

Public Consultation on Animal Welfare modernisation

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

Under the [Vision for Agriculture and Food](#) of 19 February 2025, the Commission has announced its intention to closely exchange with farmers, the food supply chain and civil society and on that basis to present legislative proposals on the revision of the existing EU animal welfare legislation, including to follow-up on its commitment to phase out cages. The Vision also sets out that the Commission will make sure that future legislative proposals on animal welfare apply the same standards to products produced in the EU and those imported from non-EU countries in a WTO compliant way and based on an impact assessment.

The Commission's fitness check of the EU animal welfare legislation in 2022 concluded that the current legislation is no longer fit for purpose. Neither is it aligned with societal and ethical expectations. One example of such ethical concerns is the 'End the Cage Age' European Citizens' Initiative, to which the Commission has responded positively in 2021 by committing to propose legislation to phase out the use of cages for certain categories of animals.

There is an interest across the livestock industry in modernising the animal welfare legislation by better using animal welfare indicators, to bring more flexibility and to simplify compliance and enforcement. Stakeholders have also called for EU animal welfare rules to apply to imports in line with international rules.

On 12 May 2025, the Commission announced its intention to modernise the EU rules for **on-farm animal welfare** in line with the objectives of the Vision.

Further to the [Call of Evidence](#), which was launched in June 2025, this consultation aims to gather feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including citizens, economic operators, trade and consumer associations, NGOs, research institutes, academia, and non-EU stakeholders. Your input is valuable in helping us assess the current situation and helps ensure that any future legislation is evidence-based, proportionate, and aligned with societal expectations and economic realities.

About you

* Language of my contribution

- ☐ Bulgarian
- ☐ Croatian
- ☐ Czech
- ☐ Danish
- ☒ Dutch
- ☐ English
- ☐ Estonian
- ☐ Finnish
- ☐ French
- ☐ German
- ☐ Greek
- ☐ Hungarian
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Italian
- ☐ Latvian
- ☐ Lithuanian
- ☐ Maltese
- ☐ Polish
- ☐ Portuguese
- ☐ Romanian
- ☐ Slovak
- ☐ Slovenian
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Swedish

* I am giving my contribution as

- ☐ Academic/research institution
- ☐ Business association
- ☐ Company/business
- ☐ Consumer organisation
- ☐ EU citizen
- ☐ Environmental organisation

- ☐ Non-EU citizen
- ☐ Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- ☒ Public authority
- ☐ Trade union
- ☐ Other

* First name

* Surname

* Email (this won't be published)

* Scope

- ☐ International
- ☐ Local
- ☒ National
- ☐ Regional

* Level of governance

- ☐ Parliament
- ☒ Authority
- ☐ Agency

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

* Organisation size

- ☐ Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- ☐ Small (10 to 49 employees)

- ☐ Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- ☒ Large (250 or more)

* I have a good knowledge of EU and national legislation related to farmed animals

- ☒ Very good knowledge
- ☐ Sufficient knowledge
- ☐ Basic knowledge
- ☐ No knowledge

Transparency register number

Check if your organisation is on the transparency register. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

* Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

This list does not represent the official position of the European institutions with regard to the legal status or policy of the entities mentioned. It is a harmonisation of often divergent lists and practices.

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| ☐ Åland Islands | ☐ Dominica | ☐ Liechtenstein | ☐ Saint Pierre and Miquelon |
| ☐ Albania | ☐ Dominican Republic | ☐ Lithuania | ☐ Saint Vincent and the Grenadines |
| ☐ Algeria | ☐ Ecuador | ☐ Luxembourg | ☐ Samoa |
| ☐ American Samoa | ☐ Egypt | ☐ Macau | ☐ San Marino |
| ☐ Andorra | ☐ El Salvador | ☐ Madagascar | ☐ São Tomé and Príncipe |
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| ☐ Antigua and Barbuda | ☐ Eswatini | ☐ Mali | ☐ Seychelles |

