

A High Health Horse (3H) status in the EU Animal Health Law

EMHF

European & Mediterranean
Horseracing Federation



EASBC

European and African Stud Book Committee

FEI™ INTERNATIONAL
EQUESTRIAN
FEDERATION



Summary

The Thoroughbred racing and breeding industries, and the Sport Horse sectors, are working together with the aim of elevating EU animal health standards and expediting international equine trade, movement, breeding and competition within the EU and with third countries.

The following proposal has been endorsed by:

- The International Horse Sport Confederation (IHSC)
 - The International Equestrian Federation (FEI)
 - The International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA)
 - The European and Mediterranean Horseracing Federation (EMHF)
 - The European Federation of Thoroughbred Breeders Associations (EFTBA) and
 - The European and African Stud Book Committee (EASBC),
- and has been presented to
- The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) by the IHSC.

These organisations propose to the Commission that a third equine category, High Health Horse status (3H), is established for the EU's Animal Health Law.

This 3H status would:

1. be available to any category of breeding and competition horse which demonstrably meets higher standards of health;
2. require Official Veterinarian and Official Control oversight to meet the conditions of national Competent Authorities and the EU;
3. facilitate expedited movement;
4. be complementary to the existing EU Tripartite Agreement and the OIE's High Health, High Performance (HHP) status;
5. allow specific industry sectors to choose to support this solution by adopting Official Certification; and
6. establish operations and procedures through industry-funded IT solutions.



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Introduction

The Commission has clarified that the Animal Health Law will repeal Council Directive 2009/156/EC which is a legal base for the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2015/262 by the Commission. As a consequence, Regulation (EU) 2015/262 will also be repealed by the implementing act to be adopted by the Commission in accordance with Article 120 of the Animal Health Law.

- New tertiary regulations under the Animal Health Law will therefore be required to accommodate the special conditions to allow movement of certain categories of horses for competition, both for Thoroughbred racing and equestrian sport, and also for breeding and sale within the EU and with a range of third countries.
- The Commission's view is also that the 'Tripartite Agreement' (TPA) concluded in accordance with Article 6 of Directive 2009/156/EC between France, Ireland and the United Kingdom, which currently greatly expedites the movement of certain categories of registered horse for competition and breeding, no longer applies to the United Kingdom as of the withdrawal date, in the absence of any implementation agreement.

Therefore, after April 2021, with the advent of the Animal Health Law, new conditions will apply to the movement of equidae with the EU, and with third countries.

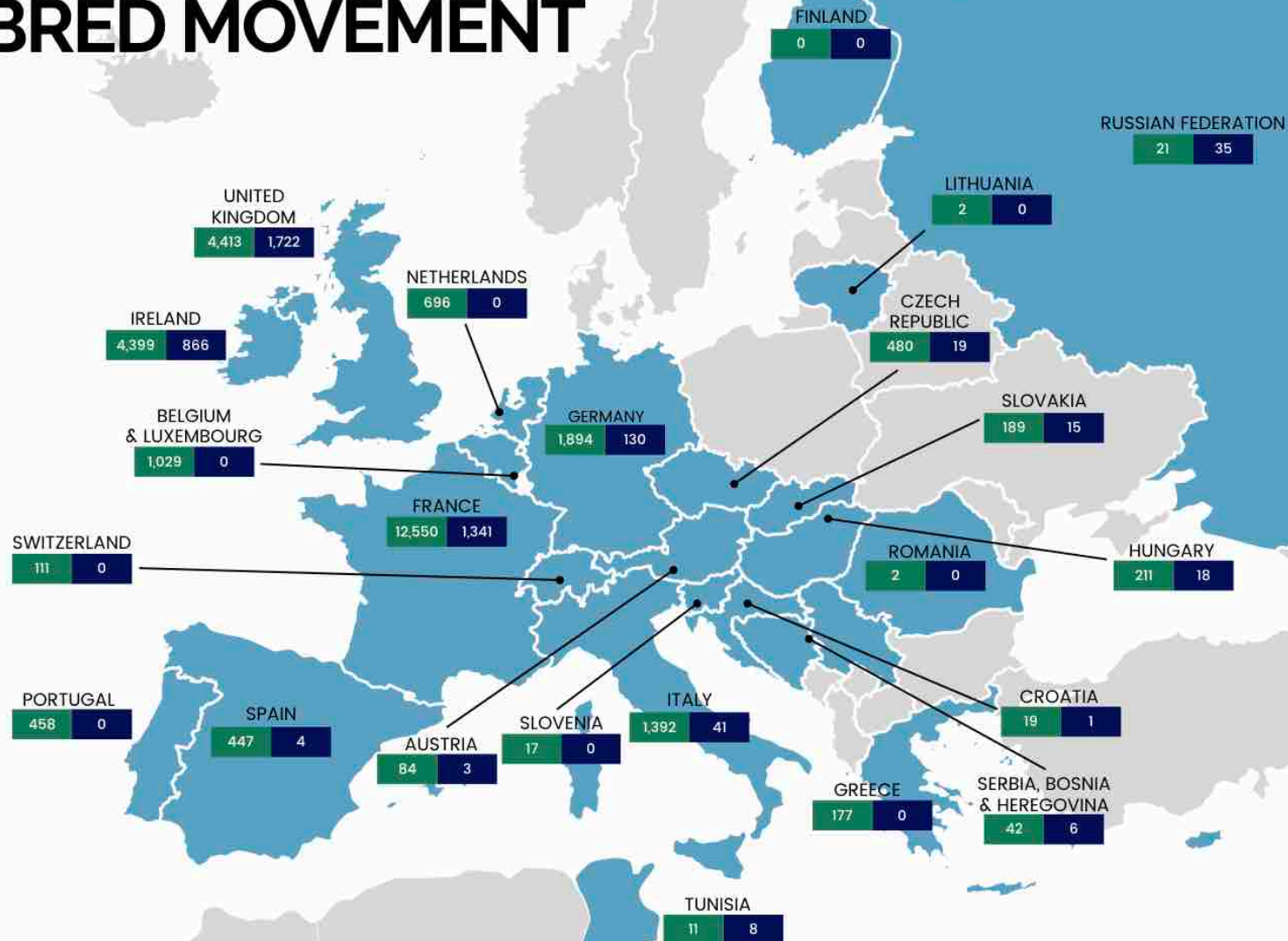
In the Official EU discussions on writing this tertiary legislation for Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council ("Animal Health Law"), in respect of identification, movement and certification of equine animals¹:

- Most Member States advocated a system of two categories of equidae ('equidae for an establishment', where an establishment is defined in Article 4(27) of Animal Health Law, and 'equidae for slaughter').
- It was recognised for groups of 'equidae for an establishment' there should be special provisions, being derogations from standard requirements or specific rules, on movement of horses used for racing and competitions with a higher health status.
- The invited experts on horse competitions and racing, invited by the Commission, advocate a category of registered horses with special conditions to accommodate frequent movements of horses for racing, breeding and competitions.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/ah-expert_group-equ_20171027_sum.pdf

EU/3RD COUNTRY THOROUGHBRED MOVEMENT - 2017

 2017 temporary and permanent Thoroughbreds in/out with other EU countries
 2017 temporary and permanent Thoroughbreds in/out with 3rd countries



The need for a special category of certain equidae in the Animal Health Law

Excluding equidae sent for slaughter, a single alternative of equidae ('equidae for an establishment') is inadequate for trade within the EU and with third countries. It is well recognised that²:

- The equine sector within the EU is worth over EUR 100 billion per annum and accounted for an additional total turnover of EUR 27.3 billion in betting in 2013 alone, with EUR 1.1 billion received by Member State governments;
- That approximately 900,000 jobs are created solely by the equestrian sports industry, five to seven equidae create one full-time job, and those jobs, which are not relocatable, are in what are now economically vulnerable rural areas;
- The European Union is the largest market for horse racing and equestrian sports industry globally.

These activities require expedited movement for racing, competition and also importantly for breeding, in particular Thoroughbred breeding where the use of natural service is obligatory.

- Such equidae for racing, competition and also for breeding, must therefore be of a permanent high health and welfare status, to allow such movement, to prevent disruption to racing, competition and breeding, and to protect their high value.
- In contrast for most equidae (the proposed category 'equidae for an establishment') in Europe, movement is minimal or absent, values are lower, lower standards of health are accepted, and breeding is not critical.
- Most equidae therefore operate to a 'lower common denominator' for health status rather than the 'higher common denominator' required for equines for racing, competition and their breeding.
- Imposing this single 'lower common denominator' health status on equines for racing, competition and their breeding would therefore necessarily restrict the freer movement currently enjoyed and required by these horses

² <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2017-0065+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

The EU's current legislative solution for expedited movement for racing, competition and also breeding is based around a complex system of privileges for registered horses.

