

Live Animal Transport in Numbers

1.6
billion

cattle, sheep, pigs, and poultry are transported across EU countries and outside the EU, making the EU the biggest live animal exporter in the world.¹

Intra-EU trade in live animals represents

85%

of transports

15%

of transports are exports to third countries.²

Poultry is the most traded farmed animal in Europe, representing

98%

of intra-EU trade

97%

of extra EU trade.³

1.4
billion

unweaned calves are traded between EU countries every year.⁴

More than
4.3
million

cattle, sheep, and pigs are exported to non-EU countries.⁵ Many of the most frequent export destinations are listed among the 18 high-risk countries for animal welfare.⁶

1 European Court of Auditors (2023). Transport of live animals in the EU – Challenges and opportunities, Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2865/211704>.

2 European Parliament: Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the Union (2021). Patterns of livestock transport in the EU and to third countries – Research for ANIT Committee. Available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2861/400742>.

3 *Ibid.*

4 European Commission (2022). Study on shifting from transport of unweaned male dairy calves over long distance to local rearing and fattening, Publications Office of the European Union, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2875/072915>.

5 Comext, data for 2022.

6 Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Umwelt und Verbraucherschutz. Tiertransporte in Drittstaaten. Available at: https://www.stmuv.bayern.de/themen/tiergesundheit_tierschutz/tierschutz/tiertransporte_drittstaaten/index.htm (last accessed 1 September 2025)

Live Animal Transport in Numbers *continued*

15

EU-approved high-risk livestock vessels are still allowed to transport animals.⁷

Between 2021
and 2023,

3/4

of EU livestock vessels were reported to have pollution prevention deficiencies.⁸

40%

of inspections reveal breaches of the Animal Transport Regulation.

900,000

citizens signed a petition to ban animal exports in 2022.⁹

83%

of Europeans think that the travel time for the transport of animals should be limited.¹⁰

94%

of the nearly 60,000 respondents to the 2021 public consultation on the revision of animal welfare legislation support a ban on live animal exports for slaughter, including one-third of business operators.¹¹

7 Robin des Bois, Animal Welfare Foundation e.V. (2024). 64 EU-approved livestock carriers. Available at: <https://www.animal-welfare-foundation.org/en/blog/die-gefahrlichsten-schiffe-der-welt>.

8 *Ibid.*

9 Four Paws International (2022). 900,000 European Citizens Call on MEPs to Ban Cruel Live Exports. Available at: <https://www.four-paws.org/our-stories/press-releases/january2022/900-000-european-citizens-call-on-meps-to-ban-cruel-live-exports>.

10 European Commission (2023). Special Eurobarometer 533: Attitudes of Europeans towards Animal Welfare. Available at: <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2996>.

11 European Commission, Factual summary report of the online public consultation in support to the fitness check and revision of the EU animal welfare legislation, Ref. Ares(2022)2359311 - 30/03/2022.