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- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
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- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bermuda
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bonaire Saint Eustatius and Saba
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Bouvet Island
- Brazil
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Ethiopia
- Falkland Islands
- Faroe Islands
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- French Guiana
- French Polynesia
- French Southern and Antarctic Lands
- Gabon
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Greenland
- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
- Guam
- Guatemala
- Guernsey
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Martinique
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mayotte
- Mexico
- Micronesia
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Montserrat
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar/Burma
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Sint Maarten
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syria
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- The Gambia

- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Cayman Islands
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Christmas Island
- Clipperton
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Haiti
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands
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- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
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- Iraq
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Israel
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- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Nigeria
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- Norfolk Island
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- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Palestine
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- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
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- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Réunion
- Romania
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tokelau
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Türkiye
- Turkmenistan
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States
- United States Minor Outlying Islands
- Uruguay
- US Virgin Islands
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Vatican City
- Venezuela
- Vietnam

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---|---|
| ☐ Cuba | ☐ Kyrgyzstan | ☐ Russia | ☐ Wallis and Futuna |
| ☐ Curaçao | ☐ Laos | ☐ Rwanda | ☐ Western Sahara |
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Tristan da Cunha | ☐ Zambia |
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Congo | ☐ Lesotho | ☐ Saint Kitts and
Nevis | ☐ Zimbabwe |
| ☐ Denmark | ☐ Liberia | ☐ Saint Lucia | |

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. **For the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association', 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published.** Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

* Contribution publication privacy settings

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

☒ Anonymous

Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.

☐ Public

Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

☒ I agree with the [personal data protection provisions](#)

1. Questions about the current situation of animal welfare in the EU

	FULLY AGREE	PARTLY AGREE	NEUTRAL/	PARTLY DISAGREE	FULLY DISAGREE	NO OPINION / DO NOT KNOW
* EU legislation regulating animal welfare at farm level does not ensure that farmed animals can express normal behaviours.	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Unnecessary administrative burdens for EU farmers and business operators result from the coexistence of EU regulation, national rules, and private standards.	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* The broad or unspecific nature of some EU requirements lead to differences in how Member States enforce them, creating distortions in the internal market	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Food of animal origin coming from non-EU countries should have equivalent animal welfare standards to those of the EU.	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
* EU rules need to align with societal expectations regarding the treatment of farmed animals, such as phasing out cages for certain animals.	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* The systematic killing of male layer chicks in the laying hens' sector is ethically problematic.	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐

Questions on potential future actions at EU level:

2. How important is it that the revision of the EU legislation for on-farm animal welfare contributes to the respective main objectives of the EU Vision for Agriculture and Food?

	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	NO OPINION / DON'T KNOW
* An agri-food sector that is competitive and resilient.	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
* An attractive and predictable agri-food sector.	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* A future proof agri-food sector that is functioning within planetary boundaries.	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* An agri-food sector that values food, fosters fair working and living conditions.	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. How important is the phasing out of cages for certain categories of animals?

	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	NO OPINION / DON'T KNOW
* Laying hens	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Pigs	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Calves	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Pullets (young chicken)	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Broiler breeders (meat-chicken for reproduction)	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Layer breeders (egg-laying chicken for reproduction)	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Rabbits	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Ducks	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Geese	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Quail	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐

*** 4. Which barriers do you consider most significant in moving away from cage systems?**

- ☒ High investment costs
- ☐ Lack of technical knowledge/support for alternative production methods
- ☒ Uncertainty around market returns
- ☒ Space and infrastructure limitations
- ☒ Labour availability
- ☐ Lack of consumer willingness to pay
- ☒ Other

Which one(s)?

Sanitary pressure

*** 5. Which is/are the most important supporting measure(s) needed to ensure a smooth transition into a cage-free farming system in the EU?**

- ☒ EU public funding, e.g. through the Common Agricultural Policy
- ☐ National public funding
- ☐ Public-private partnership to facilitate loans (e.g. through the European Investment Bank)
- ☒ Long transition periods
- ☐ Farmer-to-farmer technical advice
- ☐ Production method information, e.g. through marketing standards
- ☒ Information campaigns
- ☐ Species-specific technical guidance documents
- ☒ Other

Which one(s)?