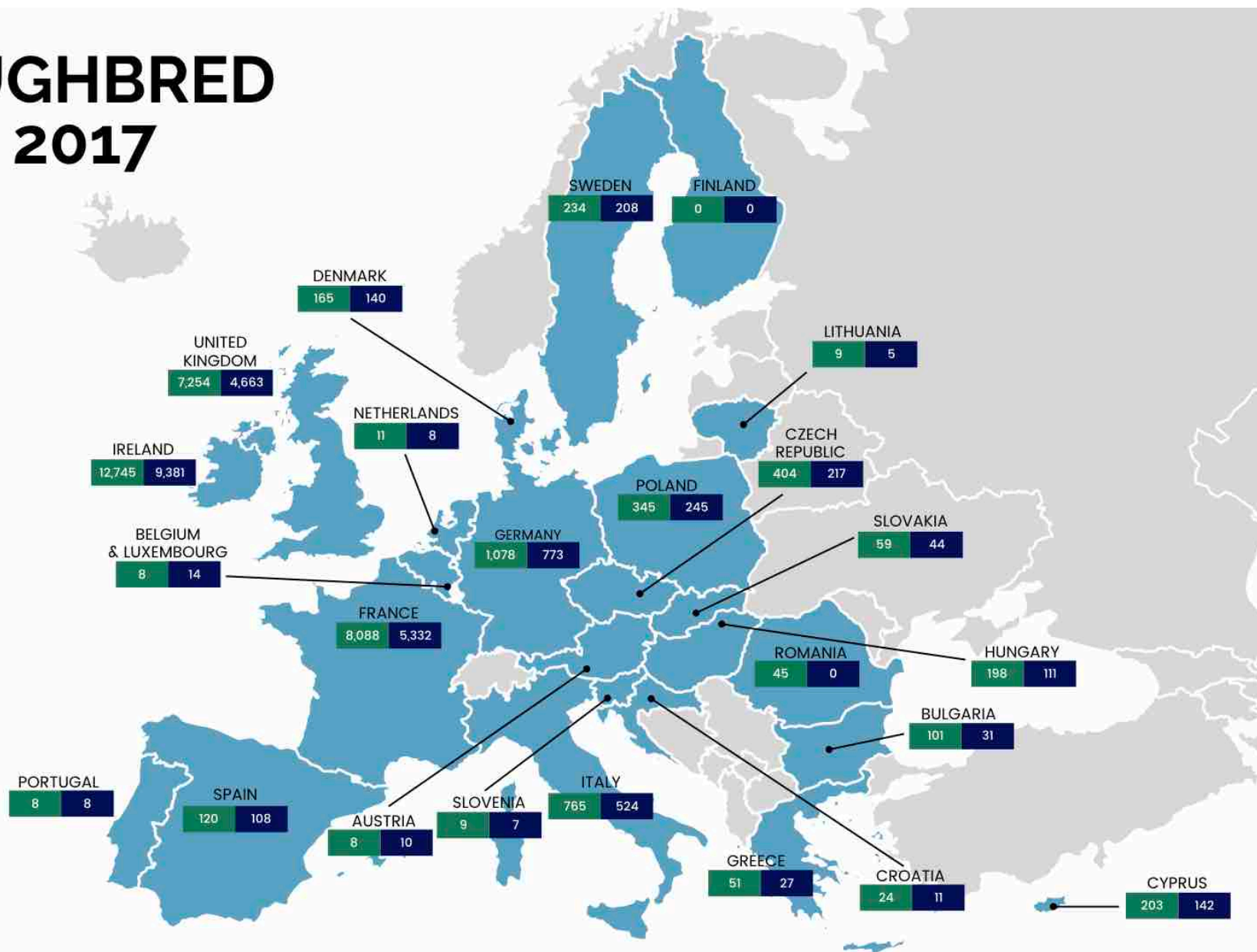
- Directive 90/426/EEC introduced a new category of livestock – the registered equidae – describing them as those equidae registered either in a studbook approved in accordance with Directive 90/427/EEC or with an international organisation managing competitions or races.
- Equidae for breeding and production are sometimes incorrectly confused with the studbook-registered equidae.
- In addition with equine identification legislation (EU) 2015/262 now in place, there has been further confusion, as now all equidae are 'registered' via an equine passport by the member states.
- Thus registered equidae can now include any registered breed of horse, most of these now with the 'lower common denominator' health status.
- Some horses moving for competition, such as FEI horses for equestrian competition, are not pure-bred, so are not Registered.

Rather than continuing expedited movement privileges for all registered horses, regardless of a wide variety of health statuses, Europe's racing, competition and breeding sectors propose a 'higher common denominator' 3H status of equidae for the Animal Health Law to allow the required expedited movement.

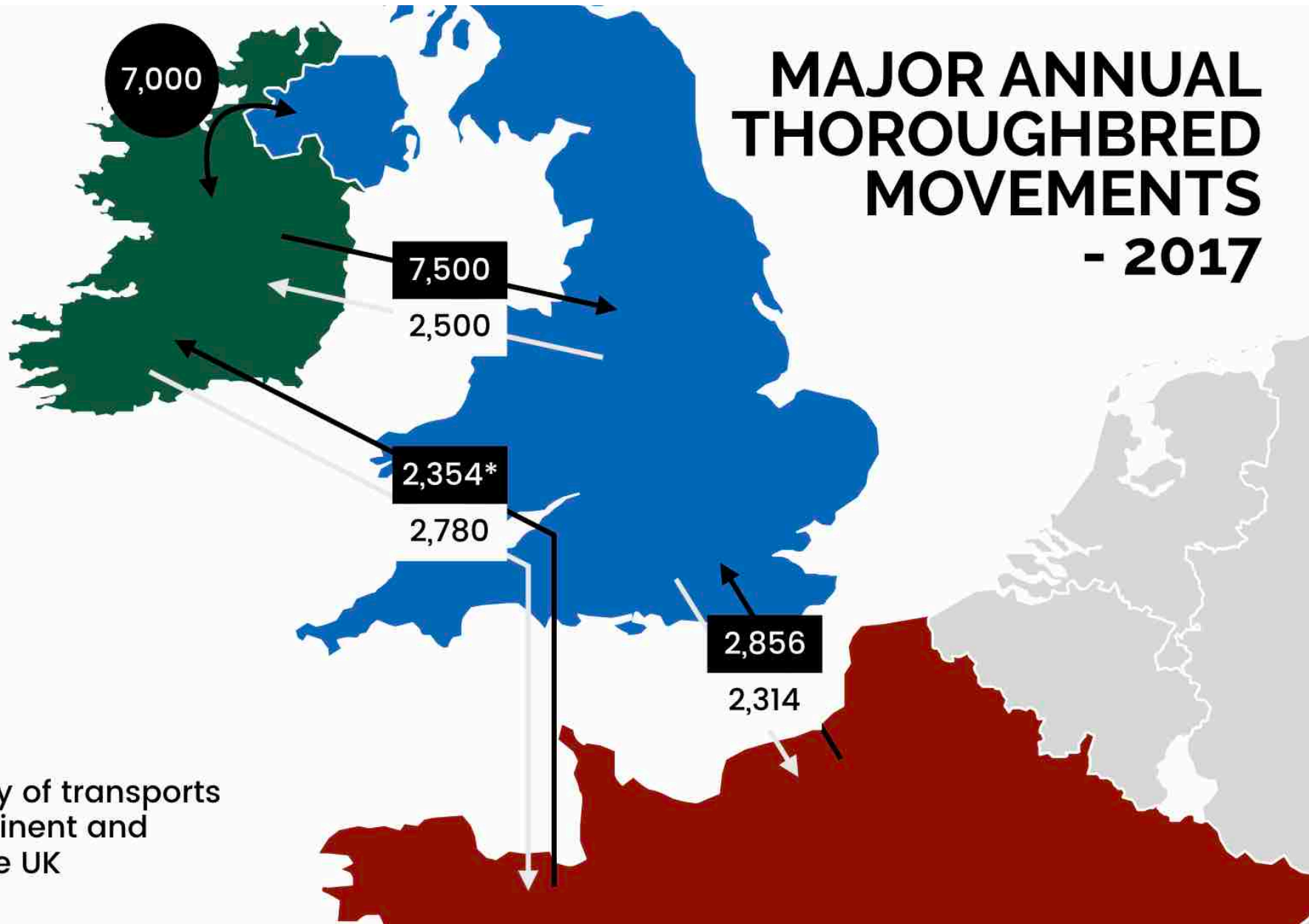
This 3H status should be open to any such categories of equidae within the EU, and with third countries, that demonstrably meet the higher standards of health and welfare and that allow this required expedited movement.

