



# Advancing Animal Welfare in the EU

Together with most EU citizens we celebrate the long-awaited appointment of a Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare. Thanks to this role, billions of animals in Europe and worldwide will receive better treatment. In order to do so, we believe that the new Commissioner should prioritise the delivery, without delay, of ambitious legislation on animal welfare.

The revision would address the **expectations of European citizens** as reflected by the #EUforAnimals campaign, successful European Citizens Initiatives calling for the end of cages and the ban of fur farming in Europe, as well as the latest Eurobarometer on animal welfare.

Building on the outcome of the **Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture**, we invite the Commissioner for Animal Welfare to complete without further delays the revision of the animal welfare legislation **by 2026** in line with the opinions produced by the **European Food Safety Authority** and the Five Domains model.

In addition, it will be important that in the future all **trade in animal-based products** imported from countries outside the EU fully **respect the same standards** as those established by the revised EU animal welfare legislation. There should be no loopholes that allow products derived from cruelly-treated animals to be imported into the EU market.

## Building a Safer Future for Europe's Companion Animals

Our companion animals deserve protection that reflects the bond we share with them.

- **Strengthen breeding legislation** and ban methods that harm their health and well-being.
- **Implement complete traceability (Identification & Registration) of animals** and their owners across the European Union.
- Strengthen **controls on the sale and transport** of dogs, cats, and equines, to better protect these vulnerable species.
- Ensure **enhanced protection for equines throughout their lives**, by banning cruel practices such as the use of eCG hormones and adopting **specific standards** that guarantee decent living conditions: social interaction, daily freedom of movement, and proper nutrition.
- Introduce a clear **EU-wide positive list**, defining which species are suitable for private ownership.



*Let's act now to improve the cats and dogs proposal and make Europe a global leader in animal welfare!*

## Stronger Protection of Aquatic Animals in Europe

Fish, like other animals, can feel pain and require special attention. Yet every year, hundreds of billions of fish, whether farmed or caught at sea, endure intolerable suffering, often in complete indifference.

- **Establish strict standards** for the farming, transport, and slaughter of fish and crustaceans, with species-specific provisions.
- **Halt the expansion of intensive salmon farming** and end the use of sea cages and recirculating aquaculture systems (RAS) on land, which severely compromise animal welfare.
- **Ban octopus farming** before it develops in Europe, due to the serious ethical and environmental concerns associated with these highly intelligent and sensitive animals.

*Now is the time for Europe to lead the way in the protection of aquatic animals, with ambitious legislation that meets ethical and scientific expectations.*



## Protecting Animals: Reforming Slaughter and Transport Practices

- There is clear scientific evidence that **slaughter without stunning** causes animals acute suffering. The slaughter of animals without pre-stunning must be banned as well as other cruel stunning methods such as CO2 stunning of pigs and waterbath stunning of poultry.
- **Ending Suffering During Transport:** Enhancing animal protection during transport requires improving the current Transport Regulation proposal to make live animal transport a last resort. Prolonged journeys should be prohibited: 8 hours for ruminants and pigs, and 4 hours for rabbits and poultry. Strict temperature limits must also be established to ensure their well-being.
- **Ending Transport of Vulnerable Animals:** Unweaned calves, pregnant females, and unfit animals should not be transported, even under exemptions.

*For a More Ethical Future: The EU must prioritise meat and carcass trade over live animal exports.*



## Animals in Science: Transforming Research Practices

Millions of animals continue to be used in research—now is the time for change. As science advances, it is imperative that we **replace, reduce, and make animal experimentation redundant**. For ethical and innovative research:

- **Set clear goals:** Reduce animal in basic and regulatory research and education by setting clear transition targets.
- Publish a roadmap on phasing out animal testing in chemicals safety assessment.
- **Ensure funding:** Support the development of **alternative methods**.
- **Foster innovation:** Create ecosystems that thrive **without animals**.
- **Harmonise education**
- Train professionals in **new approaches**.
- **Strengthen knowledge sharing:** Promote awareness of **effective alternatives**.
- **Reform legislation:** Integrate promising methods into **current laws**.

*Engaging in this transition is not just about animal welfare; it is an essential imperative for human health, environmental sustainability, and the welfare of all sentient beings. The European Union has a crucial role to play in this significant evolution.*





## From Cage to Compassion: Rethinking Farming Practices

- **Ending Cage Farming:** Cage systems symbolise the cruelty of intensive farming, denying animals basic behavioural needs. A Europe-wide ban on cages for hens, ducks, pigs, and other animals is essential. Transitioning to larger, collective spaces will enhance natural behaviours, while prohibiting unnecessary procedures like piglet castration is crucial. This can happen now and **needs to happen by 2026** with the revision of the animals kept for commercial purposes Regulation.
- **Stop the Industrial Suffering of Broiler Chickens:** Over 90% of broiler chickens in Europe face overcrowded, inhumane conditions. With around 7 billion raised annually, stricter welfare standards are urgent. Transitioning to slower-growing breeds and limiting density are necessary steps.
- The **Common Agricultural Policy** should support a sustainable food production sector with high animal welfare at its heart. It needs to encourage an easy transition towards food production that is healthier, kinder, and more sustainable.
- **Ban Fur Farming:** Prohibiting fur farming aligns with animal welfare, ethics, and public health concerns, reflecting the strong opposition of citizens, as shown by the successful European Citizens' Initiative "Fur Free Europe." All fur products from farmed animals should be banned in the EU market.
- **Ending Force-Feeding:** Force-feeding inflicts significant suffering on animals and persists in a few member states despite public opposition. A complete ban on force-feeding and the elimination of minimum weight requirements for foie gras production are imperative for ensuring animal welfare.



*Every step toward humane treatment is a step toward a brighter future for animals.*