

DL 393/XXV/2025

The agricultural policies implemented in Portugal have led to increased production profitability, resulting in a rise in the capacity of slaughterhouses located near regions where intensive production takes place and, at the same time, a gradual decline—particularly in rural areas—in the number of active slaughterhouses. Consequently, a significant proportion of small livestock producers are located at a considerable distance from establishments approved for slaughter. Furthermore, in certain cases, the costs of transporting animals for slaughter prove prohibitive for the economic viability of such production operations, which constitute an important supplement to household income in rural areas.

Thus, mobile slaughterhouses may constitute a solution in response to these constraints, enabling not only the creation of new business opportunities and the sustainability of existing ones, but also the promotion of more sustainable consumption and the development of local trade and agriculture.

Furthermore, given the growing concern of consumers regarding the welfare of animals used for food production, these mobile facilities help to reduce the stress caused to animals during their loading, transport and unloading at the slaughterhouse.

Moreover, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin (Regulation (EC) No 853/2004) on the hygiene of foodstuffs of animal origin, the sanitary preparation and inspection of parts of farmed game and of wild game intended for placing on the market must be carried out in appropriately approved game-handling establishments. In Portugal, such establishments remain limited in number and are not always located in the hunting areas where the largest number of animals intended for human consumption are found. As a result, game

carcasses often have to be transported over long distances to reach a game-handling establishment.

However, the approval of mobile game-handling establishments will reduce the transport time and distance travelled by game carcasses and will promote the local economy, as it makes it possible for game meat to remain in the region where it is hunted.

Both Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs (Regulation (EC) No 852/2004), and Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 provide for the slaughter of animals and the preparation of game in mobile facilities, provided that these comply with the legally established requirements.

Although the licensing of slaughterhouses and game-handling establishments is regulated by the Responsible Industry System (SIR), approved by Decree-Law No 169/2012 of 1 August 2012, it can be seen that the procedures established do not cover the exercise of this operation in mobile units.

In this context, although a revision of the Responsible Industry System (SIR) is envisaged, it is necessary to ensure the adoption of a legal framework allowing the proper licensing of these mobile units.

Accordingly, this Decree-Law lays down the rules governing the licensing and operation of mobile slaughterhouses and mobile game-handling establishments.

This Decree-Law was notified in accordance with Directive (EU) 2015/1535 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 September 2015 laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical regulations and of rules on Information Society services.

[The self-governing bodies of the Autonomous Regions were heard].

Therefore:

Pursuant to Article 198(1)(a) of the Constitution, the Government hereby decrees the following:

Article 1

Purpose and scope

This Decree-Law lays down the licensing regime and the rules governing the operation of mobile slaughterhouses and mobile game-handling establishments.

Article 2

Definitions

For the purposes of this Decree-Law, the following shall mean:

- a) (a) 'Mobile game-handling facilities' means a set of removable facilities in which farmed game or wild game carcasses intended for human consumption are prepared;
- b) (b) 'Parking site' means the location where mobile slaughterhouses and mobile game-handling establishments are parked outside periods during which slaughtering operations or the preparation of game carcasses are carried out.
- c) (c) 'Mobile slaughterhouse' means the set of removable facilities operating as a complete slaughterhouse or the set of facilities constituting a mobile partial slaughterhouse or a semi-mobile slaughterhouse in which animals intended for human consumption are slaughtered and prepared;
- d) (d) 'Partially mobile slaughterhouse or semi-mobile slaughterhouse' means the set of removable facilities operating in conjunction with one or more complementary permanent slaughter facilities which together constitute a complete slaughterhouse;
- e) (e) 'Mobile unit' means the mobile slaughterhouse or mobile game-handling establishment.

Article 3

Operations at the mobile units

1. Slaughtering operations in mobile slaughterhouses and the preparation of game carcasses shall be governed, respectively,

by the legislation applicable to slaughtering operations carried out in slaughterhouses and in non-removable game-handling establishments, with the adaptations provided for in this Decree-Law.

2. Slaughter operations carried out in mobile slaughterhouses involving animals from specific production systems, including animals from organic farms, must also comply with the legal provisions set out in the legislation applicable to those specific production systems, subject to the necessary adaptations provided for in this Decree-Law.
3. Slaughtering operations and the preparation of carcasses, including stunning, bleeding, skinning, dehairing or defeathering, evisceration and inspection, shall take place in the mobile slaughterhouse and may not be carried out on livestock holdings, except in the cases provided for in Article 7(4) and (5).
4. In mobile slaughterhouses, carcasses of domestic ungulates may be cut into half carcasses or quarters and half carcasses into a maximum of three large cuts.
5. In mobile game handling establishments, carcasses of farmed or wild game ungulates may be cut into half carcasses or quarters, and half carcasses into a maximum of three large cuts.
6. Slaughter on health grounds is excluded from the operation of mobile slaughterhouses.

