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Origin: Third countries

Category: Living animals

Supergroup: Mammals

Group: Dogs, cats, ferrets (commercial)

Date: 16.04.2024

Scope / conditions

The import provisions apply to the import of dogs, cats and ferrets that are to be sold or transferred to new owners. They do not apply to private journeys with pets. For details of the regulations and criteria applicable to pets, please follow this [link](#).

Anyone who imports dogs, cats and ferrets for commercial purposes requires permit from the Cantonal Veterinary Office. Please contact the relevant agency. Information can be found in the “Administration and information” section right at the bottom.

The legal requirements relating to animal diseases differ according to the risk of rabies in the country of origin. All third countries are divided into low-risk countries and countries with a risk of rabies. Long waiting periods must be observed before importing dogs, cats and ferrets from countries with a risk of rabies.

The relevant list of countries may be found under “More information”.

Irrespective of the rabies status of the country of origin, the following requirements must be met:

» Identification

The animals must be identified by means of a microchip. This must comply with ISO standard 11784 (code must contain numbers only) and be readable using a scanner that complies with ISO standard 11785.

» Valid rabies vaccination

A rabies vaccination can only be recognised as valid if the animal was identified **before** the rabies vaccination and the animal was at least 12 weeks old on the date of vaccination. It must be conducted in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Detailed requirements regarding vaccines may be found in the legal regulations (see “More information” below).

Additional provisions for imports from low-risk countries

Dogs, cats and ferrets from countries with a low risk of rabies must have been validly vaccinated against rabies at least 21 days before import. Only third countries listed in Annex VIII to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404 without specific conditions as set out in Part 3 (see “Approved countries of origin” below) are regarded as low-risk. Young animals may not therefore be imported from these countries before they have reached the age of 15 weeks, without exception. The waiting period does not apply to booster vaccinations given at least 21 days after the initial vaccination while the latter is still valid.

These provisions apply to animals that have been kept only in low-risk third countries, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or the EU for at least 6 months before entry to Switzerland (or since birth). Otherwise the additional provisions for imports from countries with a risk of rabies apply.

Additional provisions for imports from countries with a risk of rabies



At least 30 days after the rabies vaccination (but within the validity period of the vaccination), a blood sample must be taken from the animal. The veterinarian sends the blood sample to be tested for rabies antibodies (titration) in a laboratory. The laboratory must be [recognised by the EU](#). The blood test is used to prove the presence of sufficient protection by vaccination. A result of at least 0.5 IU/ml counts as sufficient. Animals with lower values may not be imported. In the case of countries with a risk of rabies, a further waiting period of 3 months (from date of sampling) must elapse after the blood analysis before entry to Switzerland is possible. It is therefore not possible to enter the country with young animals under the age of 7 months from countries with a risk of rabies.

Health certificate / TRACES

The cantonal authority must record the establishment of destination in Switzerland in the TRACES electronic system before the first import takes place.

Commercial imports of dogs, cats and ferrets must be carried out by registered importers using TRACES. To process the import in TRACES, a specialized forwarding company may be assigned.

More information can be found right at the bottom under "Information on the TRACES system".

The shipment must be accompanied by a health certificate. Only the stamped and signed original will be accepted. A specimen health certificate is shown in Annex II Chapter 38 of [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/403](#) (most recently amended by [the following legal act](#)).

Dogs, cats and ferrets may only be commercially imported by air freight with an air waybill. Accompanied import as travel luggage, AVI in hold or excess baggage is not permitted.

Additional conditions

- » It is forbidden to import dogs with docked ears and/or tails (see below under "More information").
- » Animals that are being imported into Switzerland are liable to value added tax. The importer is responsible for notifying the customs authorities of the import.
- » Dogs must be presented to a veterinarian within 10 days and registered by the latter in the relevant database
- » Dogs must be registered with the residents' registration office at the place of residence of their owner.
- » Animals must be transported in compliance with the requirements of the Animal Protection Ordinance (AniPO; SR 455.1), the European Convention on the protection of animals during international transport (SR 0.452) and Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport.
- » Heavily pregnant animals and those that have recently given birth must not be transported.
- » For air transport, the Live Animals Regulations of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) also apply. You can obtain information about this from the airline company, including details of transport container requirements and conditions, making "through" reservations to the end destination, and the 24-hour availability of the person responsible.



Approved countries of origin

The country of origin must be authorised to import. The list of authorised countries and territories is shown in Annex VIII of [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/404](#) (most recently amended by [the following legal act](#)).

Approved suppliers

The holding of origin must be registered in TRACES in advance by the competent authorities of the country of origin.

Overarching protective measures

The [protective measures](#) in force on the day of import apply in all cases .

Inspection on entry into the country

Direct import by air

The shipment undergoes veterinary inspection on arrival at the Swiss airport (Zurich or Geneva). Animals and goods that are required to undergo border veterinary control must be imported by air (with an air waybill) and cleared in the TRACES system. In all cases, please consult the relevant information under “Further info”.

The result of the inspection is entered in the CHED (Common Health Entry Document). The completed CHED must accompany the shipment until it reaches the establishment of destination.

Import via the EU

The full veterinary inspection is carried out at the point of first entry into the EU. The import provisions are in principle the same as those that apply to direct import into Switzerland. The importer must contact the relevant EU border control post to obtain information about prior notification of the shipment and any additional provisions that may be applicable. The CHED issued by the EU border control post must be present when the Swiss border is crossed and must accompany the shipment until it reaches the establishment of destination.

Owner's licence

A permit from the Cantonal Veterinary Office is required in order to keep wild animals (e.g. ferrets).

Miscellaneous

Authorisation from the Cantonal Veterinary Office is required if the animals are being imported for one of the following purposes:



- » trading
- » delivery of foundling animals and abandoned animals (trading permit)
- » advertising with animals
- » animal shows
- » small animal markets
- » zoos
- » circuses
- » and/or animal experiments.

Please obtain information from the competent Cantonal Veterinary Office.

Administration and Informations

Legal framework

[OITE-PT \(in French\)](#)

[OITE-PT-DFI \(in French\)](#)

Further info

[Imports from third countries](#)

[Questions and answers on dogs with short tails or clipped ears](#)

[Information about the System TRACES \(in French\)](#)

[Information on border veterinary controls](#)

[Customs offices and opening hours](#)

[Addresses of Cantonal Veterinary Offices \(German / French\)](#)

[List of rabies countries \(in French\)](#)

[Swiss Rabies Center Bern](#)

[List of approved laboratories for rabies tests](#)

[Animal Welfare](#)