireland to France, remains a matter of concern for the Commission, the Member States, and the wider public. The report of the audit of Ireland carried out by the Commission in 2022¹ confirmed that unweaned calves are not fed on roll-on roll-off vessels as it is required by Regulation (EC) No 1/2005² posing an infringement to the current rules.

The Commission will continue working with the tools at its disposal to ensure full enforcement of this requirement. These include the close monitoring of efforts by the Irish authorities to address the identified shortcomings and achieve full compliance with Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. The information provided by the authorities shows the efforts being made to develop a system for automatic feeding of calves at ferry journeys.

The Commission legislative proposal for a Regulation on the protection of animals during transport³ provides for stricter rules aimed also at facilitating better enforcement through clearer provisions, and more harmonised penalties. The proposal better defines which of the involved actors bears legal consequences of infringements. The proposal is currently examined by co-legislators. Concerning the transport of unweaned animals, based on the scientific opinions provided by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)⁴, the proposal sets stricter rules for the transport of young animals and clear requirements for feeding of calves with milk or milk replacement in detailed intervals, and for using automatic feeding systems for long journeys.

¹ Audit number: 2022-7503: <https://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit-report/details/4700>.

² Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97; OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1–44.

³ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1255/97 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005; COM/2023/770 final.

⁴ <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/j.efsa.2022.7442>.