Article 4

Licensing

1. Without prejudice to the provisions of this Decree-Law, the licensing of mobile slaughterhouses and mobile game-handling establishments shall be subject to the regime laid down in the Responsible Industry System (SIR), approved by Decree-Law No 169/2012 of 1 August 2012.
2. Operators responsible for mobile slaughterhouses and mobile game-handling establishments must ensure that the relevant equipment remains at the designated parking areas whenever it is not in operation or in transit between slaughtering or meat-preparation sites, except in duly justified situations necessary for the exercise of the operation, including repairs, alterations or inspections.
3. The authority responsible for coordinating the licensing of mobile slaughterhouses and mobile game-handling establishments shall be the Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional, I. P. (CCDR) with territorial jurisdiction over the location of the parking site.
4. The pre-commencement inspection provided for in Article 25-A of the SIR shall be carried out at the parking site.
5. The description of the processes and the corresponding process flow diagrams referred to in point (v) of subparagraph (b) of Article 7(1) of Ordinance No 279/2015 of 14 September 2015 shall be sufficiently detailed and shall include the following information:
 - (a) The species, maximum quantities and types of animals slaughtered or prepared according to age, purpose or other characteristics;
 - (b) A description of the location where operations are carried out, the means used and the procedures adopted for *ante-mortem* inspection operations, directing animals to slaughter, stunning, hoisting or suspending animals, bleeding, skinning, scalding and

dehairing, defeathering, evisceration, carcass-cutting, *post-mortem* inspection, preparation of offal, cleaning and final preparation, classification, weighing and chilling;

(c) The management of animal by-products, including, *inter alia*, blood not intended for human consumption, hides, feathers, hair, digestive tract contents and specified risk material, together with a description of the procedures for their removal, storage, dispatch and the means used;

(d) Details of the locations, means and procedures used for taking samples for laboratory testing, in particular in relation to screening for *Trichinella* susceptible species and within the framework of the control and eradication programmes for transmissible spongiform encephalopathies and other diseases, as well as the testing methods, the conditions for preserving the meat pending the results and the corresponding traceability mechanisms;

(e) The procedures for the cleaning and disinfection of utensils, equipment and facilities, including those required during slaughter and preparation operations;

(f) The cleaning and disinfection procedures for the mobile unit;

(g) The conditions for the storage of detained meat and meat declared unfit for human consumption, in particular for the purposes of lodging an appeal, in accordance with Article 4 of Decree-Law No 113/2006 of 12 June 2006;

(h) The source of the water used in the process at the sites of operation;

(i) The procedures for the collection, possible treatment and disposal of wastewater.

6 - The coordinating authority, as defined in the terms of the SIR, may set a maximum daily limit for the slaughter or preparation of game meat, as well as determine the species and types of animals that may be slaughtered or prepared, taking into account their age, purpose or other characteristics.

7 - Any amendment to the limits set by the coordinating authority, in accordance with the provisions of the preceding paragraph, is subject to the procedure involving a prior inspection as provided for in the SIR.

8 - Mobile units holding a licence issued under the terms and for the purposes laid down in this Decree-Law may operate only on national territory.

Article 5

Parking site:

The parking site must meet the following requirements:

(a) Have authorisation for use compatible with the operation carried out on site, if applicable;

(b) Be properly identified and integrated into the licensing process;

(c) Facilities must be kept clean and in good repair and condition;

(d) The premises must allow for the performance of maintenance work, as well as proper cleaning and disinfection, thereby enabling the implementation of good hygiene practices and the prevention of contamination by animals and pests;

(e) Sanitary facilities in sufficient number must be provided, equipped with flushing toilets, connected to an effective sewage system and with adequate ventilation, whether natural or mechanical;

(f) Have natural and/or artificial lighting suitable for the operation carried out;

(g) Be fitted with a drainage system appropriate to its intended purpose, designed and constructed in such a way as to prevent the risk of contamination;

(h) Have suitable changing rooms for staff;

(i) Ensure adequate supply of water fit for human consumption,

(j) Where animal by-products are stored, the conditions laid down in the legislation applicable to the operation in question must be complied with;

(k) Where the carcasses of slaughtered or prepared animals, and the corresponding wholesome parts thereof, are stored in the mobile unit, the conditions laid down in the legislation applicable to the relevant operation shall be complied with.

