



European Commission

2023-09-13

To Commissioner Ylva Johansson

Subject: Supporting the delivery of a solid revision of the EU animal welfare legislation

We, undersigned organisations and members of Eurogroup for Animals, are writing to you to ask your support for the upcoming proposals for the revision of the EU animal welfare legislation.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity, not only for animals but also for EU agriculture. It can provide a framework in which high animal welfare standards buttress a more productive agricultural system that is also more environmentally friendly and healthier for consumers.

EU legislation covering animal welfare is no longer fit for purpose. This revision, therefore fully in line with the Commission's Better Regulation agenda, is necessary to ensure our legislation does not lag behind science.

Citizens expect a far-reaching revision of the animal welfare legislation from the current Commission. The [Fitness check](#) rightly identified that European consumers are increasingly committed to act in favour of greater animal welfare. Already in 2016, a special Eurobarometer on animal welfare indicated that 94% of Europeans consider protecting animal welfare important. More specifically, 89% believe there should be EU legislation requiring people using animals for commercial purposes to care for them. In the recent consultation on the Future of Europe, one in seven European citizens even designated animal welfare as a priority for the EU, in an open question. Finally, as of today, the six European Citizens' Initiatives (ECIs) connected to animal welfare all gathered above one million signatures.

Improving animal welfare is also a key facet of the transition towards sustainable food systems. While these improvements have a cost, they are largely outweighed by the cost of our inaction. A report [recently published](#) by the Impact Institute found that external costs of EU animal sourced production and consumption are on average 7.7 times higher than their economic value. The main drivers of such high external cost are low animal welfare, diet-related disease, air pollution, and land use.

The previous legislation was enacted decades ago, when the world was less concerned with climate change, biodiversity loss, antimicrobial resistance or zoonotic diseases. Times have

changed, adding pressure to our moral concerns. Animals have been long awaiting a better future. With the vast support of EU citizens, we hope that the Commission will seize this rare opportunity to reaffirm the European Union's leadership on animal welfare, to the benefit of animals, citizens and the planet.

On behalf of Swedish and European citizens, we call on you to support the swift delivery of these proposals, and to make them part of the Commission's work programme for 2024.

Yours sincerely,

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