Rewarding front-runners with better access to market + higher prices

*** 6. Which of the following elements could contribute most to simplify the overlapping of animal welfare rules applicable to farmers and reduce administrative burden, while ensuring improved animal welfare outcomes?**

- ☒ Clearer and more operational legal provisions
- ☒ More harmonised EU rules / less freedom for stricter national rules
- ☐ Clearer roles and responsibilities
- ☒ Wider use of digital monitoring tools
- ☐ Greater reliance on outcome-based welfare indicators
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ None of the above

7. To what extent should imports of animal products comply with equivalent animal welfare standards to those applied in the EU?

	FOR ALL THE EU ANIMAL WELFARE REQUIREMENTS	FOR MOST THE EU ANIMAL WELFARE REQUIREMENTS	FOR SOME OF THE EU ANIMAL WELFARE REQUIREMENTS	FOR FEW OF THE EU ANIMAL WELFARE REQUIREMENTS	FOR NONE OF THE EU ANIMAL WELFARE REQUIREMENTS	NO OPINION / DON'T KNOW
* Poultry meat and meat products	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Eggs and egg products	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Pork and pork products	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Veal, beef meat and meat products	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Milk and dairy products	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

* Rabbit meat and meat products	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
* Other	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Free Text Question

*** 8. Which supporting measures could facilitate the transition to equivalent animal welfare standards in third countries?**

- ☒ EU training and technical support
- ☒ Long transition periods
- ☒ Production method information, e.g. through marketing standards
- ☒ Support through multilateral instruments
- ☒ Species-specific technical guidance documents
- ☒ Other

Which one(s)?

Clear chapters in trade deals

*** 9. To what extent could clearer and more consistent EU rules on on-farm animal welfare help ensure fairer conditions for farmers across Member States?**

- ☐ VERY LARGE EXTENT
- ☒ LARGE EXTENT
- ☐ NEUTRAL
- ☐ NOT VERY LARGE
- ☐ NOT LARGE AT ALL (the current system is sufficient)
- ☐ DO NOT KNOW / NO OPINION

10. In which ways, and to what extent, could the use of animal welfare indicators (e.g. behaviour, injuries, mortality) help to improve animal welfare on farms?

	VERY LARGE EXTENT	LARGE EXTENT	NEUTRAL	NOT VERY LARGE	NOT LARGE AT ALL (the current system is sufficient)	NO OPINION / DO NOT KNOW
* By improving the enforcement of animal welfare rules on farms	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* For benchmarking purposes, e.g. helping to identify farms with higher animal welfare standards	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
* By supporting policy monitoring, i. e. tracking how Member States implement animal welfare objectives	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
* OTHER	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

Please provide details

Dierenwelzijnsindicatoren zijn van grote meerwaarde in het toezicht, mits objectief vastgesteld. Zeker in combinatie met 'omgevingsvariabelen' (zie bijv. Frontiers | From the Five Freedoms to a more holistic perspective on animal welfare in the Dutch Animals Act).

Bruikbare voorbeelden die al worden toegepast zijn verwondingen en sterftecijfers, al geven ze altijd een beeld achteraf. Veel van deze data is nog niet beschikbaar voor toezichthouders (vb. staartlaesies varkens, longafwijking kalveren, klauwaandoeningen, e.d.). Diergedrag is ook een bruikbare welzijnsmonitor, maar deze (ethologische) parameters vergen veel tijd en kennis t.b.v. interpretatie. Dit is doorgaans niet goed mogelijk tijdens een inspectie. Cameratoezicht en langere tijd meten van diergedrag zouden objectieve indicatoren kunnen opleveren.

Real time digitale monitoring van diergedrag kan incidenten voorspellen en zorgen voor tijdige interventies.

Dierenwelzijnsindicatoren kunnen ook gedeeltelijk aantonen wat de welzijnsstatus in een lidstaat is en kunnen daarmee helpen bij het monitoren van beleid (o.a. door risico's in kaart te brengen).