EU THOROUGHBRED BREEDING - 2017

2017 Registered Mares
 2017 Foal Crop



MAJOR ANNUAL THOROUGHBRED MOVEMENTS - 2017



*The vast majority of transports between the continent and Ireland are via the UK

Movement of 3H status equidae within the EU and with third countries

Such movement to 3H status is already recognised by the EU for movement within the EU and with 3rd countries.

- The longstanding Tripartite Agreement defines animal health conditions governing expedited movement of equidae travelling between signatory Member States (France, Ireland, UK) and to clarify the basis of, and the procedures which underpin, the derogation allowed for under Article 6 of Council Directive 2009/156/EC.³ This Agreement involves around 25,000 movements a year, the majority for Thoroughbred horses for breeding purposes, and is of great benefit to all the countries involved, particularly for Ireland which although an island at the periphery of Europe, accounts for the highest number of thoroughbred movements in Europe.
- The International Organisation for Animal Health's (OIE) High Health, High Performance (HHP) status for a sub-population of horses⁴ based on the principles of compartmentalisation as defined and described in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code Chapter 4.3 and 4.4. In respect of the EU, the HHP framework aims to facilitate the temporary importation of horses including from third countries in respect of the EU for the purpose of competing in international events. HHP is not currently applicable to travel for breeding purposes or for permanent importation.

There is accordingly an existing precedent for the expedited movement of 3H status equidae within the EU and also with third countries, and so a precedent to allow this to continue under the EU Animal Health Law.

³ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140305225023/http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-trade/2013/cin-gen-13-115/>

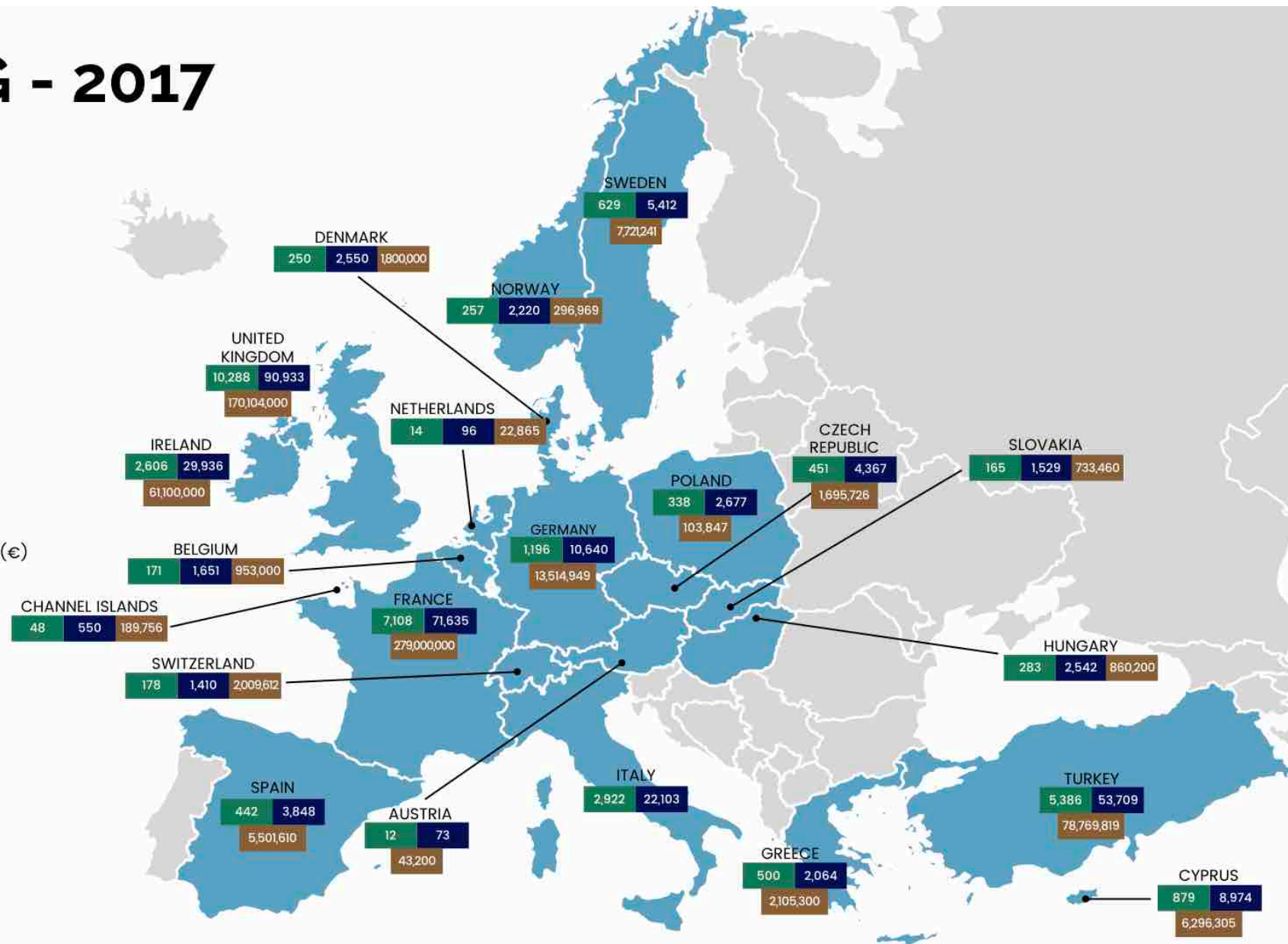
⁴ http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/Chevaux/HHP_Handbook_December_2016_V3.pdf



