



Illegal movement of pets – EU Food Fraud Network perspective

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Administrative Assistance and Cooperation system

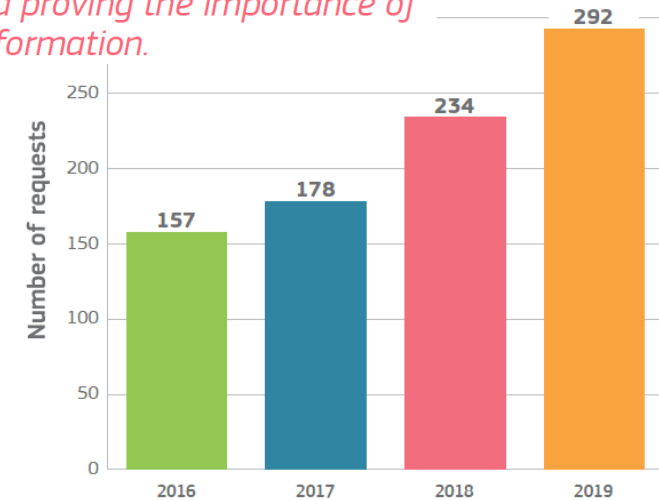
The new Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on official controls:

- ❑ sets the obligation for Member States to report **all agri-food fraud suspicions** of cross-border nature through the AAC-FF system
- ❑ extends the scope of these notifications to all areas covered by the OCR (e.g. animal or plant health, animal welfare, certain environmental aspects)

Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products

Illegal movement of pets

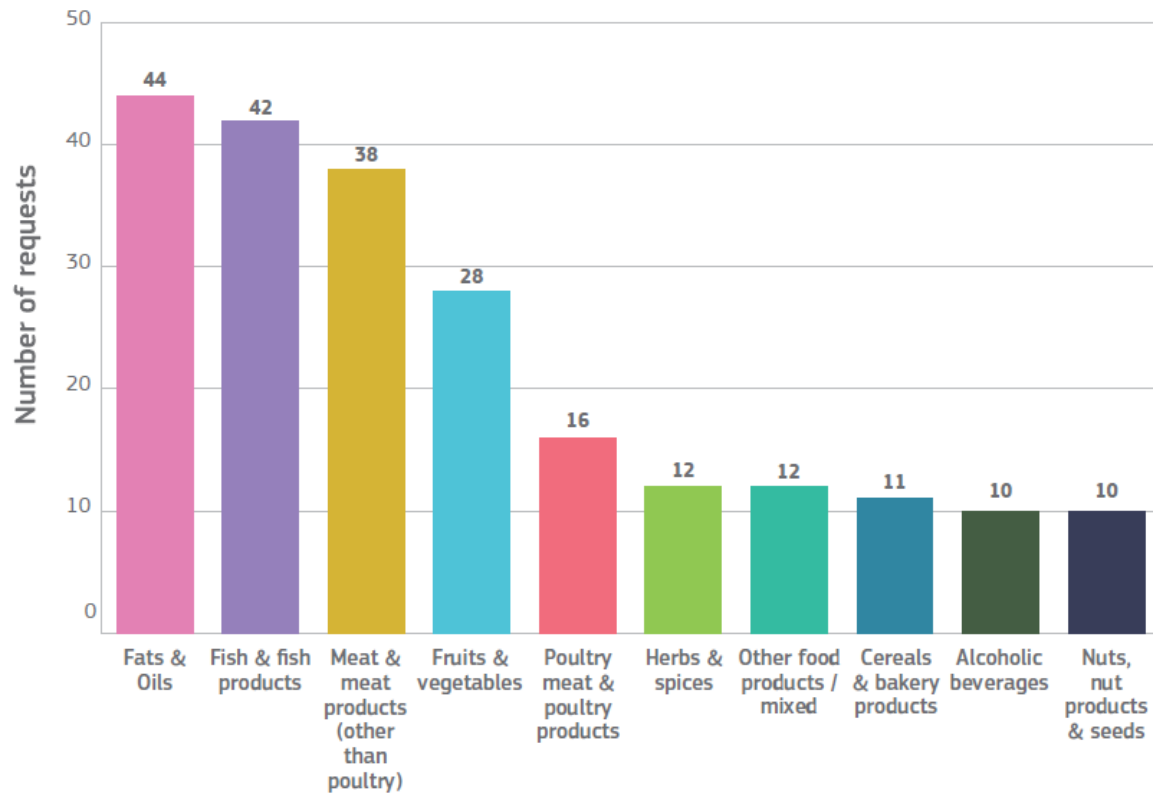
“The number of requests for assistance and cooperation shared between Member States tends to increase over the years, supporting the overall fight against food fraud in the EU and proving the importance of sharing information.”



