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From: General Secretariat of the Council
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Subject: Future legal framework setting down animal health requirements for non-commercial movement of pet animals

Delegations will find in the Annex a letter from the Commission related to the above mentioned subject.



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MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND ANIMAL WELFARE

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Brussels, 12 February 2026

Dear Minister Panayiotou,

Dear Maria,

I am writing to bring to your attention a package of Commission Delegated Acts that aim to recast the existing animal health requirements for the non-commercial movement of pet animals, and the need to avoid any risk of legislative vacuum in this area.

On 20 January 2026, the Commission has adopted a package consisting of five interlinked Delegated Regulations, namely:

- Commission Delegated Regulation supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as regards animal health requirements for non-commercial movement of pet animals (C(2026) 20);
- Commission Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2035 as regards rules for the traceability of kept dogs, cats and ferrets (C(2026) 21);
- Commission Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688 as regards rules for the movement within the Union of kept dogs, cats and ferrets and other carnivores (C(2026) 22);
- Commission Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 as regards rules for surveillance and disease-free status from infestation with *Echinococcus multilocularis* (C(2026) 23);
- Commission Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692 as regards rules for entry into the Union, and the movement and handling after entry of consignments of dogs, cats and ferrets (C(2026) 24).

Current rules for non-commercial movement of pet animals are laid down in Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹ and its derived acts. Although repealed by Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council on transmissible animal diseases² (the 'Animal Health Law'(AHL)), the application of this Regulation was prolonged until 21 April 2026 to allow the Commission to integrate and revise the current framework under the AHL.

Dr. Maria Panayiotou

Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment
Chair of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of the European Union

¹ OJ L 178, 28.6.2013, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/576/oj>.

² OJ L 84, 31.3.2016, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/429/oj>.



Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 was primarily intended to facilitate pet movements and should therefore be perceived as a derogation from the general legal framework. Nonetheless, the Regulation provides for preventive animal health rules, in particular for dogs, cats and ferrets, that are applicable to any movement of such animals, whether for commercial or non-commercial purposes.

The rules laid down in the proposed package of Delegated Acts are largely based on the rules currently laid down in Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 and its derived acts, as they have proved to be sound and proportionate. Therefore, the aim and provisions of those existing rules are maintained in this package and further updated to take account of the rules of the new animal health framework laid down in Regulation (EU) 2016/429, international standards³ and the experience gained by Member States in their application.

The purpose of the package is therefore to take over the rules on non-commercial movement of pet animals, by introducing derogations from the general framework, thereby facilitating such movement, all while ensuring an appropriate level of animal health protection.

This package was the subject of a long and fruitful consultation with all relevant stakeholders. The Commission had several meetings and exchanges with the Expert Group on animal health⁴. On these occasions, it was also made available to the European Parliament and the Council, but no comments were received from any of these institutions. Several meetings were also held with a range of stakeholders within the framework of the Animal Health Advisory Committee where the main elements of the acts were illustrated and discussed. In addition, stakeholders' comments⁵ on the Delegated Regulation supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 as regards animal health requirements for non-commercial movement of pet animals were collected in the context of the Better Regulation feedback mechanism during the period between 11 November 2025 and 9 December 2025.

In accordance with the Animal Health Law, this package of Delegated Acts shall enter into application by 22 April 2026. This will ensure a smooth transition from the rules laid down in Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 to these new set of rules and avoid any legal vacuum which could weaken the Union animal health protection system in this area.

In order to ensure such smooth transition, we kindly request an early non-objection by the Council.

The Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety stands ready to work closely with your services to respond to any question on these Delegated Acts.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Olivér Várhelyi

³ [Home - WOAH - World Organisation for Animal Health](#)

⁴ [Expert group on Animal Health - Food Safety - European Commission](#)

⁵ [Non-commercial movement of pets \(public feedback\)](#)