

Logistics activities related to the non-commercial transport of companion animals

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Abstract: The main purpose of the paper is the analysis of specific logistical requirements when transporting companion animals. Attention is focused to the obstacles that need to be addressed in the field of animal transport and the logistics associated with their commercial and non-commercial transport. The general conditions and requirements of companion animals transport within the European Union have led to unjustified administrative burdens and costs. The main goal of the contribution is to point out the circumstances on which the safe transport of animals depends, based on the selection of the correct logistics management and the selection of the correct logistics process. Special rules are applied depending on the species and quantity of transported animals. In the process of transporting companion animals, it is important to ensure that live animals entering and leaving the EU, or third countries are healthy, well-being and that the specific import and export conditions are fulfilled in European Union legislation, including all related mandatory acts, documents and data centralization. The article presents sequence of logistic activities in the transportation of companion animals for non-commercial purposes. Logistic activities are divided into two phases. The first phase (preparatory phase) includes activities that the owner of the animal is obliged to perform if he performs the transportation himself or uses a business partner for transportation. The second phase includes activities from loading to unloading the animal. The article presents selected statistics for the transportation of companion animals, too.

1 Introduction

People have been transporting animals for various purposes for thousands of years. We know from history that animals were transported, for example, for use in Roman circuses, as military animals, or to the New World. During the 20th century, animal transport was mainly focused on the movement of animals for slaughter, research purposes, and entertainment, while emphasis was focused on their protection.

Logistic activities associated with the transport of animals (farmed, companion and wild species) include the entire set of planning, organizing, implementing and monitoring activities that ensure the movement of animals from one place to another, while complying with legislative, health and ethical requirements. Logistics activities vary depending on the type of animal, destination, mode of transport used and available infrastructure, e.g. logistics operations in intermodal transport of livestock, process flow from road transport to loading into a vessel are presented in the paper [1].

The protection of animals during their transport within the EU is regulated by European Council Regulation (1/2005). As the title of the paper suggests, the paper is dedicated to the transport of companion animals. The term companion animal is defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the

Council of 9th March 2016: a companion animal is an animal kept for private, non-commercial purposes. A companion animal is an individual of a domesticated species of dog, cat, ferret, rabbit, or an individual species classified as amphibian, reptile, rodent, ornamental fish, or bird, including their hybrids. A wild, dangerous, or animal bred or kept for farming is not considered a companion animal (By-Law No 283/2020 Coll. L.). This paper also defines non-commercial transport of companion animals as any transport of a companion animal that accompanies its owner, where such transport is not intended to sell the animal or any other form of ownership transfer. However, it is a part of the movement of the animal's owner, either at his own risk or at the risk of an authorised person, in cases where the companion animal is physically separated from its owner [2].

Non-commercial transport conditions are a maximum of 5 animals per owner or authorised person. More animals are allowed if non-commercial transport is carried out to participate in competitions, exhibitions, or sporting events or to prepare companion animals for such an event. In that case, the owner or authorised person must submit written proof that the animals are registered to participate in such an event or that the animals are registered in the association that organises such events and are older than 6 months [3].

Transporting companion animals can pose a risk to their socialisation and health. Such a risk is different for companion animals compared to transporting farm or slaughter animals, where contact with humans is not so close. Therefore, transporting companion animals is more challenging, especially regarding stress elimination. Animal transport is an important part of keeping any individual animal species and is carried out for various reasons. The animal can accompany its owner on a trip, to a national or foreign competition, or on vacation.

Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9th March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the field of animal health ('animal health legislation') lays down rules governing measures related to the prevention and control of animal health during the transport, intending to ensure that companion animals do not pose a significant risk in the spread of transmissible animal diseases [2].

If non-commercial transport is carried out by car, train or ferry within the same country, it is subject to the rules in the "roads rules" or special provisions issued by the railway or ferry transport companies. In the case of public transport in Europe and partially in North America, the transport of companion animals in public transport is permitted, but in some countries, it is prohibited. Administrations regulating the transport of dogs on public transport are highly dependent on the national cultures of different countries, and there is enormous variability between them [4].

Several studies and surveys are dedicated to the non-commercial transportation of companion animals. According to a 2024 survey conducted by PETS International and Yummypets among more than 800 pet owners in the US, Canada, the UK and France, there is a growing trend in travelling with pets, and the transport sector is trying to keep up with the demand. The survey found that cars are the most popular way to transport pets, while 94% of respondents across four countries selected this mode of transport, 21% selected trains, 17% planes and 12% buses [5].

Another survey was conducted in China on the Distribution of pet shipping services used by pet owners as of September 2022 utilising transport. According to the survey, more than half of Chinese pet owners who used pet transport services transported their pets by air. About 10% of respondents used train transportation. Cars for transport were used in less than 30% [6].

In 2018, GoPetFriendly.com surveyed travelling with pets and its impact on the travel industry. The survey involved 748 respondents from all over the world. According to the survey results, dogs are the most commonly transported pets; 81.4% of requested respondents confirmed they own them. When asked how often they travel with their pets, only 0.8% said they never did, but 54.6% said they travel more than 6 times a month. In this survey, consistent with earlier ones, 63.8% of participants indicated that their preferred mode of transportation is by car [7].

Companion animals' transportation can also be implemented for commercial purposes, such as when pet animals are transported for sale or transferred to a new owner in the destination country. Transport for commercial purposes is related to economic activity and directly or indirectly covers the objectives of achieving financial profit [8]. If the transport is carried out for commercial reasons, i.e. to make a profit directly or indirectly, it falls within the scope of the rules in EU Regulation No. 1/2005. This regulation applies to animal protection when traded within the European Union and non-EU countries. Specific guidelines have been revised regarding the transportation of animals using different modes of transport, including vehicles, trains, ferries, and boats. When transportation is conducted by aeroplane, whether for the owner's relocation or commercial reasons, the terms of transport are determined by the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Airline companies enforce these conditions within EU member states and non-EU countries, applicable to domestic and international flights [9].

