



European
Joint
Support Unit

Pets and Registering Dogs

Istanbul





General

Not all dependants have 2 feet. Whether with 4 feet, feathers, or fins pets are part of the family. Importing pets is a minefield, and regulations seem to pop up or change at 50Hz, but it can be done. This section of the Arrival Guide concentrates on dogs because, IN THEORY other creatures are less trouble and are easier to deal with. Do note that there is a smaller pool of people to look after a pet when you are away which may cramp your ability to holiday travel whilst here. Kennels (or 'Pet Hotels') are available at about £15 per day (Jan 23). Ensuring you can take the dog with you back to UK when you leave Turkey is also a bureaucratic labyrinth you must understand now, before you commit to bringing it into the country. Local Vets are plentiful, and cheaper than in the UK.

Disclaimer

The detail below is included as best understood at time of writing and with the intention of showing you the complexities and possible pitfalls. Do not rely on it as authoritative, nor come chasing the authors if your experience goes wrong. Aim off as much as possible, because some of the actions discussed below have to be started 4 months ahead of travel. Be very organised and be prepared for stress. Once you embark on this particular activity and search for reliable information, you will talk to many different people in authority not all of whom will be on the same wavelength, in attitude or grasp of detail. You must take proper detailed advice from DEFRA in UK, and through the UK NSE for the latest Turkish regulations. You are also STRONGLY recommended to keep full notes of your phone conversations to use against the incompetent, and to print off webpages to take with you to key events, inspections, deliveries etc. For guidance, refer to www.gov.uk, Pet Travel where the Animal and Plant Health Agency contact details can be found – they are very helpful.

Documents

All documents should be copied at least 3 times and counter-stamped to show the copy is genuine. The further East you travel the more they love the Red Stamp, so indulge yourself with plenty of sets of 'originals'. Keep one full set on the animal, another on you, a third with your checked luggage and have some sets available to hand off to officials. There will be at the very least:

- a. The serial number of the ID micro-chip in the animal
- b. Linked Pet Passport.
- c. Stamped into the Pet Passport will be proof of regular rabies vaccinations, blood tests, worming, general health, kennel cough etc. Some of these will be tied to very specific windows (e.g. more than 60 days before travel, not more than 3 days before travel, so many days after vaccination etc) so CHECK the regulations.
- d. A 'Fit to fly' certificate may be required by your chosen airline carrier.
- e. The Turkish regulations require a 'Third Country Certificate' to be completed by a 'Government Official'. This may not even require your animal to be present but is an administrative step intended to tie up all the paperwork angles.



Import by Car

The very significant advantage to this route is that you control it and you have your dog with you at all times. It may take a bit of planning to drive your best friend across Europe for a week, but Hannibal managed it with much larger animals. Within EU countries, you are likely to have no problems – but do check yourself – and at the Turkish border the pet paperwork should not provide much of an additional delay.

Import by Air

Unaccompanied. If your pet is above 30kg it is likely that most carriers will insist you move it as 'manifest cargo'. This may also be the only option available if you are forced to send the animal 'unaccompanied'. In this case you will need to employ an agent to handle your pet and clear it through Turkish customs. There will be a very substantial cost, plus the equally fraught separation of pet from owner. You will almost certainly have to delay your pet's arrival until you have a Turkish Tax number as this will be needed to process your pet through customs. Customs may take a further day (or even days) and during that time there may be limited access to your pet and yet more cost. The authorities, in all probability, will not allow your pet out of the crate or feed your pet; the implications are self-evident. If you choose this method, do not fly in on a Thu or Fri as you pet may be confined over the weekend. Suleyman at Dynamic International (info@dcargo.com) has been used in the past.

UNACCOMPANIED PET TRAVEL IS STRONGLY NOT RECOMMENDED. REALLY, REALLY NOT RECOMMENDED. DO NOT DO IT!

Accompanied. If you expect to travel with your pet, then the issues start with booking 2 passages on the same flight. If the pet plus pet travel box is over a certain weight limit (~8kg) or greater than certain dimensions it will have to travel in the hold, and you will have to book space for the travel box. The Catch-22 is that the amount of suitable space for pets varies by aircraft type (Airbus, Boeing etc) and the aircraft type is often not known until much closer to the flight date. So while you have to book your own ticket well ahead, you risk not knowing until perhaps 2 or 3 days before flying if the pet has space to travel on the same flight. (Within living memory a family was stymied on 3 occasions and then stopped trying.) KLM from UK to Turkey was Manifest Cargo from a cargo terminal and required an agent, likewise Virgin to the States. However using KLM from Norway to Turkey was Hold Cargo and therefore no agent was required, a saving of approximately 800 Euros as of 2013. Once acceptance for carriage of animal has been granted - which may be as late as 48 hours prior to flight - take pet to the vets no more than 48 hours before intended travel date.

At the Vet's

The following checks will be required.

- i. A health check for general health/ condition of animal.
- ii. Scrutiny for signs of infectious diseases.
- iii. A worming tablet "for the treatment of mixed infestations of roundworms and tapeworms for both adult dogs and cats". The worming tablet must contain one of two active ingredients, one of which is: Praziquantel.
- iv. All details to be entered into the pet passport and Airlines paperwork completed as required.



Hopefully all of the above will ensure successful entry into Turkey on arrival at which ever border crossing is used. You will make your own plans according to your own situation, but just for absolute clarity, one more time:

DRIVE (DON'T FLY) YOUR ANIMALS INTO AND OUT OF TURKEY!

Export

Although a more long-term problem, you can see the sorts of questions to be asked and plans to be put in place. Be very certain before you bring your pet into Turkey that you are happy to go along with the undoubted malarkey and costs there will be when you take it out again. For animal movements back in to UK, your absolute reference has to be DEFRA since they are the only body permitted to authorise live imports. But they have many advisors on the help lines, many sources of advice and you may not always get consistent information. Check thrice or more. However, an emerging picture seems to be:

- a. A UK Pet Passport is only established for travel within the EU. Turkey is not in the EU so do not rely on it. However, keeping an 'EU' pet passport up to date with Turkish qualifications will give you very strong 'supporting evidence'.
- b. The dog needs an ID chip, rabies injections, subsequent blood test to prove the rabies antibodies, maybe some other inoculations too, worming, and assessment of general fitness. All of these to be done by a vet and formally recorded in the (EU) Pet Passport.
- c. Within 48 hours of travel, all the docs have to be shown to a Government admin official who produces a 'Third Country Certificate'. This 2-page document will have all the details of the animal, the vet's pre-flight visit and the details from the Pet Passport transcribed onto it and will be stamped with an official stamp. It is that 'Third Country Certificate' that ensures successful entry into UK from Turkey or indeed into Turkey from a Non-EU country.
- d. Use the approved route to enter UK: ferry, tunnel, or flight. (It is not clear how long an overland journey from Istanbul to Dover is 'allowed' to take).
- e. As with bringing animals into Turkey, the easiest travel option is definitely to avoid flying and drive them out of the country.