Article 6

Sites of operation of mobile units

1 - The sites where the mobile slaughterhouse operates must meet the following requirements:

(a) Where they are livestock holdings, they shall be licensed in accordance with Decree-Law No 81/2013 of 14 July 2013 approving the new regime governing the exercise of livestock farming operations (NREAP);

(b) Holdings must be classified as free or officially free from the diseases specified in the eradication plans currently in force;

(c) Holdings must comply with the legally required health requirements for each particular species;

(d) All biosecurity measures on holdings must be ensured, with a view to controlling infectious and parasitic diseases, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health (Animal Health Law);

(e) Animals intended for slaughter must be separated from other animals on the holding prior to the arrival of the mobile slaughterhouse;

(f) The mobile slaughterhouse must be stationed close to the place of loading and unloading of animals on the holding, ensuring the segregation of animals intended for slaughter;

(g) Where mobile slaughterhouses operate at more than one holding on the same day, the mobile slaughterhouse must not move to another holding without first being properly cleaned and disinfected, covering all internal and external surfaces;

h) When, during the animal slaughter operation, lesions are detected for any of the infectious diseases referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health (Animal Health Law), the mobile slaughterhouse may not move to another holding without emptying the by-product containers and shall be properly sanitised and disinfected;

2 - The sites of operation of mobile game-handling establishments shall comply with the following requirements:

(a) In the case of farmed game farms, they must be licensed under the NREAP;

(b) In the case of hunting areas, the relevant paperwork must be in order with the Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas; (ICNF, I.P.);

(c) In the case of game collection centres, they must be registered or approved in accordance with point 9 of Chapter II and point 7 of Chapter III of Section IV of Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin (Regulation (EC) No 853/2004);

(d) Where mobile game-handling establishments operate at more than one holding, hunting area or game collection centre on the same day, entry into the next holding may only take place after the relevant facilities, including the external structure, have been cleaned and disinfected;

(e) Where, during the preparation of game carcasses, lesions of any of the infectious diseases referred to in Article 5(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending the Animal Health Law are detected, the mobile unit may not move to another place of operation without emptying the by-product containers and shall be properly sanitised and disinfected.

Protection of animals at the time of slaughter

1 - Slaughter operations and procedures in the mobile slaughterhouse must not be visible to the public, nor cause constraints on the movement of animals, persons and vehicles.

2 - The requirements laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 and in Decree-Law No 113/2019 of 19 August 2019 on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter shall apply to mobile slaughterhouses.

3 - By way of derogation from the preceding paragraph, mobile slaughterhouses shall be exempt from compliance with the provisions and requirements on the configuration and construction of equipment set out in points 1 and 2 of Annex II to Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009.

4 - The facilities of the holding may be used for restraining and stunning animals, provided that the restraint allows animals to be immobilised in such a way as to prevent injury or suffering, does not pose a danger to handlers and ensures that hoisting and bleeding are carried out as quickly as possible in the mobile unit, in accordance with the time interval between stunning and bleeding laid down in the applicable standard operating procedures.

5 - In emergency slaughter situations, the facilities of the holding itself may be used for restraining, stunning and bleeding animals, provided that those facilities ensure:

- a) (a) The effective restraint of animals in order to prevent injury or distress to them;
- b) (b) The safety of the operators involved in the operations;
- c) (c) The proper collection and disposal of blood, in accordance with the applicable hygiene rules.

6 - The slaughter of animals and the preparation of carcasses referred to in paragraphs 4 and 5 may only be carried out on the premises of livestock holdings, provided that the following requirements are met:

a) *(a)* The cleaning and, where necessary, disinfection of the restraint structures on the holding used in support of the slaughter operations are ensured;

b) *(b)* Where only one person is designated to carry out the stunning, hoisting and bleeding of the animals, that person must complete the entire process before proceeding to the next animal.

7- Mobile slaughterhouses must incorporate any adaptations which, in light of scientific and technical progress, prove necessary to safeguard animal welfare.

Article 8

Hygiene requirements for mobile units

1. - Mobile units must comply with Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs (Regulation (EC) No 852/2004) and Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.

