

Requirements May Change for Equine Travel After Brexit

4 February 2019, UK ~ The date of 29 March 2019 looms large on the UK calendar as the date of the monumental change called Brexit (British Exit). The movement of horses and other equines between the UK and other European Union countries is subject to change after Brexit is established.

The European Union - often known as the EU - is an economic and political partnership involving 28 European countries. It began after World War Two to foster economic co-operation, with the idea that countries which trade together were more likely to avoid going to war with each other.

Which countries are in the EU? [Click here.](#)

Countries using the euro

The euro (€) is the official currency of 19 out of 28 EU countries. These countries are collectively known as the **Eurozone**.

The rules require in general terms, that equines travel with two documents: **an ID document (passport)** which also includes details of their health status; and either **an Intra-Community Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC) or a veterinary attestation**. These documents confirm fitness to travel and absence of disease. Which of the two additional documents are required depends on the purpose of the movement and perceived health risk associated with that equine type (for example racing, competition, or breeding). It is currently not necessary for equines moving between member states to do so via a Border Inspection Post (BIP).

Under a separate Tripartite Agreement (TPA), movements of certain types of horse between the UK, Ireland and France are further streamlined. **For movements between the UK and Ireland, only an ID document is required. For movements between the UK and France, an ID document and commercial document (DOCOM), along with an entry on the TRACES system, is required.** There is no requirement for the equines to move between member states via a BIP.

In the UK, equine ID documents (passports) are produced by passport issuing organizations (PIOs), which can include breed societies. Applications for ITAHC Certificate are made to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and the certificate is then completed by an authorized Official Veterinarian (OV). OVs also produce the veterinary attestation, where required. APHA provides this service in England, Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs' Veterinary Service is responsible. This would continue to be the case in a 'no deal' scenario, with the changes outlined in this technical notice accommodated for.

What if there is no deal after March 2019?

If the UK leaves the EU in March 2019 with no deal in place, the UK would be treated as a 'third country' and therefore any movement of equines to countries within the EU would be subject to EU third country rules. In order to travel from the UK as a listed third country, a horse or other equine would need an appropriate **ID document and appropriate health documentation.**

Discussions are underway with the European Commission to allow the UK to become a listed third country on the day we leave the EU. However, to allow effective contingency planning, in the event that the UK is not a listed country equine movement to the EU could not take place. We are confident however, that the UK meets the animal health requirements to secure listing, as other countries such as Australia and New Zealand have done.

The import of equines from the EU into the UK will not change immediately after exit as we are replicating current systems.

ID document or Passport

Equine ID (passports), issued by industry, would continue to be used in the UK, as they contain information relating to identification and veterinary procedures undertaken that could help to maintain a robust national equine health and traceability regime.

These industry-issued passports would continue to be valid for EU travel for horses registered either on a studbook or pedigree register; or with a national branch of an international organization for racing or competition.

All other horses and equines traveling from the UK to the EU would have to travel with a new government-issued ID document which is expected to contain very similar information to that in existing passports. This is a requirement of the EU in relation to movements from third countries.

Export certification

As the UK would be a third country, an Export Health Certificate (EHC) would be required to move equines, on a permanent or temporary basis, to the EU.

The EU currently imposes additional requirements on third countries dependant on their perceived level of disease risk. The UK could expect to be subject to fewer additional requirements in a 'no deal' scenario, given its current low disease risk profile, meaning a less burdensome process for certification.

However, EU certification would require additional action from vets to confirm the absence of

equine disease. This new process would require more planning from the equine owner and could involve increased cost if additional blood tests are required, estimated to be between £200 and £500 depending on the third country category the UK is placed in after leaving the EU.

The Export Health Certificate (EHC) would replace the veterinary attestation or Intra-Community Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC) currently required. In addition, equines entering the EU from the UK would have to pass through a Border Inspection Post (BIP) in an EU member state.

More

information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exporting-animals-and-animal-products-if-theres-no-brexit-deal>

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