Number of starts in FEI Events in Europe 2017

Competing for National Federation	EU Member State	Number of starts
AND		30
AUT	EU	10350
BEL	EU	47832
BUL	EU	964
CRO	EU	324
CYP	EU	37
CZE	EU	4045
DEN	EU	11114
ESP	EU	14965
EST	EU	1678
FIN	EU	3396
FRA	EU	73352
GBR	EU	39882
GER	EU	50980
GRE	EU	2309
HUN	EU	4938
IRL	EU	16183
ITA	EU	31304
LAT	EU	961
LIE		238
LTU	EU	1720
LUX	EU	1472
MLT	EU	49
NED	EU	34315
NOR		11010
POL	EU	9154
POR	EU	7835
ROU	EU	2229
SLO	EU	1246
SUI		23422
SVK	EU	3182
SWE	EU	14748
		425264

EU RACING - 2017



The way forward: A 3H status in the Animal Health Law

To provide solutions to "Animal Health Law" and to the continuing free movement of Thoroughbreds and competition horses, the European Thoroughbred industries and International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA), working together with Sport Horse sectors, propose creation of a 3H status for certain equidae within the EU Animal Health Law.

As noted, the longstanding Tripartite Agreement defines animal health conditions governing expedited movement of equidae travelling between signatory Member States (France, Ireland, UK) and to clarify the basis of, and the procedures which underpin, the derogation allowed for under Article 6 of Council Directive 2009/156/EC.⁵

Under the OIE's HHP status an equine subpopulation⁶ is safeguarded by the application of specific measures pertaining to veterinary supervision and certification, identification and traceability and compliance with biosecurity measures to create and maintain a functional separation between horses in the "high health equine subpopulation" and other equids, at all times, including the usual place of residence and venues of international competitions, and during transport by road or air. This compliance is assured and validated through continuous veterinary supervision.

- The establishment of the OIE HHP status sub-population of horses⁷ (hereafter "compartment" in OIE parlance) is based on the principles of compartmentalisation as defined and described in the OIE's Terrestrial Animal Health Code Chapter 4.3 and 4.4. The HHP framework aims to facilitate the temporary importation of horses for the purpose of competing in international events; it is not currently applicable to travel for breeding purposes or for permanent importation.

⁵ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140305225023/http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-trade/2013/cin-gen-13-115/>

⁶ <http://www.oie.int/our-scientific-expertise/specific-information-and-recommendations/international-competition-horse-movement/high-health-high-performance-hhp-horses/>

⁷ http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/Chevaux/HHP_Handbook_December_2016_V3.pdf

Within the EU, and with third countries, an 3H sub-population of horses under the new EU Animal Law, could be the whole of a specific population of high health horses in a member state or third country.

- This OIE approach of compartmentalisation also accommodates the flexibility from regionalisation, with strong controls, within countries within the EU, as well as within third countries, in the event of a disease outbreak.
- The OIE focus on competition immediately highlights the need to develop a wider 3H status in the EU Animal Health Law. With the majority of movements of Thoroughbred horses under the existing Tripartite Agreement being for breeding or sales purposes, an EU 3H status must accommodate breeding and sales movements.
- An 3H status in the EU Animal Health Law would need to recognise that some horses moving for competition, such as FEI horses, are not pure-bred.
- There are already common basic equine health standards across the EU, including the UK, and higher standards for some registered horses. There is an established system of equine disease standards⁸ and surveillance through national and industry organisations and laboratories.⁹
- These higher health standards for the control of equine disease are elaborated by common Codes of Practice already successfully harmonised across Europe for many decades, as recognised by Chief Veterinary Officers.
- Compliance with 3H requirements should be monitored through a continuous veterinary supervision and full traceability should be ensured through international databases managed by equine Industry organisations (such bodies might include Studbooks, racing administrators via the IFHA and the FEI). The Veterinary Authorities should have access to these databases.
- Here it is important to confirm that these equine Industry organisations would provide assurance on the integrity of this information to the national competent authorities, who in turn provide that assurance of integrity to the EU.
- There is a 250-year-old common studbook between Britain and Ireland, and close relationships between studbooks across Europe, especially with France Galop, a high degree of harmonisation of racing rules from the IFHA, and inter-operable systems of racing administration between countries.
- There is already an established system of Thoroughbred studbooks supplying data to national government databases required under the EU Equine Identification Regulation.