The significant importance of companion animal welfare concerning their transportation and the whole process is being under discussion in many scientific papers [9-11]. The illegal trade in companion animals in the European Union poses several legal, ethical and health problems for the entire community. The paper [12] presents findings from a three-year sanitary surveillance study on companion animals illegally imported and seized at the borders of Italy and Austria.

The topic of companion animal transportation is increasingly relevant today, as travelling with companion animals has become both common and, at times, essential. Therefore, it is crucial to identify the most suitable and personalised solutions for transporting animals. Ensuring maximum comfort for the pets during their journey is of the utmost importance. For this reason, the importance of transport logistics of companion animals is necessary.

Legal regulations and regulations of their compliance are not directly controlled within the Schengen region, especially in the case of non-commercial transport, since, as with humans, free movement also applies to animals.

Activities dealing with the legislation, conditions, quarantines, are based only on various recommendations and advices. Therefore, the negative consequences of non-compliance with welfare legislation during transport are not well known, which can result in serious health problems for animals. Conditions during transport can vary depending on many factors, such as the use of the right transport means, the year season, long or short distances of the journey. Observed factors, such as temperature changes, access to food and water, resting, positioning of animals, are solvable aspects and their improvement, regulation and controls can ensure an improvement of the conditions during the transport.

In preparing and transporting companion animals, various logistical challenges must be addressed. These include coordinating activities associated with the animal's transport, planning the route, choosing an appropriate

transport unit (such as a container or cage), selecting the mode of transportation, monitoring the animal throughout the journey, and identifying a reliable business partner for the transportation service. Considering a companion animal as a commodity, its transportation falls under transport logistics. This field focuses on the management and enhancement of transportation processes. Transport logistics is concerned with managing and optimising transport flows [13].

The submitted paper examines the logistics involved in the non-commercial transportation of companion animals, as this issue is not sufficiently explored in the current literature. It outlines the various logistical activities, identifies key factors influencing animal transport, and presents a comprehensive procedure for facilitating non-commercial transport from the animal owner's viewpoint, supported by the gathered data and applicable EU regulations.

2 Methodology

The transportation of live animals is governed by legal regulations that differ by country and species. These regulations aim to safeguard the welfare of the animals during transit, reduce stress, protect their health, ensure human safety, and prevent the transmission of diseases.

Legal acts that regulate the transport of animals:

1. In Slovak Republic:

- Act No. 56/2012 Coll., Road Transport Act
- Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 302/2003 Coll., of 9th July 2003, establishing details of the protection of animals during transport.
- Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 377/2012 Coll., establishing requirements for protecting animals used for scientific or educational purposes (as amended by No. 199/2019 Coll., 289/2020 Coll.).

2. Within the EU and its member states

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22nd December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 599/2004 of 30th March 2004, concerning the adoption of a harmonised model certificate and inspection report linked to intra-community trade in animals and products of animal origin
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 577/2013 of 28th June 2013 on the model identification documents for the non-commercial movement of dogs, cats and ferrets, the establishment of lists of territories and third countries and the format, layout and language requirements of the declarations attesting compliance with certain conditions provided for in Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council

- Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12th June 2013 on the non-commercial movement of pet animals and repealing Regulation (EC) No 998/2003
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 561/2016 of 11th April 2016 amending Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) No 577/2013 as regards the model of animal health certificate for dogs, cats and ferrets moved into a Member State from a territory or a third country for non-commercial purposes
- European Parliament resolution of 12th February 2020 on protecting the EU's internal market and consumer rights against the negative implications of the illegal trade in companion animals (2019/2814(RSP))
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/403 of 24th March 2021 laying down rules for the application of Regulations (EU) 2016/429 and (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and the Council as regards model animal health certificates and model animal health/official certificates, for the entry into the Union and movements between Member States of consignments of specific categories of terrestrial animals and germinal products thereof, official certification regarding such certificates and repealing Decision 2010/470/EU
- Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9th March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health

3. When entering and exiting the EU:

- European Parliament resolution of 14th February 2019 on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport within and outside the EU
- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692 of 30th January 2020, supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council as regards rules for entry into the Union and the movement and handling after entry of consignments of certain animals, germinal products and products of animal origin
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404 of 24th March 2021, laying down the lists of third countries, territories or zones thereof from which entry of animals, germinal products and products of animal origin into the Union is permitted by Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council

From the information provided, it can be inferred that there are two primary methods for transporting pet animals:

1. The companion animal travels with its owner, typically using the same mode of transportation, such as a car, public transport, train, or aeroplane.
2. The transport company handles the companion animals' transportation with or without the owner's presence.

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Whether it is one or the other mode of transport, animal welfare must be ensured, and the legal provisions governing the transport and entry of animals into the EU must be complied with. In the first method of transport, the owner is fully responsible for choosing the means of transport and the method of transporting the animal. In the second method, the transport company is responsible for implementing animal transport and the resulting requirements. Animal transport refers to the relocation of animals using various modes of transportation. This process encompasses all associated activities, including administration, loading, unloading, handling, and resting, until the animals reach their final destination and the transport is concluded. (EC 1/2005).

Conditions related to animal transport:

- identification of animals,
- ensuring the animal's needs during its transport,
- the size of the transport unit and the choice of transport means,
- choosing transport company and the professional skills of the driver,
- transport route,
- valid legal rules.

Dogs, cats, and ferrets must be marked with a microchip (transponder) or a readable tattoo before 3rd July 2011. The animal should be tagged to establish a link between it, its identification document, and its owner.

A pet can be issued a European pet passport, allowing an EU citizen to travel with the animal across the entire Union. The pet passport must include the date, and the method used to identify the animal. This passport is issued only by an authorised veterinarian and must contain information about a valid rabies vaccination. It is a document that has a standard EU format. It contains a description of the animal, the microchip code or tattoo, contact details of the owner, the veterinarian who issued the document, and health records. It is important to note that the EU pet passport is exclusively valid for cats, dogs, and ferrets. When a bird, reptile, rodent, or rabbit is regarded as a companion animal, it is essential to review the national regulations of the country the owner intends to visit [14].

