

**Question for written answer E-001116/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Export of live animals from the EU to third countries

Many live animals are still being exported from the EU to third countries. The transport times are extremely long – up to several days. As recent NGO investigations concerning such transports to third countries show, the animals are exposed to immense suffering during these long journeys, and the methods used to slaughter them once they reach their destinations are horrendous.

For example, an investigation carried out in 2012 mentions a consignment of sheep that was shipped from southern Spain to Beirut, a transit of six days, and then transferred to a grossly inadequate road vehicle. The sheep were then offloaded onto a pile of rubble. The vehicle had no ramp and several sheep fell from the truck onto their backs. The investigators also observed how, in a slaughterhouse in Lebanon, cattle from France, Belgium and the Czech Republic, and sheep from Spain, were killed in the cruellest way. A video recording made during this recent investigation documents one instance of animal suffering during export to third countries¹, but in many other cases similar circumstances remain unreported and undocumented.

The EU even pays export refunds for cattle exported for breeding purposes. This mechanism encourages the export of live animals, often involving transports over long distances, with the associated animal welfare problems. It must be borne in mind that even animals exported for breeding purposes will sooner or later be slaughtered in the importing third country – often under circumstances that are illegal in the EU. In 2010, refunds were paid for the export of more than 70 000 live bovine animals².

1. In the light of the repeated evidence of animal suffering during export to, and slaughter in, third countries, does the Commission not think it is time to abolish the payment of export refunds for bovine animals exported for breeding purposes, in order not to give further encouragement to the export of these animals?
2. How many live animals (bovine, ovine and porcine) were exported from Member States to third countries in the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, broken down by exporting Member State and country of destination?
3. How many of these animals were sent for slaughter, further fattening and breeding, respectively?

¹ Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=F11iJueFcR8

² Commission staff working paper, 'Report on the recovery of export refunds for live bovine animals in 2010' (SEC(2011)1115), p. 6.