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## OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL LEGISLATION ON FUR FARMING IN EUROPE

There is no specific legislation for the welfare of animals kept for fur in many EU countries such as Estonia, France, Greece and Poland, or the legislation is very weak such as is the case in Spain.

### **Austria**

In Austria, the Federal Act on the Protection of Animals (Animal Protection Act – TSchG) of 2004 considers animals kept for farming purposes as: “all domestic or wild animals kept for production of animal products (e.g. food, wool, skin, furs, leather) or other agricultural or forestry purposes”. Section 25 on ‘Wild Animals’ says that “it is prohibited to keep animals for obtaining furs”.<sup>1</sup>

### **Belgium**

The Belgian sixth state reform transformed animal welfare in a competence of the Regions or Communities, starting from 1th of July 2014.

Carlo Di Antonio, the minister of animal welfare for the region of Wallonia initiated a legislative proposal in order to ban the production of fur. In January 2015, a new article has been added to chapter II of the law of 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1989 regarding the protection of the wellbeing of animals: Article 9/1 states that “keeping animals for the sole or main purpose of fur production is prohibited”.<sup>2, 3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Federal Act on the Protection of Animals* (Animal Protection Act – TSchG. Austria. Consulted on 19 February on [http://bkacms.bka.gv.at/2004/10/7/animalprotectionact\\_neu.pdf](http://bkacms.bka.gv.at/2004/10/7/animalprotectionact_neu.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> 22 JANVIER 2015. — *Décret modifiant la loi du 14 août 1986 relative à la protection et au bien-être des animaux afin d’interdire la détention d’animaux à des fins exclusives ou principales de production de fourrure*. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on [http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi\\_loi/loi\\_a.pl?=&sql=\(text+contains+\(%27%27\)\)&rech=1&language=fr&tri=dd+AS+RANK&numero=1&table\\_name=loi&F=&n=1986081434&caller=image\\_a1&fromtab=loi&la=F&pdf\\_page=98&pdf\\_file=http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/mopdf/2015/01/30\\_1.pdf](http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/loi_a.pl?=&sql=(text+contains+(%27%27))&rech=1&language=fr&tri=dd+AS+RANK&numero=1&table_name=loi&F=&n=1986081434&caller=image_a1&fromtab=loi&la=F&pdf_page=98&pdf_file=http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/mopdf/2015/01/30_1.pdf)



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Brussels-Capital Region has followed the example of Wallonia and is adopting a new legal framework that is merely preventive because even though there are no fur farms in this region, it has still been possible to ask a permit to establish a specific farm.<sup>4</sup>

The region of Flanders is currently debating a fur farming ban. There are 17 existing fur farms in Flanders.

### **Bulgaria**

Breeding animals for fur is permitted by law in Bulgaria which is governed by the Veterinary Practice Act and the Ordinance 2 from 11 Feb 2009. Art. 2. in this Ordinance says:

*"The owners:*

- 1. provide conditions for animals in a manner appropriate to their physiological and behavioural characteristics;*
- 2. breed and use animals according to physiological and behavioural characteristics of the species, category and age. "*

Art. 4 specifies what kind of animals are legally to breed for fur in Bulgaria - namely "*mink - Mustela lutreola (European mink); nutrias, foxes, chinchillas and beavers*".

Article 17 in the Animal Protection Act states that "in the premises intended for animal breeding, the owner shall provide place corresponding to their physiological and behavioural characteristics, as well as space for movement and rest."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Le Soir (2015). *Le parlement wallon interdit les élevages d'animaux à fourrure*. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on <http://www.lesoir.be/764303/article/actualite/belgique/2015-01-21/parlement-wallon-interdit-elevages-d-animaux-fourrure>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid



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Second the Biodiversity Act (article 58, 1) states that “Ex-situ conservation of species shall include: 1. raising and breeding of animals and plants under controlled conditions in vivariums, zoos or botanical gardens, arboretums, live specimen collection”.<sup>6</sup> For keeping wild animals you need to be on one of the establishments listed. Fur farming is not listed.

In Bulgaria there are two mink fur farms.

### **Croatia**

In Croatia, fur farming has been banned since 2006 with a transition period of ten years.<sup>7</sup>

This can be found in the new Animal Protection Act under article 4 regarding the procedures prohibited for the purpose of protecting animals: ruling number 23 states that “it is prohibited to rear animals for fur production purposes”.<sup>8</sup> Additional information:<sup>9</sup>

### **Cyprus**

There is not a lot of information available on the situation in Cyprus. The Animal Welfare Law makes no reference to fur bearing animals (46 (1) 1994 – Law for the Protection, Health and Welfare of Animals).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Biodiversity Act (No. 77/9.08.2002) - Bulgaria. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on [http://old.europe.bg/upload/docs/CONF\\_BG\\_02\\_03\\_ad12.pdf](http://old.europe.bg/upload/docs/CONF_BG_02_03_ad12.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Animal Friends Croatia. *Some Regulations From the New Animal Protection Act*. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on <http://animal-friends-croatia.org/index.en.php?id=713>