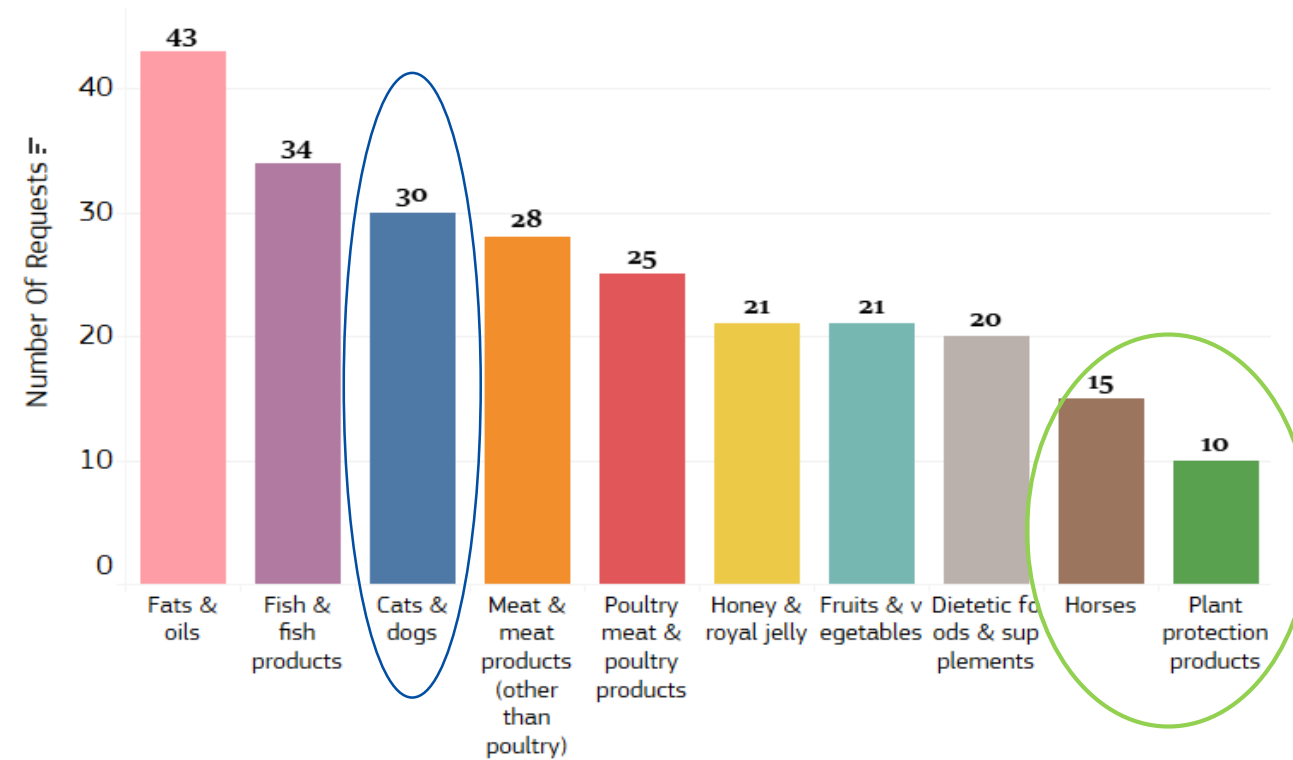
AAC-Food Fraud

Administrative Assistance and Cooperation system

2019 Annual Report



AAC-FF: January-November 2020

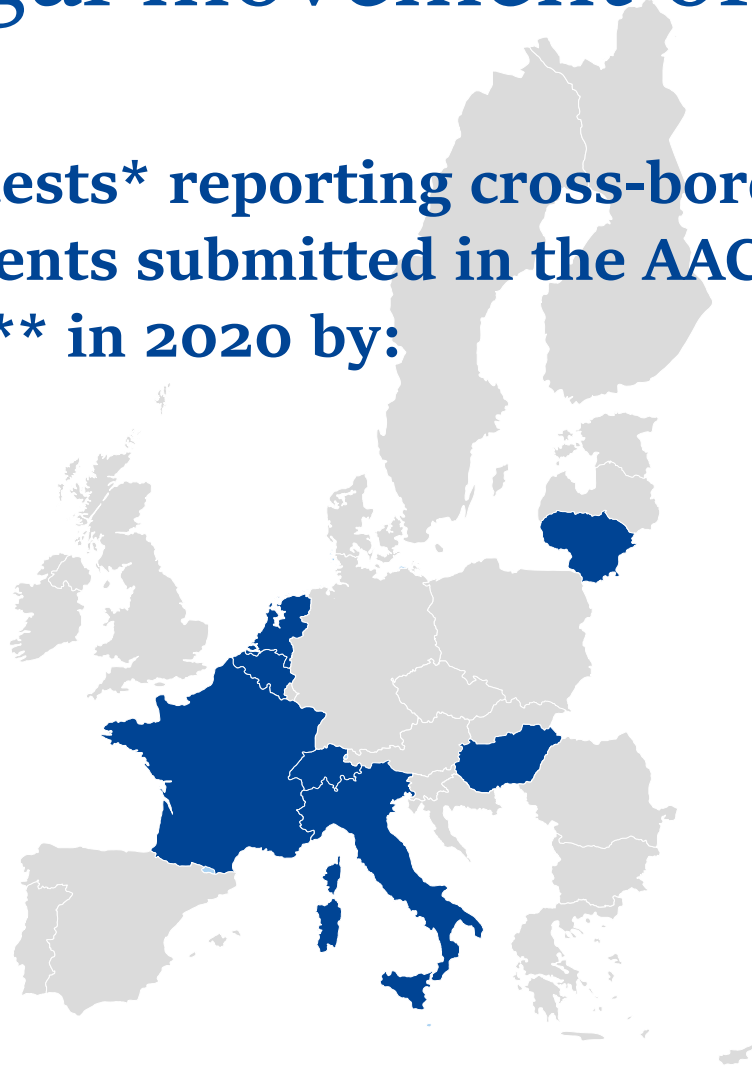


Illegal movement of pets

Administrative Assistance and Cooperation system

Illegal movement of pets

32 requests* reporting cross-border movements submitted in the AAC-FF system in 2020 by:**



Type of movement in reported cases:

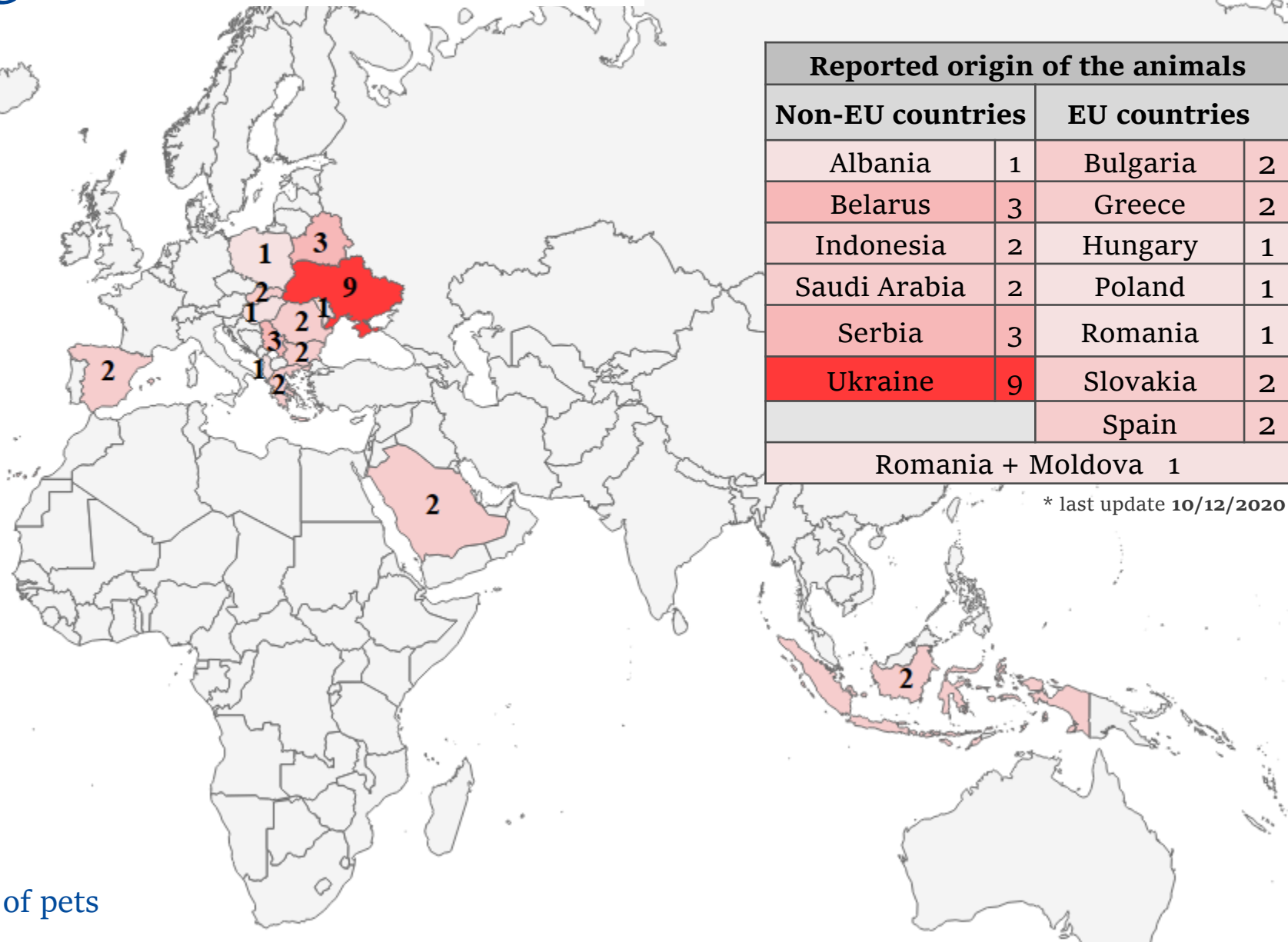
Commercial movements – 28

Non-commercial movements - 4

* last update 10/12/2020

** With the enter into force of regulation 2017/625, the scope of the Food Fraud system is extended also to Animal Health, as it is a privileged and secure channel for sharing sensitive information.