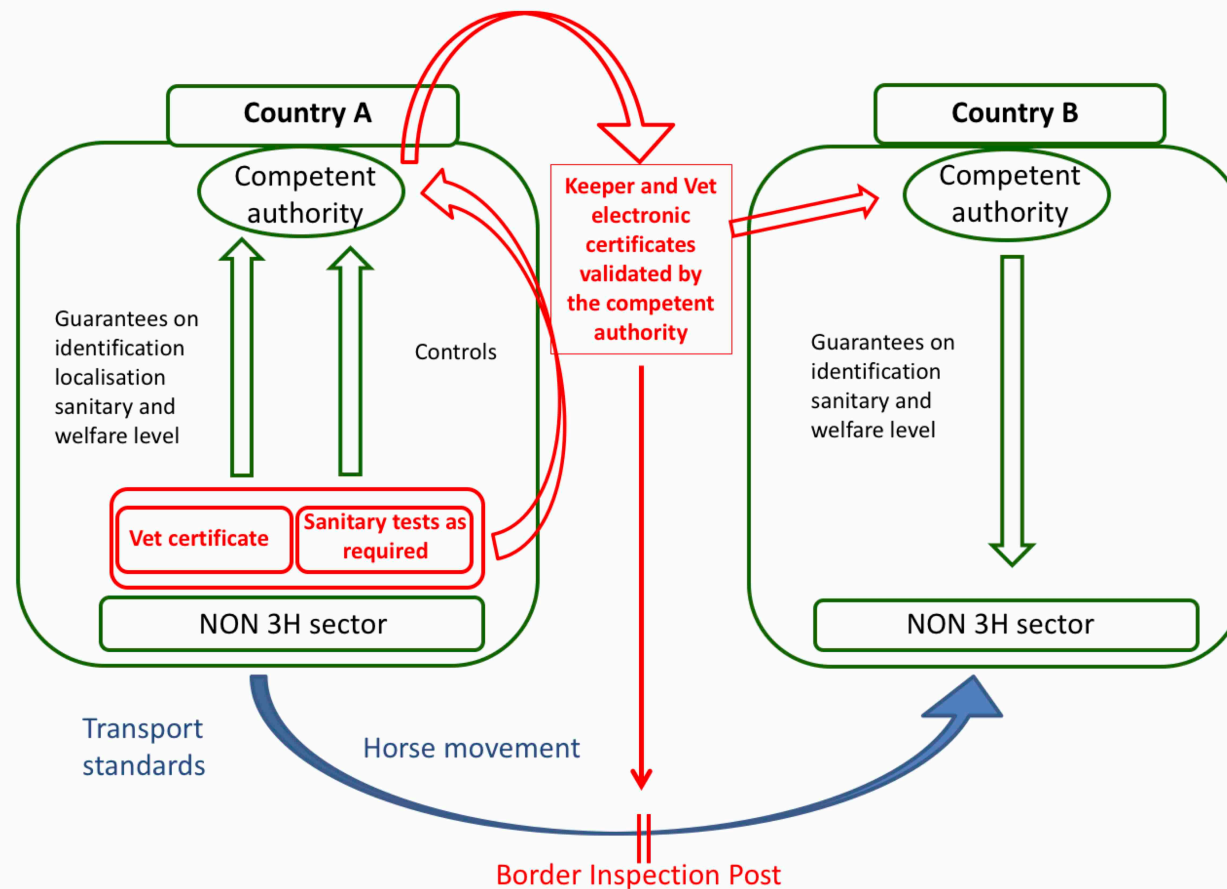
⁸ e.g. http://www.itba.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Codes-of-Practice-2018-_.pdf