2. - Without prejudice to paragraph 1, mobile units may be granted derogations from the requirements laid down in Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 in the following cases:

(a) When the transport of animals from the holding of origin is direct and slaughter is carried out immediately, mobile slaughterhouses must be exempted from having a designated place for the reception and temporary accommodation of animals intended for slaughter, by way of derogation from point 1(a) of Chapter II of Section I and point 1 of Chapter II of Section II of Annex III;

(b) Mobile slaughterhouses shall be exempt from the facilities referred to in point 1(b) of Chapter II of Section I of Annex III, if there is another effective method of isolation of sick or suspect animals;

(c) Where the operations of skinning, scalding, defeathering, dehairing, scraping, singeing, and the evisceration and preparation of carcasses are carried out at different times and measures are taken to prevent the risk of contamination, mobile units shall be

exempt from the requirement for separate rooms for those operations, by way of derogation from point 2(a) of Chapter II of Section I and point 2 of Chapter II of Section II of Annex III;

(d) Where the emptying and cleaning of stomachs and intestines are carried out at a different time from slaughter and preparation, and measures are taken to prevent the risk of contamination, or where the stomachs and intestines are intended for use as uneviscerated by-products, mobile units are exempt from the requirement for a separate room for these operations, by way of derogation from point b) of point 2 of Chapter II of Section I of Annex III;

(e) Where the emptying and washing of stomachs and intestines are not carried out, mobile units shall be exempt from the requirement for an area or place for the storage of digestive tract contents, by way of derogation from point 8 of Chapter II of Section I of Annex III;

(f) Where the preparation of cleaned intestines and stomachs, as well as other offal, is carried out at times separate from slaughter and carcass preparation, and measures are taken to prevent the risk of contamination, mobile units shall be exempt from the requirement for a separate room for those operations, by way of derogation from point 2(a) of Chapter II of Section I of Annex III;

(g) When carcasses and offal under observation can be properly labelled and stored separately from other carcasses, and measures are taken to prevent the risk of contamination, mobile units are exempt from the requirement for separate facilities for refrigerated storage of meat detained under observation, by way of derogation from point 5 of Chapter II of Section I and point 5 of Chapter II of Section II of Annex III.

3 - Where there is a container inside the mobile unit which ensures that there is no cross-contamination and storage under appropriate temperature conditions, the mobile units shall be exempt from separate facilities for the storage of by-products.

4 - Meat must be chilled to the legally prescribed temperature in the mobile unit; the final stage of cooling may be carried out in the cold storage facilities at the parking site.

5 - Notwithstanding the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the chilling of meat to the legally prescribed temperature may be carried out at another approved or registered establishment, provided that all of the following conditions are met:

(a) The chilling of carcasses must begin in the mobile unit or transport vehicle immediately after they have been prepared and inspected for hygiene;

(b) Transport to the place of destination does not exceed a maximum of two hours;

(c) The transport vehicle must be equipped with a continuous refrigeration system for use during storage and transport, as well as temperature monitoring and recording devices;

(d) The transport of the carcasses, as well as the remaining wholesome parts, shall form part of the food safety management system of the mobile slaughterhouse;

(e) The entire process must be properly documented, and reliable and verifiable records must be kept of the checks carried out by operators during the slaughter, transport and reception of the meat;

(f) The destination establishments must have a properly implemented system based on the principles of hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP), which takes into account, in its hazard analysis, the receipt of meat that is not fully chilled;

(g) The system referred to in the previous subparagraph provides for procedures for checking meat on entry, including verification of the surface temperature measured on the thickest parts of the carcasses and verification of the temperature and loading conditions of the vehicle;

(h) The responsibility for the safety of the meat remains with the operator of the mobile slaughterhouse until the actual transfer to the establishment of destination, by means of a documentary record of delivery;

(i) The establishment of destination assumes responsibility for the safety of the meat from the moment of receipt and must record any non-conformities detected and immediately report them to the operator of the mobile slaughterhouse and to the competent authorities;

6 - In the case referred to in the previous paragraph, the operator of the mobile slaughterhouse shall be responsible for the withdrawal from the market of the said meat if, during transport or prior to receipt, the presence of meat deemed unsafe in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 is detected.

7 - The provisions of the previous paragraph shall be without prejudice to the liability of the carrier when the non-compliance is attributable to it, in which case the operator of the mobile slaughterhouse may exercise the right of return against it.

Article 9

Official controls

1 - *Ante-mortem* and *post-mortem* inspection and other official controls are carried out by official veterinarians, in particular in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017, Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/624 of 8 February 2019 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/627 of 15 March 2019.

2 - For the purposes of the previous paragraph, mobile unit operators must register the operations involved in slaughtering in the database of the National Animal Information and Registration

System (SNIRA), in accordance with Decree-Law No 142/2006 of 27 July 2006, within a maximum period of 24 hours after the slaughter decision.

3 - In accordance with Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1375 of 10 August 2015, in the case of slaughter of pigs and solipeds and in the preparation of wild boars, a system must be ensured for carrying out analyses for *Trichinella* or, alternatively, sending the samples to an authorised laboratory, and the carcasses must remain under observation until the results are obtained.