Origin of the animals



Legal framework

Official Journal
of the European Union



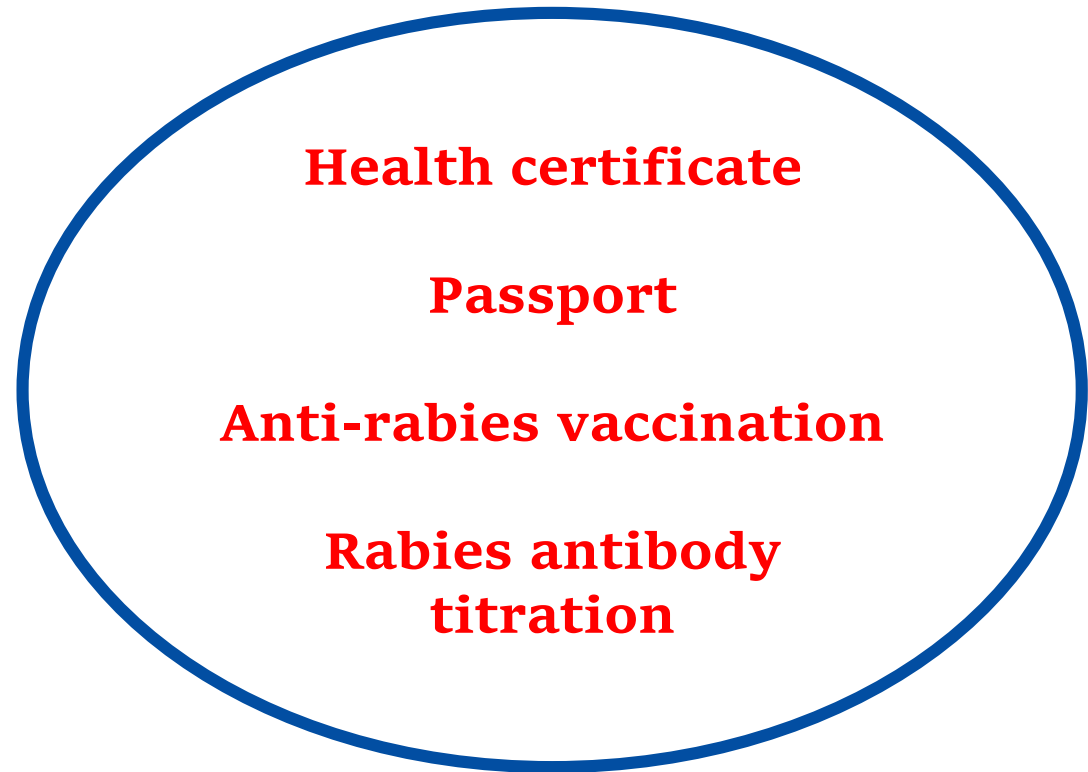
- Reg. (EU) 576/2013 on the non-commercial movement of pet animals
- Reg. (EU) 577/2013 on the model identification documents for the non-commercial movement of dogs, cats and ferrets
- Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases (Animal Health Law)
- Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/294 laying down the list of territories and third countries authorised for imports into the Union of dogs, cats and ferrets and the model animal health certificate for such imports
- Directive 92/65/EEC laying down animal health requirements governing trade in and imports into the Community
- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/772 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to preventive health measures for the control of *Echinococcus multilocularis* infection in dogs

Legal framework – requirements for the movement of pets

	From Non-EU countries		From EU countries	
	Non-commercial	Imports (commercial)	Non-commercial	Intra-EU trade (commercial)
Up to 5 animals	✓		✓	
Authorised country		✓		
Registered establishment		✓		✓
Clinical examination		✓		✓
Health Certificate	✓	✓		✓
Passport		✓	✓	✓
Marking / microchip	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vaccination against Rabies	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rabies antibody titration	✓	✓		
Treatment against <i>E. multilocularis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
TRACES notification		✓		✓
Through Border Control Post		✓		
Through a travelers' point of entry	✓			
Declaration attesting non-commercial movement and transport by a third person	✓		✓	

Main irregularities reported

Up to 5 animals
Authorised country
Registered establishment
Clinical examination
Health Certificate
Passport
Marking / microchip
Vaccination against Rabies
Rabies antibody titration
Treatment against <i>E. multilocularis</i>
TRACES notification
Through Border Control Post
Through a travelers' point of entry
Declaration attesting non-commercial movement and transport by a third person



Main irregularities reported – Passport



Issues reported in 14 requests:

- False passport – 5
- False information on passport – 3
- Blank/missing information – 4
- Absence of passport – 2

II. DESCRIPCIÓN DEL ANIMAL
II. DESCRIPTION OF ANIMAL

FOTOGRAFÍA DEL ANIMAL (opcional)
PICTURE OF THE ANIMAL (optional)

1. Nombre* / Name* PERLE

2. Especie / Specie CANIDO

3. Raza* / Breed* CARLINO

4. Sexo / Sex ♀

5. Fecha de nacimiento* / Date of birth* 04/09/2019

6. Capa / Coat FAWN

7. Cualquier característica destacada o reconocible/ Any notable or discernible features or characteristics

*Según la declaración del propietario / *As stated by owner.

