

The Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) Domestic rabbits and rodents

European Regulation 998/2003 took effect on 3 July 2004. It sets out the rules for pet animals travelling between European Union (EU) countries and into the EU from other countries.

This fact sheet explains the current rules for travelling with domestic rabbits and rodents within the EU and into the UK from non-EU countries. Pet rodents include guinea pigs, hamsters, mice, rats, gerbils and chinchillas.

For details of other fact sheets in this series and contact points see section 5.

1. The rules

The following rules apply to the movement of pet rabbits and rodents (referred to in this fact sheet as “pets”) as at October 2005.

Movement between European Union (EU) countries (*see Annex A*) or into the EU from Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland and the Vatican are not subject to any requirement with regard to rabies. This means that currently there are no requirements for these animals when entering the UK from any of these countries. The EU may impose conditions on the movement of these animals at a later date. If conditions are imposed this fact sheet will be updated. See the PETS website or contact the Helpline for the latest situation.

When imported into the UK from any non-EU country, other than those listed in the previous paragraph, pets must be licensed into quarantine for 6 months (*see section 2*). This requirement may be reviewed by the EU at a later date. Check the website or ask the Helpline for the latest position. Commission Decision 2003/459/EC **prohibits** the import into the EU of prairie dogs originating in or travelling from the USA. It also prohibits the import of certain rodents and squirrels originating in or travelling from certain countries of the sub-Saharan region of Africa.

The maximum number of all types of pet animals (not only rabbits and rodents) each person may bring into the EU from most non-EU listed countries (*see Annex A*) is 5. This rule does not apply to animals brought from Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland or the Vatican.

Animals covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) remain subject to the provisions of Council Regulation 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora.

2. Travelling to the UK with your pet

Pets from other EU countries and from Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland and the Vatican are able to enter the UK on any route at any point of entry, subject to the agreement and conditions of carriage of the transport company. **Check in advance that the transport company is willing to transport your pet.**

- ***Quarantine***

If your pet has to be licensed into quarantine, you must get an import licence from Defra (for England), Scottish Government (for Scotland) or DARD (for Northern Ireland) before it travels to the UK. Section 5 gives contact details. The licence must accompany your animal when it travels. You must meet the costs of quarantine.

- ***Travel charges***

Transport companies will usually include travel and handling charges in the ticket price for your animal. Check when you make your booking. No charges are made by Defra or the Devolved Authorities.

- ***Customs formalities***

When bringing a pet into the UK from outside the EU you must complete Customs formalities. An agent, travel company or airline should be able to do this for you and may charge for this service. Alternatively, you might be able to make your own arrangements. This would involve contacting the Customs authorities at your arrival point in the UK to obtain details of the necessary procedures and the appropriate Customs form. You are advised to discuss these charges with your agent etc before you travel as they might be included as part of a package. These charges are not made by the UK Government.

3. Taking your pet into non-EU countries

Advice on export requirements is available from your local Animal Health Divisional Office or contact the authorities (e.g. the Embassy) of the appropriate country.

4. Health and welfare of your pet

When abroad your pet may come into contact with animal diseases which we do not have in the UK, e.g. diseases transmitted by ticks, and parasites like heartworm. These could kill your animal or make it seriously ill. Some can affect humans.

Before you take your pet abroad, consult your vet about any preventative treatment necessary and how to look for signs of ill health in your pet.

If your pet becomes ill after returning to the UK, explain where it has been so your vet can consider diseases not normally found in the UK.

Also consider the welfare needs of your pet when travelling abroad and whether it will benefit from travelling with you.

5. More information

Other fact sheets

- *Fact sheet 1* gives a general introduction to the European Regulation on the movement of pet animals.
- *Fact sheet 2* is no longer valid
- *Fact sheet 3* explains the rules for dogs and cats travelling between EU countries with an EU pet passport.
- *Fact sheet 4* explains the rules for dogs and cats entering then UK from non-EU listed countries with an EU pet passport or an official veterinary certificate.
- *Fact sheet 5* explains the rules for the movement of ferrets into the UK.

