



Communication of the European Commission on the European Citizens' Initiative "Fur Free Europe"

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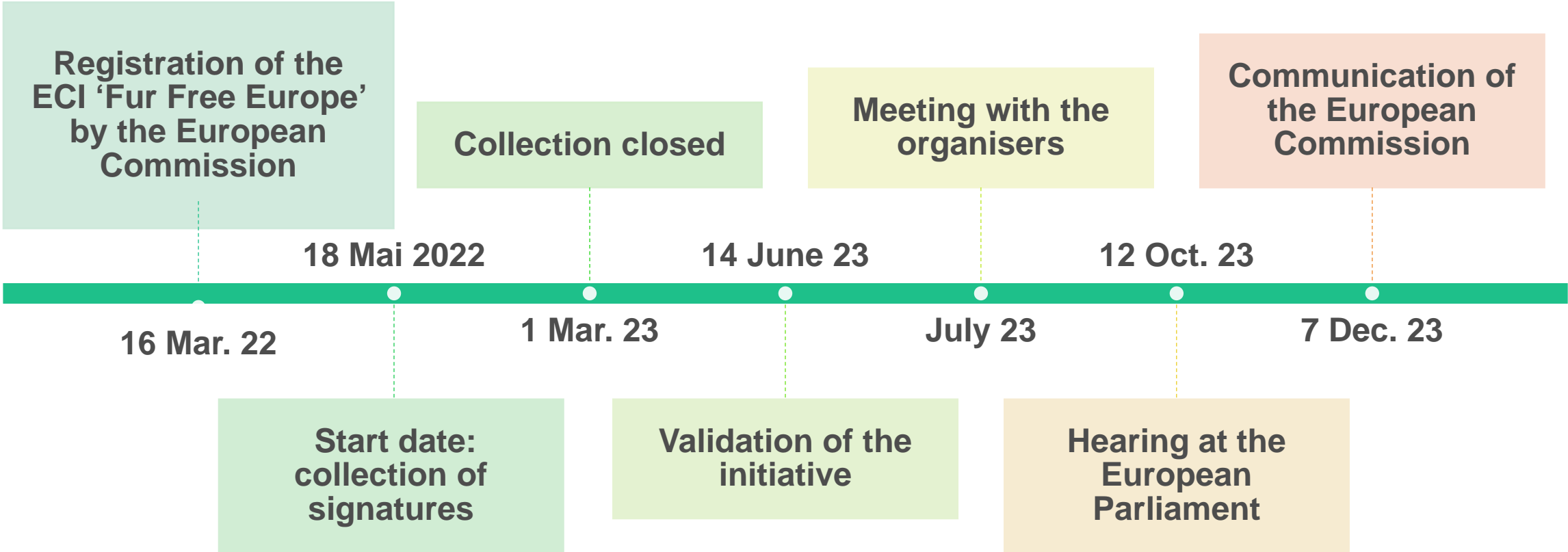


The 'Fur Free Europe' initiative

A call of more than **1,5 million EU citizens** to take action and prohibit two main practices:

- The keeping and killing of animals for the sole or main purpose of fur production.
- The placement of farmed animal fur, and products containing such fur, on the EU market.

Timeline



Structure of the Communication

- Historical background
- Current EU policy context
- Analysis of current situation in relation to internal market and trade
- Response to the European Citizens' Initiative
- Conclusions

Historical background

- Council of Europe Recommendations on the welfare of fur animals
- 2001 Scientific Opinion on the welfare of animals kept for fur production
- Industry voluntary certification scheme – Welfur
- Current EU policy context

Current EU policy context

- Current EU legal framework for fur animals – No specific rules, Directive 98/58
- Current EU policy context: Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy
- One Health dimension and policy response
- EU policies on invasive alien species
- EU textile policies in relation to fur products
- EU trade policy context

One Health dimension and policy response



- Biosecurity - key factor to prevent disease
- The risk by SARS-CoV-2 virus by infected mink - very low to low
- The risk of infection for humans with avian influenza viruses - low and low to moderate
- Monitoring of the evolution of the HPAI epidemiology and its potential impact on public health; assessments to address newly identified risks
- High Security Council to suggest actions under the One Health umbrella

EU policies on invasive alien species

- Species listed under the Invasive Alien Species Regulation (Regulation (EU) 1143/2014) (IAS Regulation) are selected based on a risk-assessment process
- Risk assessments undertaken under the IAS Regulation for the Raccoon dog (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*) and the American mink (*Neovison vison*)
- Raccoon dog already listed
- Updating risk assessment for American mink
- Both species have a negative impact on biodiversity

EU textile policies in relation to fur products and EU trade policy context

- Current rules regarding textile labelling require reference to the presence of ‘non-textile parts of animal products’
- Current rules do not apply to products containing 20% or more of non textile parts (including fur) by weight
- Commission launched a review of the Textile Labelling Regulation
- Protection of environment and ethical concerns can be the basis for import requirements if done in full respect of WTO rules.
- Essential the case-by-case assessment and careful analysis of each case on its own merits

Analysis of current situation in relation to internal market and trade

- Approximately 1088 active fur farms/ 7,7 million mink, foxes and racoon dogs as main species kept
- Chinchilla and rabbit farms not common in the Member States
- Number of Member States adopted bans or partial bans on fur farming
- Finland, Greece and Poland have the most important production
- The EU has a considerable trade surplus in fur and fur products both in raw skins and in fur apparel

Response from the Commission



- By March 2025 EFSA to provide an updated scientific opinion on the welfare of fur animals
- Commission to assess the justification, feasibility and proportionality of a ban on fur farming and the marketing of farmed fur in the EU or suitable alternatives
- By March 2026 Commission to communicate on the results of the assessment and measures it intends to take
- Additional measures related to One health, environment, textile labelling

Q&A