

HOLIDAY 2020: EU REGULATIONS FOR TRAVELING WITH DOGS

Holidays are not only a welcome change from everyday life for us but also for our four-legged family members. No matter if mountains, beach or farm, adventure is waiting everywhere and thanks to the simplified entry laws for dogs in the EU, travelling with a dog is no longer a big deal. Still, **it is necessary to be aware of the entry EU regulations and documents the travelers with pets need when heading to Europe.**

Summer 2020 is all about COVID-19 and traveling is a new challenge. Travelers should always take note of the current conditions of the respective country before travelling abroad. (Information without guarantee)

The EU Pet Passport as the Most Important Travel Document

Dogs in the EU need a passport to travel. The EU pet passport has been in existence since 2004 and is both a proof of identity and a vaccination certificate. In 2014, the passport was revised and now requires additional information that may only be filled out by veterinarians. The dog must be examined, vaccinated and chipped before a pet passport can be issued. The following details are required in the EU pet passport and should be checked carefully:

A photo of the dog
The details of the animal owner must be entered by the veterinarians and signed by the animal owner.
Official marking of all necessary vaccinations with a validity period. If the stickers can be easily removed, they must be laminated
The dog's identification must be indicated and laminated
The type of microchip, the microchip number and the barcode. If the dog was tattooed before 2011, the place with the tattoo must be indicated
All handwritten entries of the veterinarians must be signed and stamped
The veterinarians responsible must enter their name and contact information, such as an e-mail address, in the passport
Pet passports issued before 2014 remain valid and do not need to be replaced. However, in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings and delays at the border, it is advisable to obtain the new passport. The costs are not particularly high and, depending on the dog and the examination, apply for an average of 15 to 20 euros.

Necessary Identification Microchip or Tattoo

According to the EU regulation on an entry for dogs, all dogs born after 2012 must be marked with a microchip for unique identification. The microchip is only as big as a grain of rice and the placement under the skin of the animal is painless. The EU pet passport with all information about the identification may only be issued when the dog has this marking for clear identification.

To ensure that the microchip can be read at all border crossings, chips with the ISO standard 11784 or 11785 should be used. If a different standard is used, dog owners must take an appropriate reader with them. This is because if a microchip cannot be read at the border, an entry with the dog can be refused.

Dogs born before 2012 do not necessarily need a microchip if they already have a clearly visible tattoo. The identification number must be listed in the passport with the exact indication of the tattoo place. However, it is also recommended that the dog is nevertheless equipped with a microchip in order to clear up any misunderstandings.

Vaccination against Rabies Is Mandatory

Vaccination against rabies is one of the mandatory vaccinations for entry with a dog into all EU countries. The proof of the vaccination with the period of validity must be entered in the EU pet passport. Since rabies vaccination only takes effect after a certain period of time, the vaccination must be given at least 21 days before the start of the journey.

The earlier annual vaccination obligation has now been cancelled, as there are vaccines that can last up to three years. In addition, vaccination may only be given after your dog has been marked with a microchip. When issuing your pet passport, make sure that the chronological order of marking and vaccination is clear. Every EU country has different entry regulations for dogs, some more relaxed, others stricter.

But what about other diseases? Especially in the southern countries of Europe, there is a risk of dogs being bitten by the sand fly and becoming infected with leishmaniasis. The disease can be fatal for the four-legged friend, depending on its severity. If you are planning a holiday in the warm south, it is best to talk to your vet and get advice on what is healthiest for your dog, also with regard to other diseases.

As puppies may only be vaccinated against rabies from the 12th week of life, an entry with puppies (plus the prescribed waiting period of at least 21 days) is only possible from the 15th week of life in all EU countries with some exceptions.

Different Special Entry EU regulations

All regulations mentioned so far refer to the EU regulation No. 576/2013, which is generally valid for travelling with a dog in all EU countries and which all dog owners must comply with if they want to travel with their pets.

Moreover, many countries in the EU have additional rules and regulations that apply when travelling with a dog. To ensure that you are well informed on your future journey and that you and your dog do not experience any unpleasant surprises at the border, you will find below a list of all EU countries that have extra regulations in addition to the general provisions of EU Regulation No. 576/2013.

Hygiene Rules

Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Ireland and the UK, Italy, Croatia, Latvia, Malta, Sweden, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Cyprus

Distance rules of 1.50 m apply. The number of customers in shops is limited, depending on the size of the shop. Masks are compulsory in public transport including bus stops, stations and platforms, as well as at airports. Since 11 July 2020, the obligation to wear masks also applies in shops, shopping centers, places of worship, cinemas, museums, libraries, as well as theatre and conference halls.

For the EU countries Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Hungary, the general provisions of the EU regulation for entry with dogs apply, i.e. EU pet passport, valid vaccination against rabies and clear identification by microchip.

Further regulations and entry bans for certain dog breeds are not known for these countries.

However, it is essential to take into account the regional regulations and requirements such as the obligation to keep your dog on a leash or to bring a muzzle with you on every holiday.

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