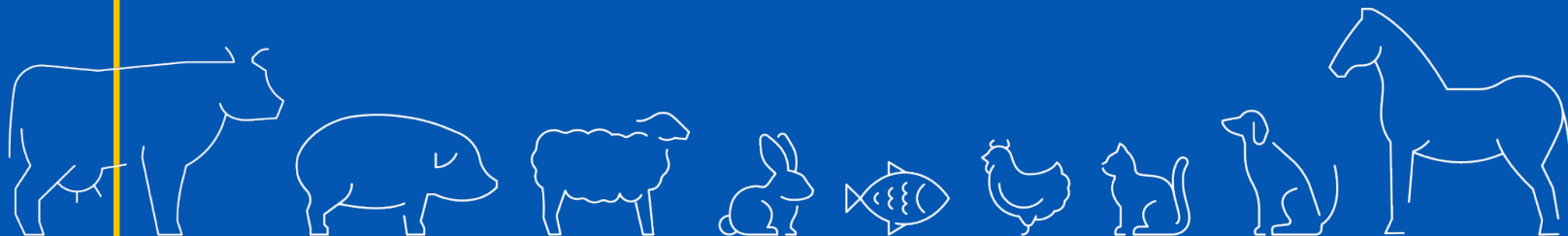




# Commission answer to the European Citizens' Initiative “End the Cage Age”

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*EU Animal Welfare Platform meeting, 10 November 2021*



# ECI 'End the Cage Age'

This ECI calls on the Commission to propose legislation to prohibit the use of:

- cages for **laying hens, rabbits, pullets, broiler breeders, layer breeders, quail, ducks and geese;**
- farrowing crates for **sows;**
- **sow stalls**, where not already prohibited;
- individual **calf pens**, where not already prohibited.”

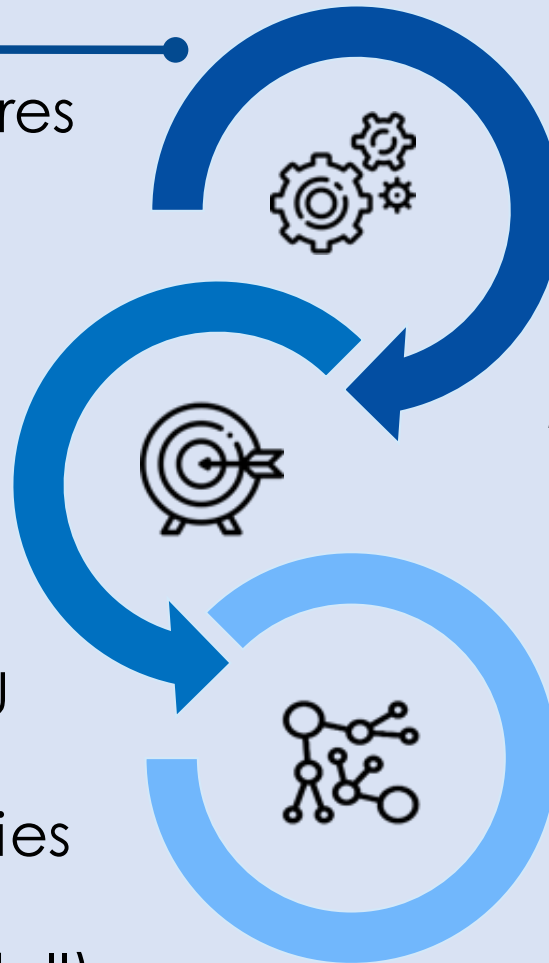


# Support to the ECI 'End the Cage Age'

Collected almost 1.4 million signatures  
(minimum: 1 million)

- Supported by more than 170 organisations throughout the EU
- Support from major food companies (Unilever, Nestlé, Mondelez, etc.) and well-known figures (Jane Goodall)

Met the threshold in 18 MS  
(minimum: 7 Member States)



# *“End the Cage Age”*

Animal welfare – ‘End the Cage Age’ European citizens’ initiative ([europa.eu](https://europa.eu))

**A call of more than 1,3 million EU citizens to prohibit the use of cages for farm animals** (laying hens, sows, calves, rabbits, pullets, broiler breeders, layer breeders, quail, ducks and geese).



Commission Communication with intention to:

- **Put forward a legislative proposal by the end of 2023 to phase out and finally prohibit the use of cages** for all the animal species and categories referred to in the initiative;
- **Determine the length of the transition period** based on EFSA opinions, the results of an impact assessment and a public consultation as part of the planned revision of EU animal welfare legislation.

# Scientific context and ongoing projects

- EFSA scientific assessments for the animals addressed by the initiative are expected in 2022 and 2023.
- Ongoing research and innovation projects are also financed by the EU
- Horizon Europe will provide further support in 2023-2027

# Social and economic context



- Growing numbers of consumers are demanding more welfare-friendly farming methods.
- *Farmed animals are kept in caged confinement for various, mainly economic reasons.*
- Discontinuing the use of cages will necessitate changes to current farming systems and often costly investments.

# Transitional and accompanying actions

- Facilitating the transition to cage-free farming
- Considering relevant societal concerns, economic impacts and environmental aspects
- Farmers to seize society's demand as an opportunity
- Important role for the entire food chain

# Support measures to farmers mainly via the CAP



- Member States are encouraged to include measures in their National Strategic Plans (NSP), in eco-schemes and in rural development plans
- *“When evaluating NSP, the Commission will pay particular attention to the financial support devoted to animal welfare”*
- Use of the farm advisory services (information & training).



# Support via food

- COM to work with food processing industry and retailers to promote cage-free products
- Animal welfare labelling as a tool to incentivise early transition



# Other accompanying measures

- best practices, guidelines, recommendations and studies;
- Horizon Europe,
- BTSF, audits, state aids, etc.



# Supportive measures: trade

To explore different options on imports in the impact assessment:

1. enhanced cooperation with trading partners
2. imposing some EU rules on imports
3. animal welfare labelling system that also applies to imports



# Steps already ongoing

- EFSA opinions in preparation for all animals falling under the ECI. EFSA opinion for rabbits available
- Inception impact assessment launched on 6 July 2021
- Open public consultation launched on 15 October 2021
- Stakeholder conference organised for 9 December 2021

# Where to find the information?

[https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-welfare/eci-end-cage-age\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-welfare/eci-end-cage-age_en)

Video available



# Thank you !

For further inquiries:

[SANTE-CONSULT-G5@ec.europa.eu](mailto:SANTE-CONSULT-G5@ec.europa.eu)

Open Public Consultation:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12950-Animal-welfare-revision-of-EU-legislation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12950-Animal-welfare-revision-of-EU-legislation_en)

**#EU4AnimalWelfare**