III. MARCADO DEL ANIMAL
III. MARKING OF ANIMAL

1. Código alfanumérico del transpondedor / Transponder alphanumeric
Indexel
 Lot number : 782069
 To be used before : 04/2021

2. Fecha de aplicación / Date of application

3. Ubicación del transpondedor / Location of the transponder

4. Código alfanumérico del tatuaje / Tattoo alphanumeric code

5. Fecha de la colocación / de la lectura del tatuaje / Date of application / date of reading of the tattoo

6. Ubicación del tatuaje / Location of the tattoo

Se verificará el marcado del animal antes de introducir más datos en este pasaporte.
 The marking must be verified before any new entry is made on this passport.
 *Thcese lo que no proceda / *Delete as necessary

IV. EXPEDICIÓN DEL PASAPORTE
IV. PASSPORT EXPEDITION

Nombre Veterinario Autorizado / Name of Authorized Veterinarian

Dirección Postal / Address

Código Postal / Post-code

Localidad / City

País / Country

Teléfono / Telephone Email

Fecha de Expedición / Expedition Date

Sello y Firma
Stamp and Signature

V. VACUNACIÓN ANTI-RÁBICA
V. VACCINATION AGAINST RABIES

FABRICANTE Y DENOMINACIÓN DE LA VACUNA / NAME OF THE MANUFACTURER AND NAME OF THE VACCINE	NÚMERO DE LOTE / BATCH NUMBER	FECHA DE VACUNACIÓN / VACCINATION DATE	VALID FROM	VALID UNTIL

Main irregularities reported – Vaccination against Rabies

Issues reported in 17 requests:

- Absence of vaccination – 4
- Inadequate date of vaccination – 2
- Fake antibody titration report – 11

VIRO VET DIAGNOSTIK
Am Institut für Virologie, FB Veterinärmedizin
Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen
Schubertstr. 61
35392 Gießen
Tel.: 0641-99-38363
Fax: 0641-99-38379
diagnostik@vetmed.uni-giessen.de

Zertifikat Certificate

Veterinary Surgery
Dorina Kolieshi
Rruga e Durrësit, Pallati N. 79, Shkalla 2, Ap. 17, Kati 1
Tirana
Albanien

Tollwut-Antikörperbestimmung für Hunde, Katzen und Frettchen zum Zwecke der Einreise:
Rabies antibody testing in cats, dogs and ferrets for import:

Besitzer / Owner: [REDACTED]
Viere
Albanien

Datum der Probenentnahme / Date of sample collection: 05.05.20 Tierart / Species: Hund/dog Geburtsdatum/Alter / Date of birth/Age: 01.02.20

Transponder-Nr./Tätowierung / Microchip-No./Tattoo: [REDACTED]

Tier-Name / Animal-name: "Lara"

Die o.g. Daten wurden direkt vom Untersuchungsauftrag übertragen. Der Unterzeichnende übernimmt keine Gewähr für die Richtigkeit. / The above information has been directly copied from the sample submission form. The undersigned does not accept responsibility for the correctness of the information

Ergebnis / Test result Tagebuch-Nr. / Reference-No: 12106

Eingangsdatum / Date of Entry	Testdauer / Duration of test	Testdatum / Date of Test
06.05.20	2 Tage/days	12.05.20

Antikörper gegen Tollwutvirus waren im "fluorescent antibody virus neutralisation" (FAVN) Test, gemäß dem O.I.E. "manual of standards for diagnostic tests and vaccines" nachweisbar.
Antibodies against rabies virus were detectable using the "fluorescent antibody virus neutralisation" (FAVN) test according to the O.I.E. manual of standards for diagnostic tests and vaccines

Titer: >= 5.21 IU/ml (Größer oder gleich 0.5 IU/ml)
Titre: >= 5.21 IU/ml (greater than or equal to 0.5 IU/ml)