⁹ <http://www.oie.org.uk/cms-display/international-breeders-meeting.html>

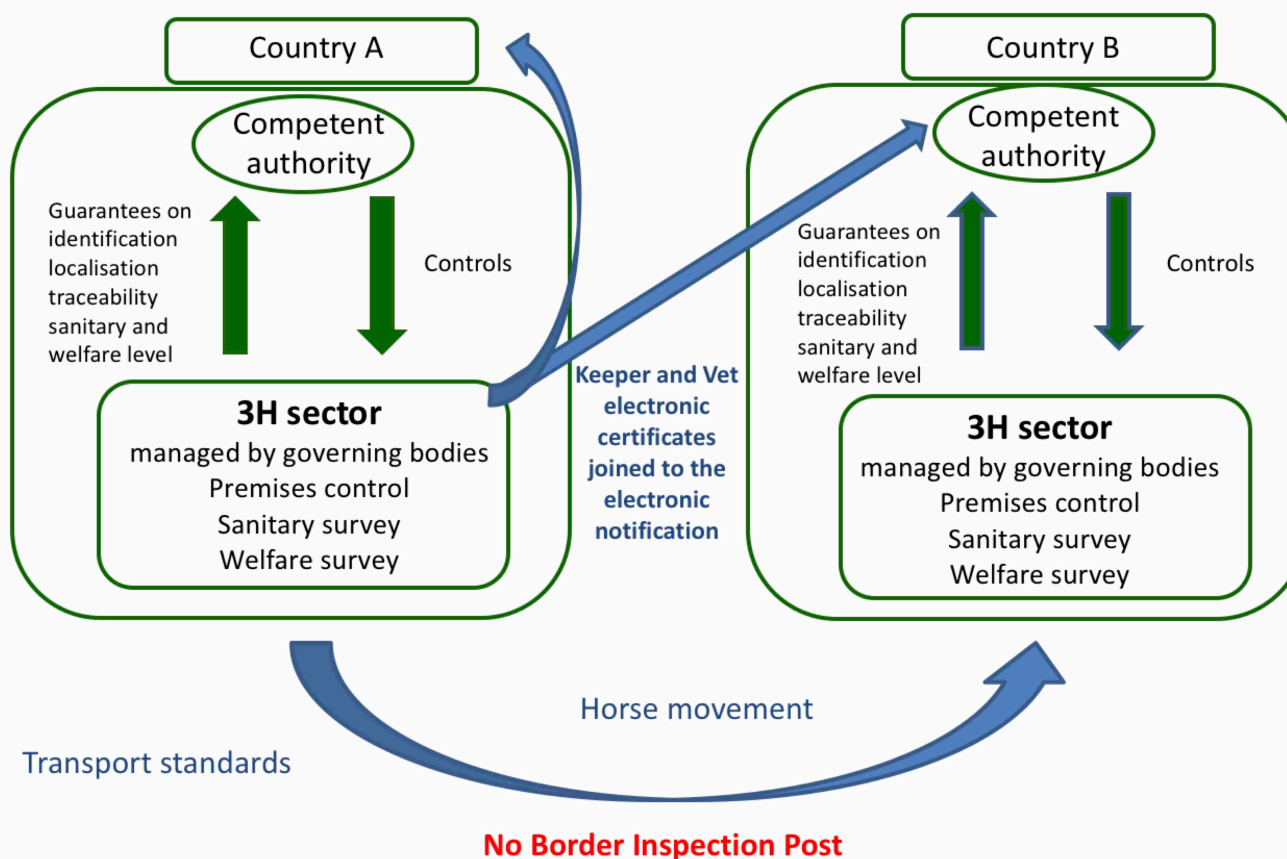
- Further expansion of how Veterinary Authorities could have access to these Thoroughbred and FEI databases, and racing and competition administration data is described under the 'Industry delivery' section.
- There are other examples of 3H status from around the world: Movement of horses between Australia and New Zealand and selected other countries, benefits from certain privileges and the shipping agents are responsible for confirmation of the biosecurity procedures.

Overall an EU 3H status would continue the EU's longstanding arrangements and be compatible with the OIE's HHP status, but incorporate flexibility to accommodate the existing high-health and high-welfare horse standards of FEI and IFHA horses, including Thoroughbred breeding, and other equidae with similar high standards across the EU and key third countries, in accordance with EU principles of simplifying and reducing regulatory burdens.

HORSE MOVEMENTS BETWEEN COUNTRIES WITH NO RECOGNISED 3H SECTOR



HORSE MOVEMENTS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES WITH RECOGNISED 3H SECTOR



Annex:

High Welfare assurance for 3H status

Under the Animal Health Law, welfare provision is not included directly but included in a complementary manner. Therefore an 3H status, by being only applicable to certain populations, will also ensure welfare in a complementary manner.

Rapid movement, reduced journey time, avoiding delay at Border Inspection Posts, and recognition that breeding horses travel with foals at foot, are all important considerations of animal welfare in respect of 3H status.

There are also a number of existing standards that assure the 3H status animal welfare:

- IFHA International Agreement on Breeding, Racing and Wagering covering equine welfare, antidoping, equine identification, movement and health¹⁰
- FEI Code Of Conduct For The Welfare Of The Horse¹¹
- FEI Clean Sport, anti-doping¹²
- La Charte du Bien Etre Equin¹³

¹⁰ <http://www.ifhaonline.org/default.asp?section=IABRW&area=0>

¹¹ http://inside.fei.org/system/files/Code_of_Conduct_Welfare_Horse_1Jan2013.pdf

¹² <http://inside.fei.org/fei/cleansport/>

¹³ <http://www.fnc.fnsea.fr/toutes-les-thematiques/bien-etre-equin/charte-bee/articles/charte-signee/>

Annex:

Industry delivery of 3H status

The new EU Animal Health Law will regulate the identification, movement and certification of equine animals.

- For all equine identity requirements, an important unpinning requirement is to fully utilise existing EU Zootechnical, (and as below its revised version due in place in November 2018) and the EU Equine Identification Regulations.
- The new comprehensive EU Zootechnical Regulation, will be adopted by all EU countries in November 2018, and so include recognition by the UK. It contains clear procedures for mutual studbook recognition with third countries.
- Under these existing Equine Identification Regulations, which may be continued into the Animal Health Law, where mutual studbook recognition is not in place, there is also a complex solution for equine identification between the EU and third countries, outside certain options for identity documents issued by competition authorities. This solution means the EU and third countries re-issuing an equine identity document, with Official Veterinarian certification. This duplicative equine passport issuance, without mutual studbook recognition, is the least desirable option for mutual third country equine movement for the longer term.
- Arrangements for identification are also already simplified for FEI horses moving within the EU and in and out of the EU.

3H status equine movement and health certification within the EU and with third countries could be managed holistically and efficiently by a single industry generated input to certificate movement' potentially incorporating a 'health certificate' as required. This would be compliant with the EU's requirements for horses entering the EU from a third country.