When owners bring their pet from a non-EU country to an EU member state, they must present the "EU animal health certificate." Like the EU pet passport, the EU veterinary certificate contains details of the pet's health, identity and rabies vaccination. This document is issued by an authorised official veterinarian in the country from which the owner travels with the animals no later than 10 days before they arrive in the EU. The Certificate remains valid for travel between EU countries for four months from the date it is issued or until the rabies vaccination expires, whichever occurs first. The EU veterinary certificate for pet animals must be accompanied by a written statement confirming that the travel is for non-commercial purposes [14].

Suppose an animal entering the EU from a non-member country fails to satisfy the health status requirements. In that case, it will be housed in a quarantine facility authorised by the Member State of the destination upon its arrival in the EU. If the health status conditions are not met:

- the animal's entry into the country may be refused,
- the animal may be placed in quarantine in a state facility at the owner's expense, along with the costs of additional treatments, testing, and overall care,
- the animal may be euthanised at the owner's expense.

Two state-established quarantine stations, Martin and Veľký Krtíš, are currently in operation in the Slovak Republic [15]. An animal can be affected by various factors during transport, which can impact its health and well-being. It is important to recognise that not all animals can be transported. This inability may stem from various factors, including injuries, illnesses, pregnancy, or, for young mammals, their age. Dogs and cats younger than eight weeks must be accompanied by their mother [16]. The well-being of an animal must be ensured during transport. Important factors that could limit the welfare of animals during transport include the space in which the animal is located during transport, temperature, humidity, ventilation, noise, vibrations, water, feed, and handling of the animal during loading and unloading.

When transported in larger transport units, animals benefit from increased space for movement and rest. Adult cats must always be transported individually. Dogs from the same household can be transported together in pairs, provided their combined weight does not exceed 30 kg, and they get along well. The transport cage must be sufficiently spacious to enable both dogs to lie down comfortably without contacting the sides of the cage or with each other.

Research at the University of Bristol (2021), commissioned by the RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), found that the presence of bedding in the transport unit led to a reduction in anxiety, so it is recommended that all units should be equipped with bedding. The temperature should not drop under 5 °C or exceed 30 °C when travelling a long distance. A significant stress factor for companion animals is noise from other animals, which increases significantly, especially when transporting many animals. Transporting in the upper level of stacked cages was linked to increased physiological distress. Every vehicle utilised for transporting animals must adhere to the established fundamental design standards and be kept in a condition that ensures the safety of the animals [17].

Transport means, containers and their equipment shall be designed, constructed, maintained and operated in a way that:

- a) would prevent injury and suffering to animals and ensure their safety,
- b) would protect animals from adverse weather, extreme temperatures and sudden changes in climatic conditions,

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- c) could be cleaned and disinfected,
- d) would prevent the animals from escaping or falling out and would be able to resist the strain of moving,
- e) would ensure that the quality and quantity of air can be maintained at an appropriate level for any animal being transported,
- f) would ensure access to animals and enable their control and care,
- g) are equipped with anti-slippery flooring,
- h) are equipped with floor coverings that reduce urine and faeces leakage to a minimum,
- i) are equipped with lighting sufficient for inspecting animals and their care during transport [16].

Since 2009, European Union rules have required that all vehicles transporting animals for more than eight hours must have appropriate equipment, including a satellite navigation system (GPS), a system for providing water to the transported animals and ensuring a suitable microclimate, as well as a warning system that alerts the

driver to potential problems. In the Slovak Republic, such vehicles are officially approved by the State Veterinary and Food Administration of the Slovak Republic.

The driver and attendant must have a Certificate of Professional Competence for the Transport of Animals and a Certificate of Competence for Drivers and Attendants. The animal transporter must possess a transport permit for short journeys (up to 8 hours, type 1) or long journeys (over 8 hours, type 2). The driver's permit is issued for a maximum of five years; the validity date is always stated on the driver's approval certificate. The register of animal transporters, which is available on the SVFA SK website, contains the list of approved animal transporters in the Slovak Republic.: <https://www.svps.sk/zoznamy/register-prepravcov-zvierat.php> (SVFA SK, 2023) [18]. The animal transporter must meet the conditions in terms of transport distance and transport time (up to and over 65 km or up to and over 8 hours), which are the mandatories of a transporter whose company is based in Slovakia, as shown in Figure 1.

