

Animal Action Hellas

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To: Mr. Mavroudis Voridis

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Request to support the phasing out of the use of cages in livestock farming in the European Union

We write to you as Animal Action Hellas, the not-profit operations of The Greek Animal Welfare Fund, the longest serving UK animal welfare charity working in Greece.

As you know, the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) 'End the Cage Age' recently secured a record 1.6 million signatures, asking the EU to stop the use of all cages in livestock farming. More than 170 EU organisations have teamed up to support this massive Initiative. www.endthecageage.eu
https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative/home_el

We are addressing you to ask **Greece** to support this important request which respects the views of citizens on this issue.

Scientific research shows that rearing animals in cages causes enormous misery, as these conscious beings cannot perform most of their physical and basic behaviors. Every year, over 300 million animals in Europe spend all or a significant part of their lives imprisoned in cages. For example, egg-producing hens and rabbits bred for meat live in the space of about one Sheet A4 per animal, and most sows spend almost six months each year in cages, where they can't even turn around.

The result of this European Citizens' Initiative goes hand in hand with the 2016 Eurobarometer poll, according to which 94% of Europeans consider the need to protect the welfare of farmed animals to be important, and 82% believe that the welfare of productive animals should be better protected. According to the 2018 Eurobarometer report, the public considers that ensuring animal welfare is the second largest responsibility of farmers, after providing high-quality safe and healthy food.

We urge you to call on the European Commission to propose legislation on the phasing-out of cages in livestock farming.

We would be grateful if you also proposed to other Member States that they, too should support the proposal.

The phasing-out of cages goes hand in hand with Article 13 of the Treaty of Lisbon, which obliges the European Union to formulate agricultural policies with 'full respect for animal welfare requirements'. Scientific research shows that the use of cages is completely contrary to animal welfare requirements. We invite you to ask the Commission to propose legislative proposals for:

- 1. the prohibition of the installation of new cages**
- 2. the phasing-out of existing cages**

The cages to be phased out are:

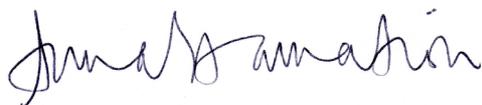
- Enriched cages for egg-producing hens. (Germany will ban these cages from 2025. Austria and Luxembourg have bans that have already entered into force).
- Conventional and enriched cages for hens and breeding groups in the egg sector.
- Birthing cages for sows. Community law currently allows their use by weaning the previous birth up to four weeks / 28 days in each pregnancy.
- Breastfeeding cages for sows. Their use is already prohibited in Switzerland and Sweden.
- Cages for farmed rabbits. (Belgium will ban the detention of farmed rabbits in cages from 2025).

We are calling for a ban on these cages throughout the EU but we are also urging **Greece** to move more promptly to ban them on its territory, as the EU-wide effort will take time. Improvements in the welfare of farmed animals in Greece should be made as swiftly as possible. Initiatives by individual Member States may encourage the Commission to propose actions at EU level.

We hope that the inhumane practice of rearing animals in cages is coming to an end. To hasten this outcome, we ask the Ministry to take the necessary legislative measures in **Greece** but also to encourage the European Commission in the proposed direction. We will be grateful if you inform us by 31st March of Greece's position on the inhumane practice of rearing animals in cages, so that we can inform our supporters in turn.

We look forward to a positive response on behalf of the Government.

Yours sincerely,



Anna Stamatou
President of Animal Action Hellas



Paul McGlone
Chief Executive Officer