



## Recommendation 1289 (1996)<sup>1</sup>

# Animal welfare and livestock transport in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly, referring to its earlier reports on different aspects of animal welfare, commends the Committee of Ministers on the important work undertaken by the Council of Europe in this field. It also welcomes the new importance given to animal welfare in the European Union.

2. The Assembly is, however, concerned that not all Council of Europe member states and states whose parliaments enjoy special guest status with the Assembly have signed the three conventions on the welfare of farm animals, that is to say:

2.1. the European Convention for the Protection of Animals during International Transport (ETS No. 65) (1968);

2.2. the European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes (ETS No. 87) (1976); and

2.3. the European Convention for the Protection of Animals for Slaughter (ETS No. 102) (1979).

3. Although the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals (ETS No. 125) makes appropriate provision for the welfare of those animals, the Assembly recalls its interest in other categories of animal, such as working animals, which must also be protected, and would like children to be made more aware of animal welfare at school.

4. The Assembly is also concerned that this legislation is not always respected in all signatory states and may be violated without punishment.

5. The Assembly is particularly worried about many reports on the ill treatment of animals during international transport and on suffering caused to animals due to unnecessary waiting times at border crossings, which could be avoided by giving priority to live animal transport.

6. It is of the opinion that such incidents damage the image and quality of meat and its marketing, as well as respect for the farming profession.

7. The Assembly is concerned about certain practices or types of treatment which are intended to make livestock grow faster or increase their yield - apart from the suffering they may cause animals, these practices, which range from dosing with drugs or hormones to genetic manipulation, may be harmful to humans - and considers that the use of hormones should be prohibited.

8. Consequently, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

a. ask the parties to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals during International Transport, in co-operation with the Commission of the European Communities:

1. to improve as a matter of urgency the conditions for the international transport of livestock, in particular by reducing travel and waiting times, improving transport facilities (lorries), watering and feeding, and by training the personnel involved (with the use of training manuals) in line with the spirit and letter of the convention and the connected recommendations and resolutions;

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1. Assembly debate on 26 January 1996 (8th Sitting) (see [Doc. 7427](#), report of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, rapporteur: Mr Michels). Text adopted by the Assembly on 26 January 1996 (8th Sitting).



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2. to entrust such transport only to persons and/or companies with certified qualifications;
  3. to strengthen the control mechanisms for the implementation of legislation and introduce penalties for any conduct contrary to it, in particular by making refund rates for animal transport dependent on the state of the animals on arrival in the country of destination;
  4. to avoid, in general, any unnecessary transport of live animals by, for example, slaughtering animals close to their breeding places, and acknowledging that small abattoirs can have the same standards as larger ones;
- b. draw the attention of the Standing Committee of the European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes and the parties to the European Convention for the Protection of Animals for Slaughter to the need for:
1. assuring that the spirit and letter of these conventions and the connected recommendations and resolutions are implemented;
  2. introducing and monitoring necessary control measures;
  3. penalising breaches of the conventions;
  4. implementing relevant training for all the personnel involved (production of training manuals);
- c. encourage non-signatory member states to accede to these conventions;
- d. invite states whose parliaments enjoy special guest status with the Assembly to sign the conventions;
- e. make the necessary resources available, including secretariat resources, for the continuation of work needed to implement and improve these international legal instruments and, in particular, analyse the feasibility of financing these and related agreements within the framework of a partial agreement;
- f. include specific activities within its assistance programmes for the new democracies of central and eastern Europe, with a view to informing, improving legislation and offering training in the fields covered by the animal welfare conventions of the Council of Europe. Assistance for the upgrading of local slaughter capacities is of particular importance in order to allow export of carcasses, notably to the European Union;
- g. develop co-operation with the Commission of the European Communities on questions relating to the breeding, transport and slaughtering of animals, and in particular to instruct the European Health Committee (CDSP) to study, in co-operation with the Partial Agreement in the Social and Public Health Field, the effects on human health of consuming meat from animals treated with hormones or biochemicals or subjected to genetic manipulation.