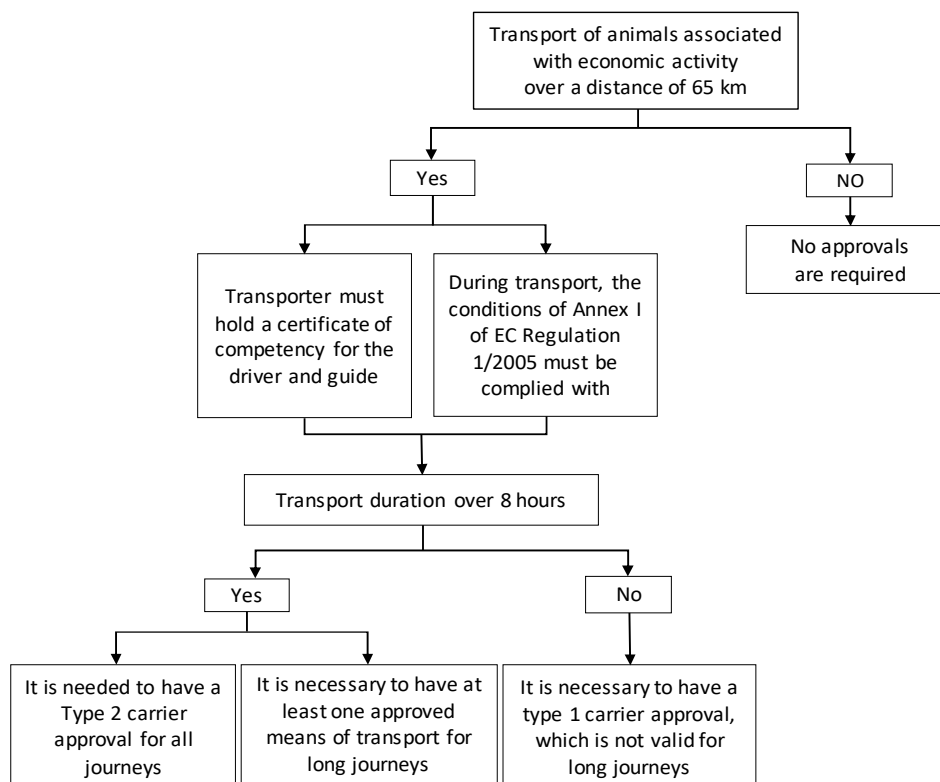


Figure 1 Conditions that the animal transporter must fulfil

As mentioned above, according to Article 6 Section 5 and Article 17 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, the drivers of vehicles transporting animals are required to hold a certificate of competence for drivers and attendants (which does not apply in the case of the movement of an animal by its owner). Based on this regulation, the training is a prerequisite for anyone who wants to transport animals. This Certificate of competence confirms that drivers and

attendants have received training on the technical and administrative aspects of this regulation, the care of animals during transport, and the impact of transport on animal behaviour. This training does not cover safety road aspects when driving certain vehicles. Therefore, participants must complete additional training required by the directive on training professional drivers (Lundgren, 2020) [19].

Drivers who transport animals over long distances must complete a course on the subject. Certificates can be obtained in many ways (e.g., online courses, seminars, workshops). Certification levels vary based on the species of animal and the mode of transport, such as pet taxis, animal ambulances, or long-distance drivers. Nonetheless, all certifications must comply with EU regulations.

Transporting companion animals necessitates collaboration among various parties before the actual journey and careful planning of the route from the loading location to the unloading destination. This includes addressing specific animal care requirements throughout the transportation process. Transport of companion animals solves several logistical challenges. Transport companies can offer a comprehensive portfolio of services, including domestic and international flights, road and sea transportation, specialised pet cages, documentation assistance, health certificate assistance, and personalised care during travel that ensures safe and comfortable travel for pets.

3 Results

From a logistical perspective, pet transport requires solving multiple tasks that can be divided into two separate phases, including multiple logistical activities. Non-commercial transport of a companion animal may be carried out by its owner or the transport company selected by the owner.

The first phase, the preparation phase, encompasses logistical tasks that the pet owner must manage and those the chosen business partner must oversee to facilitate transportation. These activities must be coordinated. This phase can take several days or months, depending on the destination country's requirements, distance, species, age of the pet being transported, and other requirements.

The pet owner's obligations are:

1. To ensure that the necessary documents for the companion animals are provided in sufficient time - European pet passport, EU animal health certificate and other documents issued by the official veterinarian based on the requirements and rules in the final destination (vaccination, rabies tests, treatment). It is recommended that the owner keep copies of all documents. Some countries require that some steps regarding identification, vaccination, testing, and treatment are carried out in a precise order and within a given timeline (e.g., Japan requires at least 180 days to elapse between the test performed to determine the rabies titer and the pet's arrival in the country). Adhering to the requirements is crucial; failure to do so may result in the animal being denied entry to the destination or facing quarantine upon arrival, potentially for an extended period [20].

2. Suppose the owner is unable to transport the animal personally. In that case, he/she must secure a reliable business partner, such as a transport company or shipper, to ensure the animal is delivered safely and punctually to its destination. Numerous companies around the globe are

currently involved in the transportation of animals. They aim to ease the transportation process for pet owners and breeders, and many provide additional services. These include guidance and support in preparing animals for transport, legal counsel on the import and export of animals, customs clearance (document management), border veterinary inspections, assistance with permit applications, and arrangements for animal quarantine. They also offer services tailored to specific modes of transport, whether by road, rail, air, or water.

Activities that the transport companies are required to perform in the preparation phase:

1. Companion animals are transported without an owner or attendant. Depending on the species and number of pets, the company will select the appropriate transport unit (container, cage, etc.) and means of transport. It will prepare a transport plan from the point of loading to the point of unloading. When creating a transport plan, the specific requirements of the pet (type of food, necessary resting) and the special requirements of the owner (animal travelling with an attendant or individually) must be considered. The transporter must create a transport plan if the animals being transported are meant for exchange or export to other countries or if the anticipated transport duration is longer than eight hours. The transport plan specifies all rest areas and transfer points. Good transport planning can eliminate its adverse effects on animals.

2. Preparation of mandatory documents. The company, in cooperation with the pet owner, collects all necessary documents for the companion animal (European passport, EU health certificate, vaccinations, etc.) to identify and ensure requirements related to the animal's entry into the final destination (what vaccinations and within what time frame are required, whether the animal needs to be quarantined, etc.).

A crucial task during the preparation phase is ensuring the readiness of the transportation vehicles prior to the actual transport (EC No. 1/2005): cleaning and disinfection, inspection of the animal's space—floors, walls, partitions—for injuries, inspection of the functionality of the drinkers, provision of the amount of water, feed, and bedding, and inspection of the functionality of the ventilation. Sufficient height and floor space must be available for the animals.

The sequence of logistical activities for the preparation phase of non-commercial transport of companion animals from the perspective of the animal owner is shown in Figures 2 and 3 in the blue box. Figure 2 shows the sequence of logistical activities for both phases when the owner carries out transporting the companion animal. Figure 3 shows the sequence of activities for the first phase - the selection of a transport company and the activities of the second phase from the perspective of the animal owner, which the owner carries out in cooperation with the business partner.