Ein Antikörpertiter von 0.5 IU/ml oder höher nach Impfung zeigt gemäß den Richtlinien der WHO/OIE einen Schutz vor Tollwut an.
An antibody titer of 0.5 IU/ml or above after vaccination indicates protection against rabies according to the guidelines of the WHO/OIE

Befunddatum / Date of report: 14.05.20 Gießen, den 15.05.20

VIRO VET DIAGNOSTIK
G. S. Schmidt
(Tierärztin)

BEFUNDENDE / END OF TEST REPORT

Other irregularities



- Recurrent breeders/traders/transporters
- Absence/unreadable microchip
- False declaration from owner
- Unknown destination of animals



Modus operandi

- Commercial movement disguised as non-commercial:
 - Very young animals
 - Transfer of ownership when arriving to destination

- Non-compliant movements
 - Fake documents



Modus operandi

- Use of social media (Facebook, Instagram...)
 - to promote illegal businesses
 - to find and communicate with potential customers

- Recurrent operators – transport companies or individual people systematically moving different animals

- Involvement of Official Veterinarians?



Violation of
EU rules



Deception of
customers



Economic
gain



Intention

EU Agri-food fraud criteria

Suspicion of intentional actions taken by businesses or individuals for the purpose of deceiving purchasers and gaining an undue advantage therefrom, in violation of the rules referred to in Article 1(2) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625

EU Agri-food fraud criteria



- Falsification of health certificates
- Falsification of serological reports
- Falsification of passports

Reg. (EU) 576/2013 on the non-commercial movement of pet animals

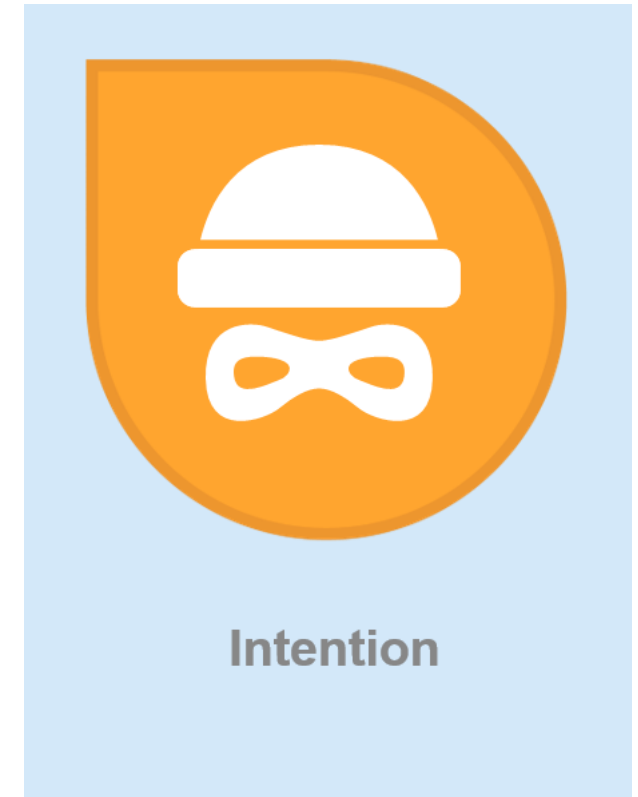
Reg. (EU) 577/2013 on the model identification documents for the non-commercial movement of dogs, cats and ferrets

Directive 92/65/EEC laying down animal health requirements governing trade in and imports into the Community

