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From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
Subject:	AOB item for the meeting of the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council of 11 and 12 December 2025: Regulation on the protection of animals during transport and related operation: state of play <i>- Information from the Presidency</i>

On 7 December 2023, the European Commission presented a proposal for a new Regulation on the protection of animals during transport and related operations. The proposal aims to address the latest scientific evidence regarding animal welfare, technological developments and consumer expectations. The proposal also aims to simplify the requirements concerning animal transport and thereby make them easier for operators to comply with and for authorities to enforce. The Danish Presidency has built upon the comprehensive work done by the Belgian, Hungarian and Polish Presidencies to continue the work at technical level.

Animal welfare is a key priority for the Danish Presidency. With the aim of making as much progress at technical level as possible, the Presidency arranged five two-day meetings of the Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Questions (Animal Welfare and Husbandry). The negotiations focused on five chapters: means of transport (Chapter III), obligations prior to transport (Chapter IV), the provisions regarding training (the relevant Articles of Chapter VIII), space allowances (Chapter VII of Annex I) and fitness for transport (Chapter I of Annex I). In addition, the Presidency presented a concept paper on air transport.

For each chapter, the Presidency presented drafting suggestions addressing comments from Member States. In this process, simplification and clear provisions were central ambitions for the Presidency.

On the basis of the fruitful and constructive discussions with Member States in the Working Party, the Presidency was able to reach preliminary endorsements at technical level on several of the above-mentioned topics, albeit with some outstanding issues mainly relating to space allowances, air transport and vulnerable animals.

The main outcomes of the negotiations in the Working Party were the following:

- Regarding space allowances (Chapter V of Annex I), the delegations welcomed the Presidency's risk-based approach, including the use of an allometric equation to calculate space allowances. The risk-based approach consists of species-specific space allowance requirements for cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, rabbits and poultry, depending on the means of transport, journey time and predicted external temperature. Further negotiations are needed to reach agreement on the specific space allowance requirements.
- Regarding fitness for transport (Chapter I of Annex I), the Presidency aimed to ensure that the terminology used was clear and applicable for all actors involved. Furthermore, it was key to strike a balance between describing situations where animals are clearly unfit for transport and allowing room for veterinary professional assessments. The Presidency also suggested adopting different age requirements for unweaned calves depending on the length of the journey to achieve a compromise between the positions of the Member States.

- In addition, several Member States emphasized the need to ensure better conditions during transport for vulnerable animals. Further discussions are needed to agree on a definition of vulnerable animals and to identify solutions to accommodate their special needs during transport.
- Regarding training (Articles 36a, 36b, 37 and 38 in Chapter VIII), the delegations expressed support for the Presidency's proposal to establish a two-level training system with a basic course for all actors who handle animals during transport, and an advanced course required for actors who need a certificate of competence. The Presidency has aimed to strike a balance between harmonising training requirements and content and still giving flexibility to Member States to structure, plan and execute the training courses as they see fit within their Member State.
- Regarding the requirements concerning the means of transport (Chapter III), the Presidency suggested, among other points, including requirements for containers and conditions for their approval, and specifying the conditions for approval of livestock vessels. These suggestions were generally supported by Member States.
- Regarding obligations prior to transport (Chapter IV), the Presidency focused on aligning the provisions in this chapter with the latest suggestions concerning maximum journey times (Chapter VI) presented by the Polish Presidency. In general, it was specified that transport documentation is required for any type of transport of animals within the Union and to third countries. However, the type of documentation required, and whether it must be provided in TRACES, depends on the specific journey. The aim has been to provide a balance between limiting administrative burdens on operators and still allowing competent authorities to carry out official checks on all consignments.
- Regarding air transport, the Presidency presented a concept paper with a suggested approach that would include provisions on air transport of animals to align with the current standards for the transport of live animals from the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Member States expressed support for the approach presented by the Presidency, while emphasising the need for further discussions.