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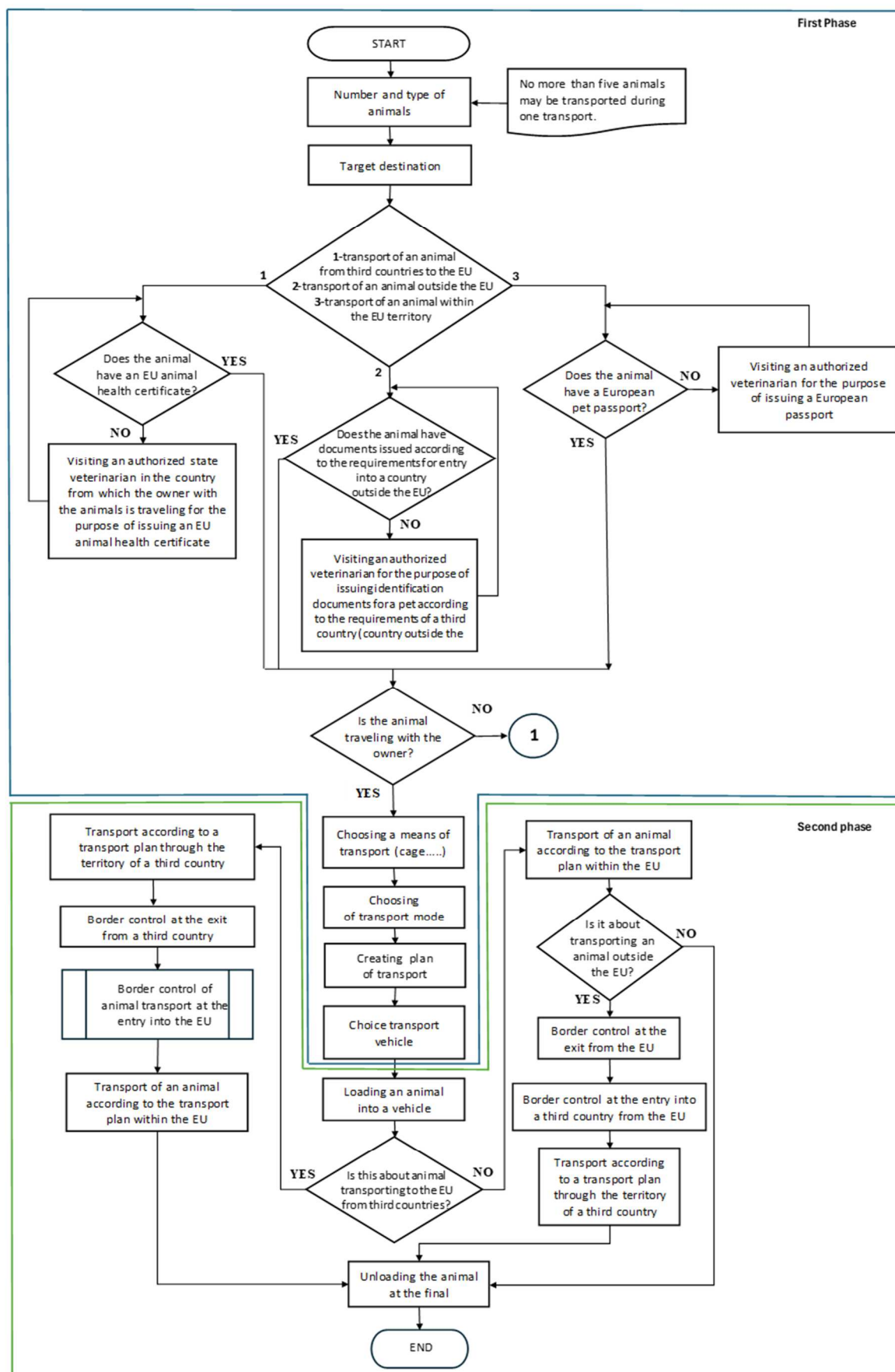


Figure 2 Sequence of logistical activities for transporting companion animals carried out by the owner

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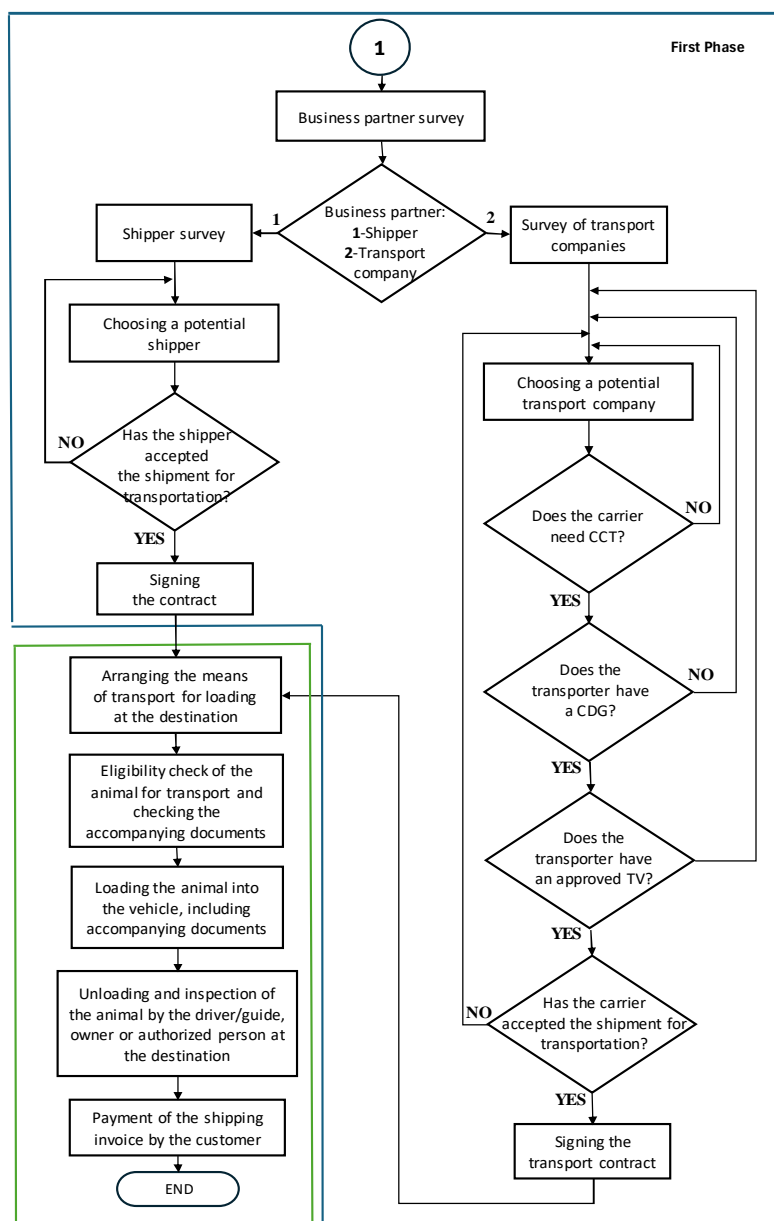
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The second phase is the transport phase. This phase can be carried out by the pet owner or a transport company (Figure 2, Figure 3).

