

Temporary procedure of the Chief Veterinary Officer on dealing with animals accompanying travellers entering the EU from Ukraine via the Polish external border during the military conflict.

1. Objective of the guidelines:

- to establish a system to minimise the risk of importing animals presenting a potential risk of transmission of infectious diseases, in particular rabies virus to humans and animals in the event of a mass influx of people leaving the area of military operations and with accompanying animals
- to minimise delays at border crossing points and improve the movement of people across the external EU border

Responsible institutions: Veterinary Inspection (VI), National Revenue Administration, Voivodes responsible for management of border crossings

2. Description of situation

In a situation of mass movement of people from Ukraine to the EU, we can deal with **three groups of people traveling** with accompanying animals:

- EU citizens
- Ukrainian citizens
- Citizens of other third countries

Accompanying animals may belong to different species as defined in Regulation (EU) 2013/576

- A. an animal belonging to the species: dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*), cats (*Felis silvestris catus*), ferrets (*Mustela putorius furo*);
- B. invertebrates (except bees and bumblebees covered by Article 8 of Directive 92/65 / EEC, and molluscs and crustaceans as referred to in Article 3 (1) (e) (ii) and (iii) of Directive 2006/88 /IN);
- C. ornamental aquatic animals as defined in Art. 3 lit. (k) of Directive 2006/88 / EC and excluded from the scope of that Directive pursuant to Article 8 thereof. 2 clause 1 lit. and;
- D. amphibians;
- F. reptiles;
- G. birds: representatives of bird species other than those referred to in Art. 2 of Directive 2009/158 / EC (poultry);
- H. mammals: rodents and rabbits other than for food production

2.1. Animals of the species dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*), cats (*Felis silvestris catus*), ferrets (*Mustela putorius furo*)

Animals moved in conditions of extreme emergency may accompany travellers **when all EU requirements are met, i.e.**

- the animal has been properly identified with a microchip
- the animal has been vaccinated against rabies and vaccination is still valid
<https://www.wetgiw.gov.pl/nadzor-weterynaryjny/szczepienie-na-wscieklizne>
- the animal has a current serological test to determine the titre of anti-rabies antibodies
<https://www.wetgiw.gov.pl/nadzor-weterynaryjny/badanie-poziomu-przeciwcial>
- the animal has a valid passport issued in one of the EU Member States
<https://www.wetgiw.gov.pl/nadzor-weterynaryjny/dokumenty-identyfikacyjne> or in a health

certificate that conforms to the model set out in EU law <https://www.wetgiw.gov.pl/nadzor-weterynaryjny/swiadectwo-zdrowia>

Or in a situation where **one or more of the above requirements are not met**

2.2. Derogations from the standard requirements for dogs, cats and ferrets due to an emergency situation:

Animals moved during a military conflict do not need to be serologically tested for anti-rabies antibody titers.

2.3. Procedure in the event of failure to meet the requirements

The minimum requirement for when an animal may enter the EU should be a microchipped animal accompanied by a rabies vaccination document no earlier than 12 months before the date of movement. It must be possible to verify the identity of the animal, i.e. link vaccination to labeling. The compliance with these requirements is verified by customs and tax officers.

In order to establish the health status of the accompanying animal and to be properly supervised, **any traveler whose animal does not meet one or more of the import requirements is required to complete a declaration, a model of which is attached to this procedure.**

In a situation where the traveler is able to indicate the address of the animal's place of stay in Poland:

The information on the movement of the animal contained in the declaration is submitted to the territorially competent District Veterinary Officer along with a document containing the decision of the DVO territorially competent for the place of crossing the external border of the EU .

District Veterinary Officer covers the animal with isolation and supervises the performance of activities that determine the fulfillment of the requirements by the animal, i.e.

- marking of the animal (if the transponder is missing or illegible)
- vaccination against rabies (if vaccination cannot be documented or is invalid)
- blood collection for serological testing for the determination of the level of anti-rabies antibodies performed by an approved laboratory

After obtaining the result of the serological test, according to which the level of antibodies confirms acquired immunity, the animal is released from isolation and the animal is provided with documents confirming compliance with the requirements.

In a situation where the traveler is not able to indicate the address of the animal's place of stay in Poland

The official veterinarian will mark and vaccinate the animal (in the situations indicated above) in the place of temporary stay of the animal together with the owner / guardian after crossing the border

Costs related to the above-mentioned activities are covered by the state budget

The appendix, constituting the model declaration of the owner / guardian of the animal, constitutes the appendix to the procedure

2.4. Handling of pets under 12 weeks of age

The animals described in point 2 A:

- up to 8 weeks of age, apart from filling in the application, no additional procedures,
- from 8 to 12 weeks of age as in points 2.2 and 2.3.

2.5 Treatment of animals brought in illegally (in case of detection of illegal border crossing by the owner or keeper of the animal)

The authority which disclosed the illegal crossing of the border, in case an animal or animals are found in possession of an apprehended person, shall notify the territorially competent District Veterinary Officer who shall decide on the further course of action with the animal (placement in an animal shelter or asylum. As a last resort - euthanasia).

3. Other species of animals moved as companion animals

Other (rodents, rabbits, amphibians, reptiles, ornamental aquatic animals, invertebrates)

Due to the lack of risk associated with the potential transmission of infectious diseases dangerous to humans or animals, rabies virus, a temporary exemption from the requirement for a licence from the Chief Veterinary Officer for importation is introduced. If there are any species restricted due to the Washington Convention CITES without the required permits - the decision will be taken by the National Revenue Administration.