Contacts

Animal Health

PETS

- Website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel/index.htm>
- Helpline: 0870 241 1710 (Monday to Friday - 08.30 to 17.00 UK time)
- E-mail: quarantine@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk (enclose your postal address and daytime telephone number)
- Fax: 01245 351162

Quarantine

- Website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel/quarantine/index.htm>
- Telephone: 01245 454860
- E-mail: quarantine@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk
- Fax: 01245 351162

P.T.O.

Scottish Government

- Telephone: 0300 244 9243
- E-mail: animal.health@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
- Fax: 0300 244 9797

National Assembly for Wales Department of Environment, Planning and Countryside (NAWDEPC)

- Telephone: 01286 662027 (English and Welsh)
- E-mail: AnimalByProductsCaernarfon@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Northern Ireland (DARD)

- Telephone: 02890 524622

While this fact sheet provides information about the Scheme, it cannot cover every possible situation. Check with one of the contact points above if your questions are not answered by our fact sheets, and to make sure you have the latest information.

Annex A

The listed countries

These countries are subject to change. For the latest situation see the PETS website or ring the Helpline.

(a) EU countries and territories

Austria	Estonia	Hungary	Netherlands
Azores	Faroe Islands	Ireland ³	Poland
Balearic Islands	Finland	Italy	Portugal
Belgium	France	Latvia	Réunion
Bulgaria	French Guiana	Lithuania	Romania
Canary Islands	Germany	Luxembourg	Slovakia
Ceuta	Gibraltar	Madeira	Slovenia
Cyprus ¹	Greece	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Greenland	Martinique	Sweden
Denmark	Guadeloupe ²	Melilla	

¹ Pets may only enter or re-enter the UK without quarantine from the Republic of Cyprus. As at October 2005, pets travelling from north Cyprus (the area north of the Buffer Zone) must be licensed into quarantine for 6 months on arrival in the UK. See the website or contact the Helpline to check for any change in this situation.

² Includes St Barthelemy and St Martin (French part of the island)

³ There are no requirements for pets travelling directly between the UK and the Republic of Ireland

(b) Non-EU listed countries and territories

Andorra	Cayman Islands	Malaysia 3	St Lucia
Antigua & Barbuda	Chile	Mauritius	St Pierre & Miquelon
Argentina	Croatia	Mayotte	St Vincent & The Grenadines
Aruba	Falkland Islands	Mexico	San Marino
Ascension Island	Fiji	Monaco	Singapore
Australia	French Polynesia	Montserrat	Switzerland
Bahrain	Guam	Netherlands Antilles	Taiwan
Barbados	Hawaii	New Caledonia	Trinidad & Tobago
Belarus	Hong Kong	New Zealand	United Arab Emirates 4
Bermuda	Iceland	Norway	USA (mainland)
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Jamaica ¹	Russian Federation 2	Vanuatu
British Virgin Islands	Japan	St Helena	Vatican
Canada	Liechtenstein	St Kitts & Nevis	Wallis & Futuna

(2) The Russian Federation consists of [88 subjects \(regions\)](#). Please note that the following Republics are **NOT** part of the Russian Federation; Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

(3) The import into UK quarantine of dogs and cats from Malaysia (Peninsula) is prohibited unless health certification provided by the Malaysian veterinary authorities is provided which confirms that the cat or dog:

- has had no contact with pigs during at least the 60 days prior to export; and
- has not been resident on holdings where during the past 60 days any case of Nipah disease has been confirmed; and
- has been subjected with a negative result to an IgC capture ELISA test carried out in a laboratory approved for testing for antibody against the Nipah disease viruses by the competent veterinary authorities on a sample of blood taken within 10 days of export.

In order to enquire about arrangements for the test to be carried out and obtaining the health certification, you will need to contact the Malaysian veterinary authorities on 006 03 88702000. The original health certification must accompany the dog/cat to the UK and be handed to the authorised carrying agent nominated to collect the dog/cat from the port/airport of landing in the UK.

(4) The UAE consists of the following states Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Al Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, and Al Fujairah.

© Crown copyright 2005

Use of Crown copyright material

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is a Crown body. The information we produce is subject to Crown copyright, which is administered by the Office of Public Sector Information.

Research and private study

This fact sheet may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium in order to carry out research for non-commercial purposes, for private study or for internal circulation within an organisation. This is subject to the material being reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and you must give the title of the source document. Any other use of this fact sheet will require a licence. Details of how to apply for such a licence can be found on our website at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/web/terms.htm>