This phase includes all activities related to the import or export of the animal, from checking the accompanying documentation to loading, the transport itself (including feeding, resting, etc.), and unloading the animal at the destination. The entire transport process must be managed and controlled. If animal transport is done by a transport company, all the checks and controls of the animal's ability for transport must be made before loading the animal, as well as a check of the animal's accompanying documentation and its verification based on the animal's

marking (microchip, tattoo, or other marking), veterinary certificates, driver or attendant certificates, and a transport plan.

Suppose a group of animals is being transported. In that case, their placement must be respected (separate placement of males and females, separation of animals according to size and age, separation according to whether they are from the same breed, etc.). Personnel handling animals must be trained and competent. The entire transport to the destination must be carried out immediately and include regular checks on the welfare of the animals being transported.



TV: Transport vehicle

CCT: Certificate of professional competence for the transport of animals

CDG: Certificate of Competence for drivers or guides

Figure 3 Sequence of logistics activities of the first and second phases from the owner's perspective when a transport company performs the transport

During the transport itself, the means of transport must contain transport documentation with records related to the origin and ownership of the animals, including health certificates, on the place, the date and time of loading and start of transport, on the estimated time of transport, on the place of their final destination, and on the transport plan. The transport plan should document all essential measures to meet the animals' needs, including feeding and watering schedules tailored to the species and the length of the journey. This requirement holds even if the plan is modified or unexpected events disrupt the journey. The last

part of the second phase is unloading the animals and inspecting them during unloading at the destination. This activity can only be performed by the driver or an authorised accompanying person (e.g. the owner or attendant) of the animal. After unloading the animal, the means of transport must be disinfected.

Figures 2 and 3 show the logistical activities of this phase in the green box. Figure 4 shows the sequence of activities related to the entry of animals into the EU (border control quarantine).

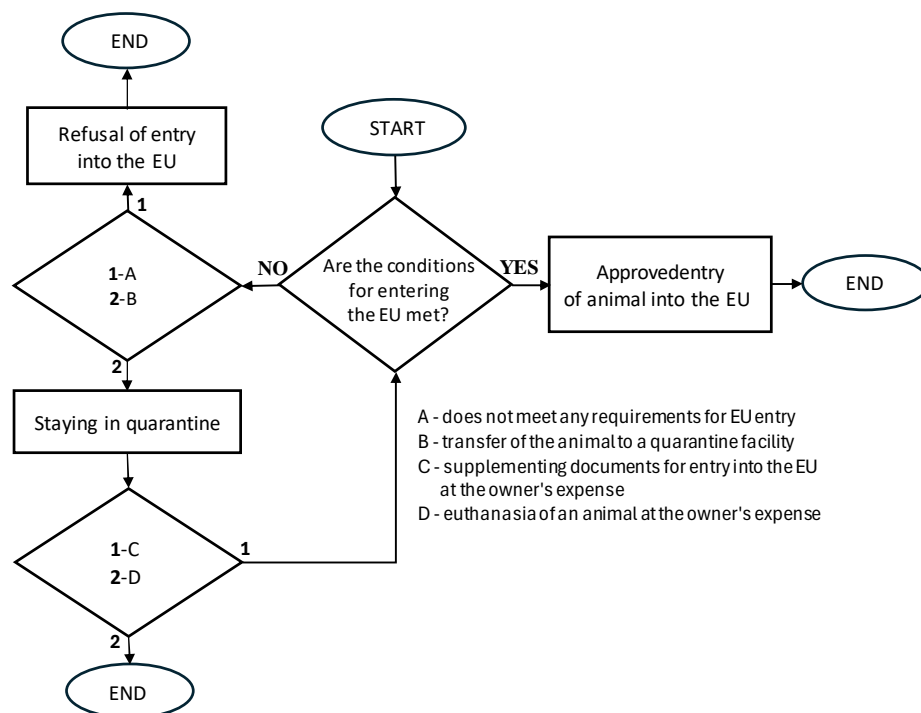


Figure 4 Sequence of activities related to the entry of an animal into the EU territory

It is essential to recognise that the processes involved in loading, transporting, and unloading the animal at this stage can differ depending on the mode of transport. We have provided a generalised overview of these activities given the wide range of factors.

4 Discussion

Nowadays, animal transportation is no exception. Numerous companies are specialising in animal transportation, and many operate at a professional level. Most animal transporters are verified and qualified, so animal owners do not need to be concerned whether their animals are companion or farm animals.

More and more companies are entering the animal transportation market as this service becomes increasingly popular, primarily due to the rising demands from owners who want to transport their pets. Whether the owners are moving their pets or going on a vacation with them, it all requires using transportation services; choosing a quality service is essential. According to various companies'

general terms and conditions, live animals are not permitted for transportation by courier companies (services).

An important issue closely related to animal transport is the promotion of their transportation at seemingly favourable prices through various advertising portals, low-quality websites, online platforms, and social media. Many cities worldwide have local "pet taxis," specialising in short-distance transportation. Anyone interested in arranging transportation for their pet should follow the guidelines and verify which entity they are ordering the services from.