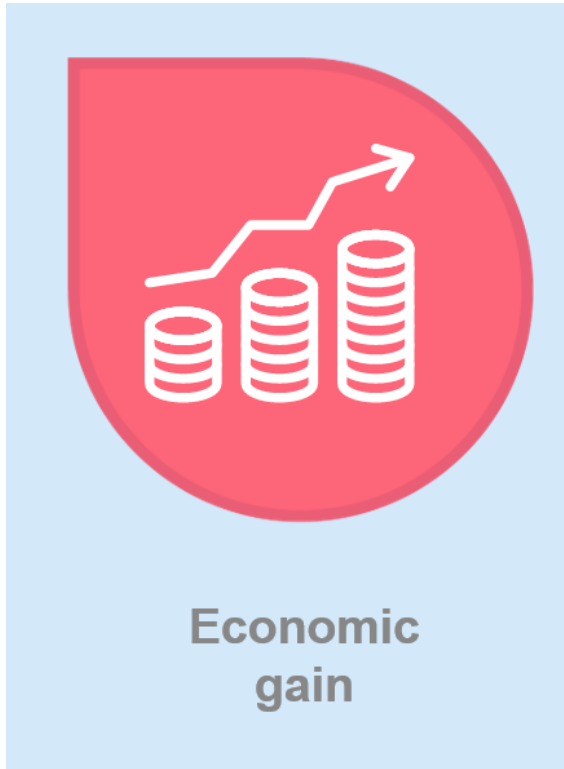
EU Agri-food fraud criteria

- Promoting illegal sales on the Internet and social media
- Falsification of documents

Responsible: breeders, official veterinarians, third parties (transporters)



EU Agri-food fraud criteria



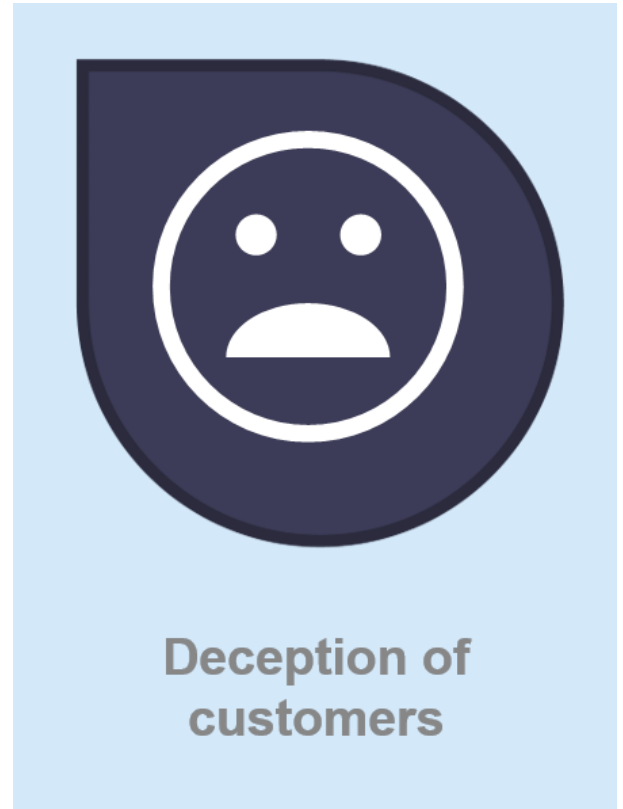
- **Tax evasion, VAT and revenue** - substantial amounts of revenue can be reclaimed from puppy traffickers (in the UK, £5.3 million from 257 cases over a four-year period)
- 8 million puppies with a value of €1 billion are estimated to be required annually to satisfy the European market*
- “bulldog that costs €50 to breed in Bulgaria, is sold for €450 to a pet shop, and ultimately sold to customers for €1100”
- Unfair competition with legal businesses to gain market share

*Georgia Diamantopoulou, Animal health law: A power tool against illegal puppy trade?
<https://www.euractiv.com/section/agriculture-food/opinion/animal-health-law-a-power-tool-against-illegal-puppy-trade/>

EU Agri-food fraud criteria

Animal Health / Public Health / Animal Welfare

- Improper rabies vaccination, potentially leading to quarantine imposed by the MS
- Public health concerns regarding the introduction of rabies in the EU
- Premature weaning



Challenges

- Recurrent operators all over Europe, easily identifiable on the Internet
- Efficiency of controls?
- Measures taken?
- Sanctions applied?
- Lack of control/sanctions: an incentive to continue illegal business?



Next steps



- Improvement and adaptation of the reporting system by the EC
- More frequent exchanges in the system and adequate follow-up of cases by MS
- Better cooperation between EU Networks
- EU coordinated actions?
- Updating legislation?



Thank you!



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https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/food-fraud_en

