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Letter to the FCI EU member Federations

Dear Mister President,

Object: EU regulation: 2020/ 688 Activity of DCI members in EU countries

The EU has scheduled the new Animal Health Regulation 2020/688 to become effective on April 21, 2021 together with the new Animal Health Regulation 2016/429. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32020R0688&from=EN>

In this regulation racing pigeons are specifically mentioned in chapter 68. This chapter in turn refers to chapter 59 for specific regulations. Chapter 59.1.a mentions a mandatory quarantine period of 21 days before racing pigeons are allowed to cross EU member state borders.

This regulation basically puts the pigeon sport at a disadvantage, because some of the provisions of the legislation cannot be complied with for animal health and sport professional reasons.

Definition of the problem: The critical point for European Commission Regulation 2020/688 on racing pigeon competitions is the 21-day quarantine provided for in Article 59 of Section V of the Regulation.

The 21-day quarantine set out in the decree, in addition to excluding traditional pigeons from racing pigeons, cannot be maintained from animal protection or animal welfare point of view: it restricts competing animals in their most important movements when quarantined in flocks: in flight. The transport of the racing pigeons to the starting place must take place in the shortest possible time interval, ensuring the criteria for the obligatory rest period, feeding and watering.

Paragraph 68 regulates carriage to sporting events, with reference to the provisions of Article 59, of which the requirements of paragraph 1 (a) to (b) to (c) to (f) are complied with in all cases.

The Member States of the European Union have the right to table amendments before these laws enter into force.

I am confident that they have done so, as, in addition to racing pigeon races, the 2020/688 legislation also causes serious problems in the organization of racing pigeon races, dog shows and equestrian races.

Several FCI associations, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture of their respective countries, have signaled the need to amend the law to the EU Committee Agriculture in case of derogation of 21 days quarantine.

I call all leaders of FCI member federations in the EU Member States to visit their country's MEPs, in particular the members of the Committee on Agriculture, and to ask MEPs to initiate and support an amendment to Commission Regulation 2020/688 on the competition for carrier pigeons: delete the 21-day quarantine clause.

Paragraphs 67 and 68 are amended so as not to require compliance with the 21-day quarantine section of paragraph 59.

The pigeon sport has very strict rules on the international level. They are enclosed in the statutes and in the regulations of both National Federations and the FCI. We have clear rules for transportation, vaccination, and veterinarian management, which all the time follow the EU and the world regulation.

The pigeon plays no epidemiological role with regard to avian influenza and this fact is taken into account in the current version of the German Avian Influenza Law.

Attachment No 1: Prof. Celia Abolnik statement in case of Avian Flu

The Veterinarian Commission of FCI worked on this issue, please find the summary of their work.

Attachment No 2.

I would like to ask each President of the national federations, do the necessary steps to change this regulation in case of the safety of pigeon sport.

Attachment No 3: List of the members of Agriculture Committee

Please give us information about your results in an email, addressed to the General Secretary.

Yours sincerely,



Istvan Bardos
President FCI

