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## **Council concludes better legislation for animals is needed**

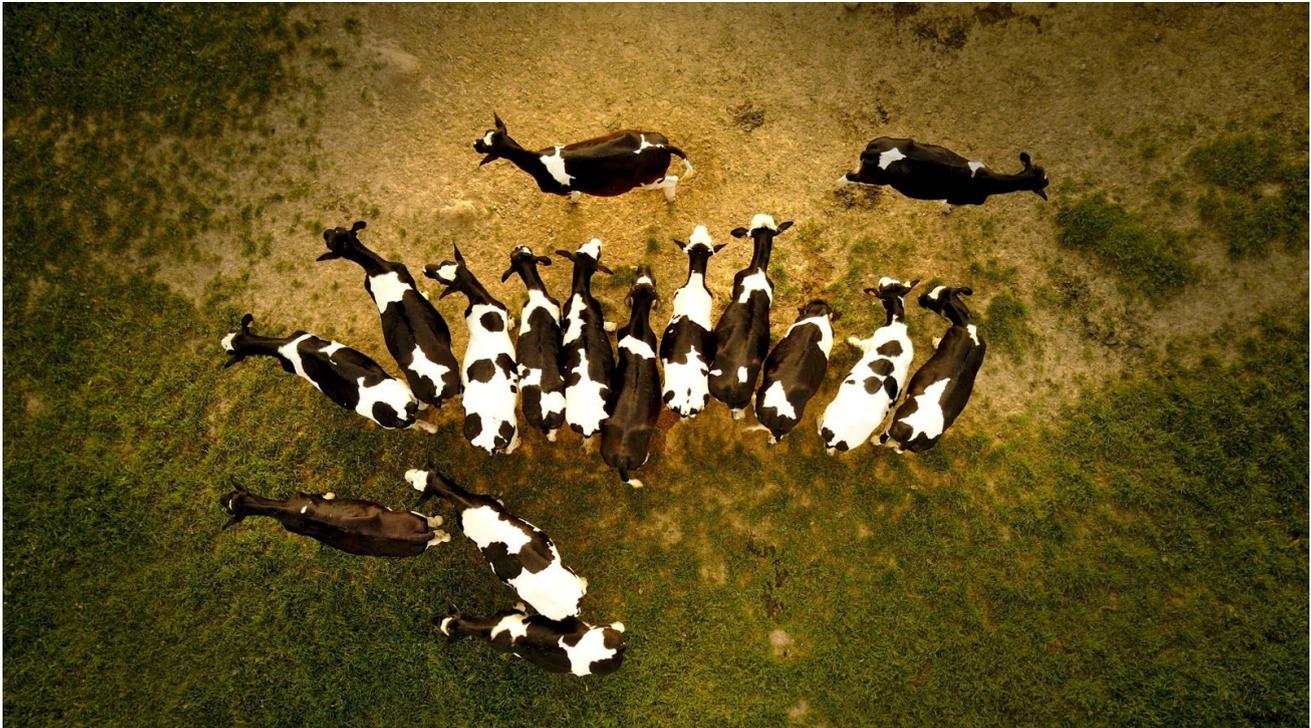


Photo credit: Filip Bunkens

**Citizens have spoken, the European Parliament has spoken – and now the Council of the European Union has added its voice to the throng calling for a better future for animals in the EU.**

The Conclusions adopted by Ministers today reveal that the Council of the EU considers animal welfare an integral part of sustainable animal production, and that as a result, another term cannot go by without new and improved legislation for animals. There's no excuse now for the new Commission to ignore this huge body of evidence and not act on the wishes of the rest of Europe.

The Council Conclusions point out, in particular, that current legislation is not comprehensive, and invite the Commission to assess the need for and impact of new legislation covering all species for which specific animal welfare legislation does not exist at present: cattle at least six months old, farmed rabbits, pullets, dogs and cats, turkeys, broiler and laying hen breeders, sheep, goats and farmed fish.

They also stress the need to improve the welfare of animals during transport over long distances, encouraging the Commission and the Member States to find solutions that will help enforce the existing transport legislation. They call for more discussion about the sustainability of trade in live animals versus meat and carcasses, as well as for a review and update of the Transport Regulation.

*“We welcome these Conclusions, and congratulate the Finnish Presidency and the Member States for adopting them,” says Reineke Hameleers, Director of Eurogroup for Animals. “Council, Parliament and citizens all expect legislative actions on animal welfare this term. The Commission must now act to make sure that this shifting emphasis of both public opinion and public policy to focus more on animal welfare, as well as environmental standards and food quality, is reflected in new and improved legislation.”*

Council Conclusions are a powerful tool in expressing the formal position of all Member States on topics of EU-level competence. Although they are not strictly binding, it is rare for the Commission not to take action in accordance with their wishes.

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*Eurogroup for Animals represents 70 animal advocacy organisations in 26 EU Member States, Switzerland, Serbia, Norway, Australia and the USA. Since its inception in 1980, the organisation has succeeded in encouraging the EU to adopt higher legal standards for animal protection. Eurogroup for Animals reflects public opinion through its membership organisations' affiliations across the Union, and has both the scientific and technical expertise to provide authoritative advice on issues relating to animal welfare. For more information, please visit [www.eurogroupforanimals.org](http://www.eurogroupforanimals.org). Follow us on Twitter [@Act4AnimalsEU](https://twitter.com/Act4AnimalsEU) and like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/eurogroupforanimals).*

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