*** 11. To the extent that affordable alternatives to the systematic killing of male day-old chicks in the egg production sector are available, how urgent is it for the EU to require the use of such alternatives?**

- ☐ VERY URGENT
- ☒ URGENT
- ☐ NEUTRAL
- ☐ NOT VERY URGENT
- ☐ NOT URGENT AT ALL
- ☐ DO NOT KNOW / NO OPINION

*** 12. a) In your view, what are the most important changes that should be made to the current EU legislation on on-farm animal welfare?**

De EU-wetgeving moet zich richten op een meer dierwaardige veehouderij, in principe voor alle diersoorten en -categorieën die op dierhouderijen voor productiedoeleinden (mogen) worden gehouden. Het vijf-domeinenmodel van Mellor, waarbij ook het bereiken van een positieve mentale staat, maar ook de intrinsieke waarde van dieren wordt meegenomen, moet als uitgangspunt worden gehanteerd bij de herziening van de EU-dierenwelzijnsreggeving. (Onder positieve mentale staat wordt verstaan dat het dier in staat is om te reageren op de veranderende sociale en fysieke omgeving en een toestand bereikt die het als overwegend positief ervaart (RDA, 2021. Zienswijze dierwaardige veehouderij)). Dieren moeten kunnen beschikken over een goede omgeving, een goede gezondheid, goede voeding en ze moeten (voldoende mogelijkheden hebben om te) kunnen voorzien in hun gedragsbehoeften. De behoeften van de dieren zouden een beginpunt moeten zijn om te bepalen welke houderijvoorschriften moeten worden gesteld en eisen moeten zodanig worden geformuleerd om in de behoeften van dieren te voorzien, daar waar mogelijk en waar veiligheid van boer, diergezondheid en economische rendabiliteit niet in het geding of in de knel komen. Hierbij moet gekeken worden naar de meest recente wetenschappelijke inzichten, maar uitvoerbaarheid en betaalbaarheid vormen cruciale randvoorwaarden.

Regelgeving dient handhaafbaar, uitvoerbaar en fraudebestendig te zijn, opdat uniforme toepassing in alle lidstaten kan worden bereikt. Bij doelvoorschriften moeten de doelen helder en concreet zijn geformuleerd (termen als 'voldoende' of 'toereikend' dienen te worden vermeden). Kwantitatieve doelvoorschriften kunnen helpen om de regelgeving beter toetsbaar en uitvoerbaar te maken.

*** 12. b) How can these changes be designed or supported in a way that also enhances the competitiveness and long-term resilience of the EU livestock sector?**

Het Gemeenschappelijk Landbouwbeleid (GLB) kan actief bijdragen aan de huidige uitdagingen door het stimuleren en belonen van dierenwelzijn als publieke dienst. Hierbij is het belangrijk dat landen moeten worden beloond voor waar ze staan en niet direct of indirect benadeeld worden omdat andere landen in het verleden minder grote stappen hebben gezet. In dit kader kan voorts kennisuitwisseling over dierenwelzijnsrisico's (in houderijen) en over mogelijkheden om deze risico's te beperken, worden gestimuleerd.

Er kunnen ook equivalente dierenwelzijnseisen gesteld worden aan dieren en dierlijke producten die vanuit derde landen naar de EU komen. Regelgeving over productiestandaarden inzake dierenwelzijn op geïmporteerde producten moet wel in lijn zijn met relevante WTO-regels (waaronder het non-discriminatiebeginsel), zoals ook geconcludeerd door de Commissie in 2022 in haar rapport "Application of EU health and environmental standards to imported agricultural and agri-food products", (COM/2022/226 final).

Naast op unilaterale, autonome maatregelen kan de EU ook inzetten op bilaterale overeenkomsten & samenwerking, alsmede - multilateraal - op het verbeteren, verhogen en uitbreiden van internationale standaarden op het gebied van dierenwelzijn; dit laatste vooral door ernaar te streven de WOAH-dierenwelzijnsstandaarden zo goed als mogelijk te krijgen op het niveau van de EU-regelgeving. Wel is het zo dat gebleken is dat de laatste jaren geen verbetering en uitbreiding van WOAH-dierenwelzijnsstandaarden op (pluim-)veehouderijbedrijven mogelijk is geworden.

De mogelijkheden van Doelsturing moeten ook op dierenwelzijn worden gezien.

13. Do you have any additional comments, views, or evidence to share related to the revision of EU legislation on on-farm animal welfare?

Please upload your file(s)

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

Contact

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