- The Industry solution is for a EU recognised 3H status, which could be cost neutral for Governments, would allow the delegation of support of Certification and IT development to Passport Issuing Organisations (PIO) and recognised competition authorities, and would allow integration with Official Veterinarian oversight, to meet the national Competent Authority's requirements and for the EU more widely.
- The system would be required to generate on demand a certificate for shippers for each movement;

- The PIO/competition authority and shipper would need to ensure correct data for each horse;
- A digital signature would be required to be added by the Competent Authority/Official Veterinarian;
- The 'certificate of movement' would accompany the horse electronically or via a Smart Card;
- The system would be expected to open for all equine breeds and competition authorities, and operated and funded by these sectors;
- The system would process an administration fee/payment;
- Any industry system would be subject to oversight by official control from competent authorities from the EU and third countries;
- The system should be inter-operable with systems such as national equine databases under the EU Equine Identification Regulations; and
- The system may have to provide output to other systems such as Customs via Trusted Traders¹⁴ schemes.

Different Industry sectors could choose as and when to introduce Industry delivery, if they wished to invest in such systems. Here is important to again confirm:

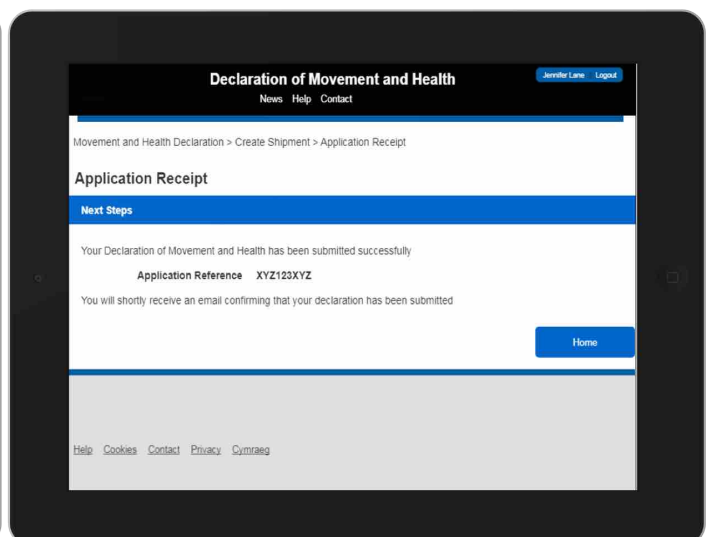
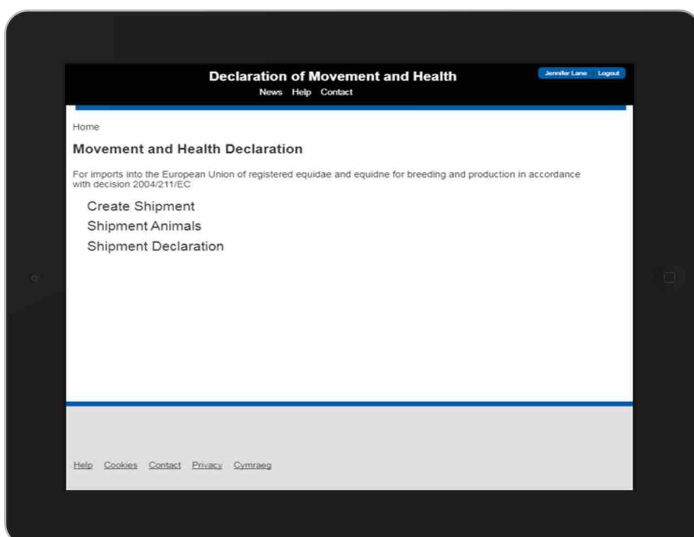
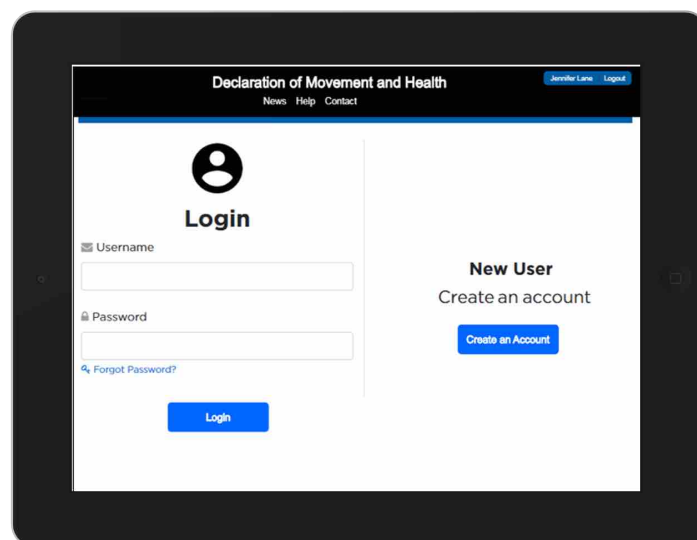
- National authorities may choose to develop, own and operate all parts of such a system;
- Any equine Industry organisations would provide assurance on the integrity of this information to the national competent authorities, who in turn provide that assurance of integrity to the EU.

¹⁴ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-449_en.htm

Annex:

Digital Certificate of Equine Movement and Health

An industry-funded digital movement and health certificate has been developed and is in beta format. This digital certificate incorporates the required standards and processes detailed in the 3H status proposal, including: Health certification, Digital Veterinarian signature, Owner verification etc. The draft digital certificate is applicable to mobile devices and is a universal offering that can be adopted by all Competent Authorities.



Annex:

Contacts for further information

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