The most extensive grouping of live animal transport operators is IPATA (International Pet and Animal Transportation Association), a non-profit trade association of independent members dedicated to the safe and humane transportation of pets and other animals. IPATA is an international network of pet moving specialists who work together to provide professional pet transport services worldwide. Other agencies and organisations working with

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the EU to monitor compliance during the transport not only of companion animals are, for example, HATS Handling of Animals during Transport and Slaughter: It is internationally recognised as one of the leading research centres in the field of animal welfare concerning handling during transport and slaughter and WOA World Organization for Animal Health: provides technical support to member countries requesting assistance in the control and eradication of animal diseases, including diseases transmissible to humans (WOAH 2023).

During the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, the transport of pet animals entering the Slovak Republic began to be

monitored. Along with war refugees, the pet animals are also coming to Slovakia from war-torn Ukraine. Although their movement from third countries to EU territory is subject to regulation, in the case of war refugees from Ukraine, the EU makes an exception if the animals lack the necessary documents. The person transporting the animal must fill out only a simple form available on the financial administration portal and at crossing the border. These transports were primarily carried by road when the animal travelled with its owner [21]. Figure 5 shows the number of companion animals transported from the UA to Slovakia in 2024 and Figure 6 during the first months of 2025.

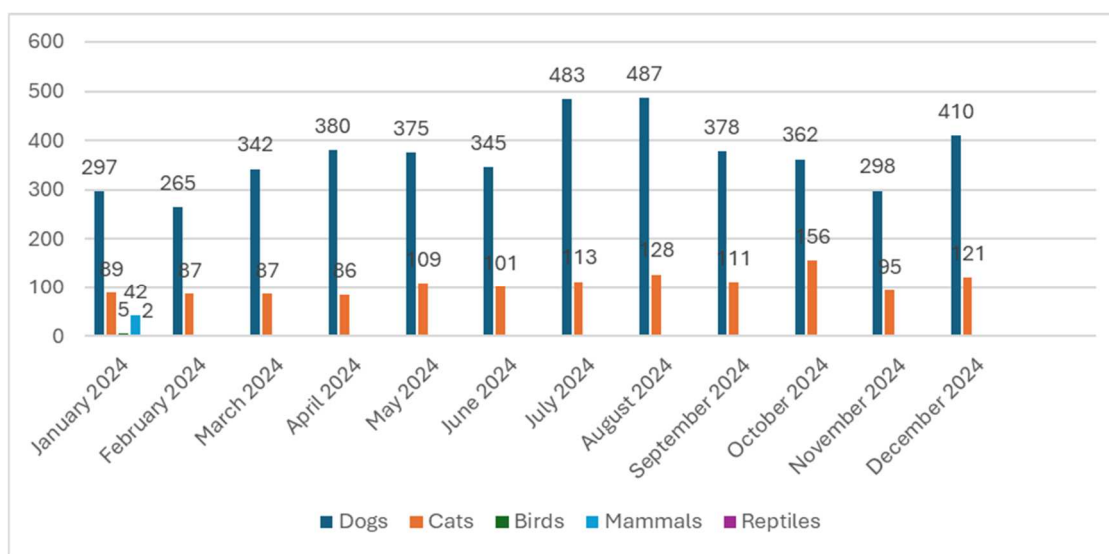


Figure 5 Transporting pets from Ukraine in 2024

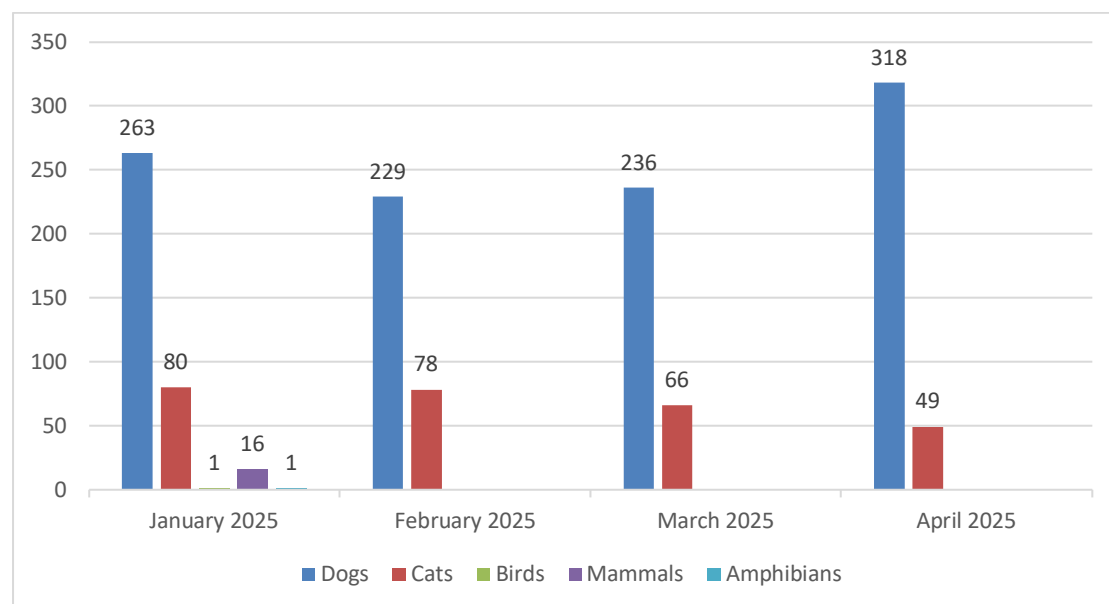


Figure 6 Transport of pets from Ukraine 2025 to Slovakia

When entering the Slovak Republic (EU), border control stations check the transport of companion animals. This is the first point of control when entering the country. These stations oversee mandatory documents,

identification, and physical inspection of animals to ensure that all conditions for entry into the country are met. Table 1 shows the results of checks in the period 2020-2023 at entry points to the Slovak Republic [22-25].