Article 10

Animal by-products

All animal by-products resulting from the operations of mobile units, including blood, must be collected, classified and disposed of in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules concerning animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption, and other applicable legislation, in conjunction with the provisions of Decree-Law No 33/2017 of 23 March 2017.

Article 11

Protection of the environment

1 - Mobile units must be equipped with systems for managing effluent resulting from their operations and water used for cleaning the premises, in accordance with Article 5(g), in order to prevent the contamination of surface water and groundwater.

2 - The systems referred to in the previous paragraph must ensure compliance with applicable environmental legislation, including, where applicable, regulations governing the use of water resources, the discharge of wastewater and waste management.

Article 12

Single Market

1 - Products lawfully marketed in another Member State of the European Union or in Turkey, or which originate in and are lawfully marketed in the Contracting Parties to the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA Agreement), shall be deemed compatible with this Decree-Law.

2 - The application of these regulations is subject to Regulation (EU) 2019/515 of 19 March 2019 on the mutual recognition of goods lawfully marketed in another Member State.

Article 13

Fees

The mobile units covered by this Decree-Law shall be subject to payment of the official control fees provided for in Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017, without prejudice to the values and procedures to be defined by order of the members of the Government responsible for finance and agriculture.

Article 14

Supervision

1. - Without prejudice to the powers legally assigned to other entities, the Economic Food Safety Authority (ASAE) and the DGAV shall be responsible for monitoring compliance with the provisions of this Decree-Law, within the scope of their respective responsibilities and legal powers.

2. - Where access is refused or the exercise of the powers legally conferred on supervisory authorities is obstructed in any other way, those authorities may request the assistance of the police and other competent administrative bodies, with a view to removing any obstructions, ensuring that the measures ordered are carried out,

and safeguarding the safety of persons and property whilst the necessary actions are being carried out.

3. - The bodies referred to in paragraph 1 may also monitor compliance with the requirements set out in Article 9 during the transport and distribution of products.

Article 15

Administrative offences

1. 1 - The following constitute serious economic administrative offences, punishable under the Legal Scheme for Economic Administrative Offences, approved by Decree-Law No 9/2021 of 29 January 2021:

(a) The carrying out of slaughter and animal preparation operations on the premises of livestock holdings outside mobile slaughterhouses, in breach of Article 3(3);

(b) The cutting up and deboning of domestic ungulate carcasses following slaughter, in breach of Article 3(4);

(c) The cutting up and deboning of carcasses of farmed or wild game ungulates following slaughter, in breach of Article 3(5);

(d) The presence of mobile slaughterhouses outside designated parking areas, in breach of Article 4(2);

(e) The slaughter of animals or the preparation of meat in breach of the conditions laid down by the coordinating body, as provided for in Article 4(6);

(f) Failure to comply with the requirements for parking places laid down in Article 5;

(g) Non-compliance with the requirements laid down in Article 6 for the places of operation of mobile slaughterhouses and mobile game handling establishments;

(h) Non-compliance with the requirements laid down in Article 7 concerning the protection of animals at the time of slaughter or killing;

(i) Non-compliance with the requirements laid down in Article 8 concerning the hygiene of mobile slaughterhouses and mobile game handling establishments;

(j) Non-compliance with the obligations laid down in Article 9 (2), (3) and (6) concerning official controls;

(k) The absence of an effluent management system to prevent contamination of surface water and groundwater, in non-compliance with Article 11.

2 - Attempts and negligence are punishable under the RJCE.

3 - For the economic administrative offences referred to in paragraph 1, the ancillary sanctions provided for in the RJCE may be applied, depending on their seriousness and the degree of fault of the offender.

4 - The allocation of the proceeds of the fines shall be determined in accordance with the RJCE.

Article 16

Conduct of proceedings and imposition of sanctions

1. 1 - The DGAV or the ASAE, depending on the subject matter concerned, shall be responsible for conducting administrative offence proceedings, as well as for deciding on the imposition of fines and ancillary sanctions in the cases initiated by them.

2. 2 - When the investigating body does not have the competence to initiate the administrative offence proceedings, the latter shall be instructed and decided by the DGAV.

Article 17

Autonomous Regions

This Decree-Law shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Autonomous Regions of the Azores and Madeira, in accordance with their political and administrative autonomy, its executive implementation being the duty of the services and bodies of the autonomous regional governments with the powers and responsibilities provided for under

this Decree-Law, without prejudice to the powers of the entities at national level.

Article 18

Entry into force

This Decree-Law shall enter into force 90 days after its publication.