

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005215/18
to the Commission
Miriam Dalli (S&D)
(12 October 2018)

Subject: Conditions of companion animals in air transport

A number of airlines allow a limited number and type of pets to travel in the cabin while others limit cabin travel to assistance animals. For this, owners pay a fee ranging from EUR 30 to EUR 200, allowing the pet to be kept under their legs or underneath the seat.

The fee does not allow for a possible seat allocation, even though passengers might require more leg space.

It has been scientifically proven that the stress levels of animals increase in air transport, which may have a negative impact on the health of pets.

The travel crate dimensions dictated by airlines determine that the dogs are able to stand up and turn around in the crate. In practice dogs, even those under 5kg, are unable to turn due to crate measurements of 40cm x 34cm x 20cm.

Given the fees already being paid, from a consumer protection point of view, can the Commission look into the suggestion that pets in crates be allowed on their owner's lap, as opposed to being crammed in a tight space?

Would it be possible to allow pet owners to buy a passenger seat in order to allow their pet more space and a bigger crate?

Answer given by Ms Bulc on behalf of the European Commission
(5 December 2018)

As the Commission pointed out in its answer to the written questions E-002032/2017 and E-002095/2018, the relevant EU-rules are found in Article 10 in connection with Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 ⁽¹⁾, which requires air carriers to carry recognised assistance dogs in the cabin, subject to national regulations.

With regard to aviation safety, Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 ⁽²⁾ specifies that a mix of passengers and live animals is only allowed for pets weighing up to 8 kg and guide dogs. In addition, the allocation of seats, which permit direct access to emergency exits, to passengers with animals is prohibited.

It remains for the air carriers to define their commercial conditions regarding the transport of animals on-board.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has developed a set of provisions on the carriage of live animals ⁽³⁾. Many of the EU airlines have rules on the carriage of live animals on board based on these provisions.

As there is no safety problem involved, it is not the intention of the Commission to propose rules governing the commercial choices of air carriers regarding the transport of pets. However, the Commission considers that all conditions regarding transport of pets on EU flights should be clearly announced to the passenger when booking the ticket.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air.
⁽²⁾ Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 of 5 October 2012 laying down technical requirements and administrative procedures related to air operations pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 296, 25.10.2012, p. 1).
⁽³⁾ <http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live-animals/pets/Pages/index.aspx>