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Table 1 Results of border controls in the period 2020-2024 at entry points to the Slovak Republic

Control at place	2020			2021			2022			2023		
	Num. of vehicles	Num. of Animals	Passport deficiencies	Num. of vehicles	Num. of Animals	Passport deficiencies	Num. of vehicles	Num. of Animals	Passport deficiencies	Num. of vehicles	Num. of Animals	Passport deficiencies
Bratislava	25	28	0	3	3	0	6	6	0	8	8	0
Čierna n. Tisou	9	9	0	18	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vyšné Nemecké	405	745	0	1091	1454	41	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uľfa	194	194	0	470	470	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Veľké Šlemence	66	66	4	50	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Michalovce	674	1014	4	1579	1992	46	6928	8927	59	0	0	0
Prešov - Poprad	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	4139	5196	76

The non-commercial movement of companion animals within the EU (Schengen area) is not monitored in more detail, as only a pet passport is required for their movement, and just like EU residents, animals can move freely. Recording the movement of pet animals within the

EU by owners is unrealistic but appropriate. Shortly, it would be appropriate to record the numbers of transported companion animals, e.g. by transport companies, in a created database (commercial movement of animals is recorded in the TRACES database, Figure 8) [26].

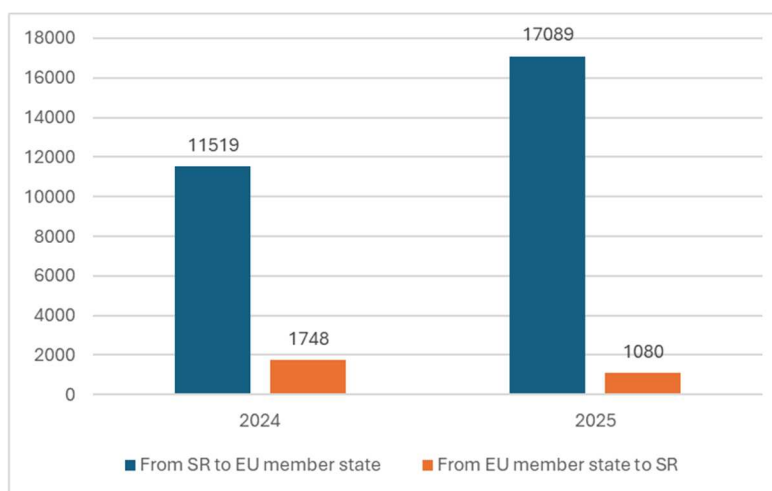


Figure 8 Commercial transport of dogs and cats within the EU

A good example of monitoring animal transport is airline companies registering their transportation in the USA. Airlines companies keep accurate records of transportation by animal species, the number of injured

animals, the number of lost animals, and the number of dead animals. This form of record keeping has been implemented since 2005, Figure 9 [27].

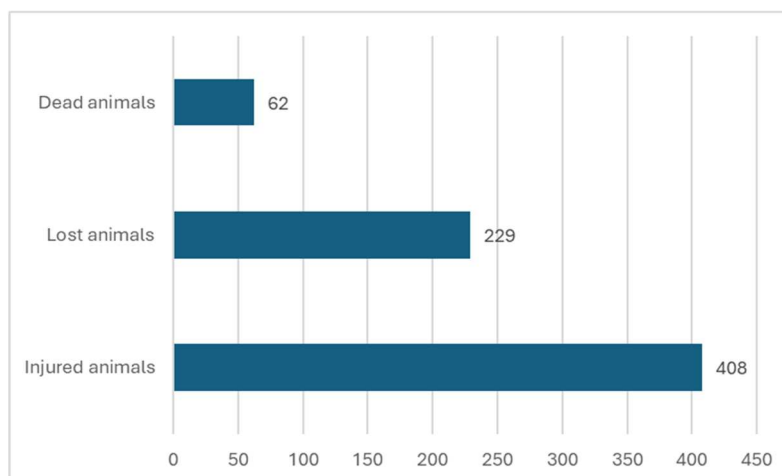


Figure 9 Records of dead, lost and injured companion animals by airlines in the USA from May 2005 – December 2024

5 Conclusions

The transportation of animals represents a specific segment of logistics. It is a complex and multidisciplinary process that involves not only transportation itself, but also veterinary care, legislation, and ethics. Efficient and humane transport requires careful planning, appropriate technical equipment, compliance with health and legal standards, as well as trained professional personnel. Animal transport presents significant challenges, as legal regulations vary between countries and require specific permits and health certificates.

The logistics of transporting companion animals, particularly dogs and cats, requires a specialized approach that prioritizes animal welfare while also meeting operational and regulatory demands. Unlike livestock transportation, companion animals are more sensitive to environmental changes, confinement, and human absence. As such, both private pet owners and commercial transport providers must adopt measures that ensure physical safety, psychological comfort, and legal compliance throughout the entire transport process. Ultimately, ensuring safe and ethical pet transport is not only a matter of compliance, but a key aspect of quality service and trust between clients and logistics providers.

The paper's main contribution, in addition to presenting legal regulations and describing the non-commercial transport of companion animals, is to present two phases of the logistics process and logistics activities. We defined logistics activities from the pet owner's perspective and the transport company's perspective as the transport operator based on the owner's selection. The paper presents general graphic representations of the sequence of logistical activities in the non-commercial transport of companion animals by the owner and through the transport company. In commercial transportation, the logistics activities are similar when the owner transports a companion animal for profit.

The future focus in this area will be to define further logistical activities and procedures related to loading, transporting, and unloading companion animals using various types of transport (e.g., in air transport: flight reservation, check-in and security check of animals, placement of the animal on board the aircraft or in the cargo hold according to the specified regulations of individual airlines). Due to the broad issue, we have generalised the sequence of these activities in this contribution.

Global future research should focus on the harmonization of transport standards and documentation across countries (e.g. pet passports, vaccination records) and digital tracking systems can enhance transparency and traceability.

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Single-blind peer review process.