

30 June 2020

Press Release

UK urged to do better as new cage-free league table reveals over 16.6 million animals still caged

In a new, Europe-wide poll of cage-free farming, the [UK has emerged in eighth place](#), with just 63% of UK animals reared in cage-free conditions. The data collected represents cage use in each of the 27 EU Member States, along with the UK.

Whilst some EU countries such as Sweden and Austria score higher than others, in reality, this means hundreds of thousands of animals are still suffering from confinement and, sadly, no Member States are 100% cage free. Disappointingly, countries including Italy, France, Spain and Poland – key players in the EU animal agricultural sector – rank at the bottom of the table.

Over 300 million pigs, hens, rabbits, ducks, quail and calves are imprisoned in cages across the EU. In the UK, there are 16,661,696 animals in cages. Most of these cages are barren, cramped, and deny the animals space to move freely.

In 2018, Compassion led a broad-based coalition of 170 environmental, consumer rights and animal protection groups from across Europe, to launch the End the Cage Age European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). Last September, the ECI closed, having gained over 1.5 million signatures from individuals calling for an end the use of cages for farm animals across the continent. This was the biggest political push for farmed animal welfare in European history.

Such a huge wave of support for the campaign proves that a future free from cages is a priority for EU citizens from every part of the continent and should therefore be a priority for EU Institutions and national Governments.

“EU Citizens have made it clear – they want a continent that is free from cages. But the fight continues,” said Mandy Carter, Compassion in World Farming’s Global Senior Campaigns Manager. *“To convince the European Commission that the future of Europe is cage-free, we need the support of the UK Government and key decision makers.*

“The UK’s score of 63% is simply not good enough. Until all EU countries are 100% cage-free, animals will continue to suffer. It’s time we evolved past such cruelty, it’s time to end the cage age.”

~ends~

For more information please email media.team@ciwf.org or call 01483 521 886.

Social media assets/ images can be downloaded [here](#).

Notes to editors:

1. Compassion in World Farming was founded in 1967 by a British dairy farmer who became horrified at the development of intensive factory farming. Today Compassion is the leading farm animal welfare organisation dedicated to ending factory farming and achieving humane and sustainable food. With headquarters in the UK, we have offices across Europe, in the US, China and South Africa.
2. Data for the total number of animals in cages and the percentages are taken from various sources including both industry and national government statistics. For the total number of animals still in cages and for the calculation of that % we are not counting quail bred for meat or eggs, and calves, since data for those species are not consistent across all countries. Data on annual animal numbers were taken from the following sources according to the most recent published data: Sows – Eurostat 2017; Laying Hens – CIRCABC 2017; Rabbits – European Commission (DG Santé) 2016; Ducks and Geese - ITAVI 2016 and SSP, Eurofoiegras 2016. Where published figures are not available, estimates of number of animals caged have been calculated using generic estimates and data from various credible sources.
3. To view the cage free league table and to find out more about the campaign visit: www.endthecageage.eu/how-close-are-we-to-a-cage-free-europe/