

# Supporting Eurogroup for Animals in strengthening Europe's animal welfare landscape

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Animal Welfare & Protection

Website: [eurogroupforanimals.org](http://eurogroupforanimals.org)

Eurogroup for Animals, founded in 1980, is a pan-European animal protection organization. Its primary focus is to work in the interest of animals towards a society in which they are valued and respected as sentient beings. By driving comprehensive policy reform at the EU level, raising public awareness, and building capacity within member organizations, Eurogroup for Animals aims to address systemic animal welfare issues while fostering sustainable food systems. It seeks to create high welfare standards that not only improve the lives of animals but also support the health of ecosystems and align with Europe's commitment to responsible and ethical governance.

Europe has a long history of progressive animal welfare laws. However, animals continue to face severe challenges due to systemic issues such as factory farming, live animal transport, wildlife trafficking, and scientific testing. These issues are compounded by inadequate policy enforcement, inconsistencies in regulations across EU member states, and limited public awareness.

These outdated legislative frameworks have not evolved to meet the demands of a rapidly changing environment, and the demands of the public. Factory farming, for instance, subjects billions of animals every year to inhumane conditions that not only compromise their well-being but also contribute

to environmental degradation. Live animal transport regulations often fall short, leaving animals vulnerable to long, grueling journeys that result in immense suffering. Despite rising awareness, the illegal wildlife trade continues to threaten biodiversity and poses significant health risks to both humans and ecosystems. Furthermore, millions of animals are still subjected to scientific testing, even though viable, humane alternatives already exist. The need for policy intervention extends beyond animal protection, the industrial farming practices that underpin Europe's food systems have profound environmental implications, contributing to habitat destruction, water pollution, and carbon emissions. These practices are inherently unsustainable, endangering Europe's natural resources and ecosystems. Tackling these challenges demands a comprehensive, adaptive approach that addresses the root causes and facilitates systemic change.

As an advocacy-focused organization, Eurogroup for Animals is tackling these challenges by engaging a diverse range of stakeholders, including cross-party and cross-country policymakers, as well as EU institutions, to drive tangible change. The organization's work is grounded in providing thorough analysis and evidence-based recommendations for improving animal welfare policies. This includes evaluating existing legislation, identifying gaps in animal protection, and proposing

new initiatives that promote better practices, stronger safeguards for animals, and advocate for ecological sustainability. Eurogroup for Animals also emphasizes the importance of fostering human-animal cohabitation that respects nature's limits, ensuring a balanced and sustainable relationship between people, animals, and the environment.

The **Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation** (NaEPF), deeply committed to the protection and advocacy of animal welfare worldwide, is supporting Eurogroup for Animals' initiatives to address critical animal welfare issues, including the treatment of companion animals, industrial farming, and the use of animals in scientific research.

The main objectives of the project are:

1. **Companion Animals:** Eurogroup for Animals is advancing new standards for the welfare of companion animals, with a particular focus on cats and dogs. Following the publication on the European Commission's proposal the work centres on improving it while it progresses its legislative path, promoting responsible breeding, ensuring transparency in animal sales (including online sales), and implementing a EU-wide traceability system. By mandating breeder and animal identification, the aim is to combat illegal imports, prevent harmful breeding practices, and uphold humane treatment for these animals by establishing comprehensive guidelines, advocating for enforcement, and engaging the public on responsible pet ownership.

2. **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP):** the Food Policy team is advocating for a shift towards plant-based diets in Europe as part of a broader effort to reform the EU's CAP. With the CAP directing nearly a third of the EU budget, there is a significant opportunity to reshape agricultural practices in ways that prioritize animal welfare and support sustainable, plantbased food systems.

3. **Cellular Agriculture:** Eurogroup for Animals is working to position cellular agriculture as a key solution in the food landscape, aiming to reduce reliance on industrial animal farming, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and improve animal welfare, in alignment with broader environmental and ethical goals. To promote the acceptance and adoption of cellular agriculture in Europe as a sustainable alternative to conventional animal farming, it is essential to address regulatory

challenges and enhance public understanding of this innovative approach.

4. **Animals in Science:** replacing animal testing with ethical, non-animal methods in scientific and regulatory testing is both a critical and technically complex challenge. Eurogroup for Animals is focused on supporting the development of a roadmap to phase out animal use, while addressing significant regulatory gaps in EU chemical safety laws. This work is crucial for advancing scientific innovation while eliminating animal suffering.

5. **"No Animal is Left Behind"** under the protection of the EU legislation: across its program areas, Eurogroup for Animals continues to advocate for the inclusion of its priorities in ongoing legislative files. Although the review of current animal welfare legislation has been postponed, the re-election of President Ursula von der Leyen presented a renewed opportunity to achieve these important policy changes.

*"The modernisation of animal welfare legislation is an opportunity we should not miss. It is an opportunity to improve welfare, respond to citizens' demands and increase competitiveness. It is an opportunity to build a better system for everyone."*

Olivér Várhelyi

European Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare

5 February, 2025