<sup>8</sup> Animal Friends Croatia. *Animal Protection Act*. Consulted on 19 February on <http://animal-friends-croatia.org/index.en.php?id=470>

<sup>9</sup> <http://animal-friends-croatia.org/index.en.php?id=547>, <http://animal-friends-croatia.org/index.en.php?id=549>

<sup>10</sup> 46 (1) 1994 LAW FOR THE PROTECTION, HEALTH AND WELFARE OF ANIMALS. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on [http://animalpartyprus.com/images/46\\_1\\_94\\_English.pdf](http://animalpartyprus.com/images/46_1_94_English.pdf)

There are only general rules on breeding and slaughter of animals. Keeping animals is regulated in article 4 and 6 since the owner should ensure the health and welfare and must provide food, water and care suitable for the species and, where necessary with shelter. Slaughter of animals can be found in article 15 and states that animals have to be sedated sufficiently before they can be killed.

### **Czech Republic**

In March 2016 a new bill to ban fur farming was proposed by 20 members of parliament. The first reading of the bill will take place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2016.

In 2004 the Czech Republic has issued two decrees with a reference to fur farming. The first decree lays down “minimum standards for the protection of farm animals”. Section 13 of this decree describes the “minimal standards for the protection of fur animals kept at farms” and formulates the general and species specific requirements in order to attain normal behaviour. Breeding systems that don’t meet the terms of the required parameters must respectively be closed before the end of 2004 or before the end of 2013.<sup>11</sup>

The second decree with a reference to fur farming is a decree on the protection of farm animals at the time of slaughter, killing or other ways of putting to death. Section 11 specifies the “procedure for killing fur-bearing animals in fur farms”. The practices to kill fur animals are listed together with the requirements to stipulate a minimum level of pain.<sup>12</sup>

Also worth mentioning is Article 3 of the “Act on the protection of animals against cruelty” that states that animals kept for the production of animal products, wool, skin or fur amongst others are being regarded as ‘farm animals’.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> DECREE 208/2004 Coll., issued on 14 April 2004 laying down minimum standards for the protection of farm animals. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on [http://eagri.cz/public/web/file/10668/AV208\\_04\\_HZ.pdf](http://eagri.cz/public/web/file/10668/AV208_04_HZ.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> DECREE 382/2004 Coll., issued on 15 June 2004 *on the protection of farm animals at the time of slaughter, killing or other ways of putting to death*. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on [http://eagri.cz/public/web/file/10664/AV382\\_04\\_por.pdf](http://eagri.cz/public/web/file/10664/AV382_04_por.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> *Act No 246/1992 Coll., on the protection of animals against cruelty*. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on [http://eagri.cz/public/web/file/10666/AZ246\\_92\\_OZ\\_uz.pdf](http://eagri.cz/public/web/file/10666/AZ246_92_OZ_uz.pdf)



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## **Denmark**

Denmark is the largest producer of fur and has developed its own trade mark as Copenhagen Fur is the major fur auction house in the world, owned by the Danish Fur Breeders Association. Fur farming is the third largest type of animal farming in Denmark. The country has developed the following legislative framework:

- Regulation on fur farms (number 1428 of 2006)
- Guidance on fur farms (number 607 of 2002)
- The Animal Welfare Act (number 252 of 2013)
- Regulation on the protection of fur animals (number 1734 of 2006)
- Prohibition against the keeping of foxes (number 469 of 2014)
- Regulation on slaughter and killing of animals (number 583 of 2007)
- Act on mandatory health advice in mink farms (number 261 of 2011)
- Act on housing of mink and fencing of mink farms (number 265 of 2006)
- Act on the protection of farm animals (number 432 of 2004)

In 2009 the Danish government banned the breeding of foxes for their fur (amended in 2014). It should be noted that Regulation 1428 (2006) and Guidance 607 (2002) are primary applicable to the environment and not to animal welfare because they respectively focus on the farm halls and on the farm's sustainability. The only difference between the two is that whereas the regulation is legally binding, the



guidance is only informative. Act no. 265 on housing of mink and fencing of mink farms (2006) is also purely based on environmental matters.<sup>14</sup>

The most important legislative act is Regulation 1734 (2006) on the protection of fur animals. It is legally binding and covers different chapters. Chapters with provisions on breeding, caring and supervision, as well as a chapter on penalties. Moreover there is a focus on specific provisions for minks, ferrets, foxes, chinchilla's and coypu.<sup>15</sup>

## **Estonia**

Fur farming is considered a key industry in Estonia.<sup>16</sup> The Animal Protection Act of 2000 used to refer to fur-bearing animals in article 11 which stipulates the “conditions of slaughter of farm animals” but only mentioned the fact that fur-bearing animals amongst others are allowed to be slaughtered in other places than slaughterhouses. However this article has been repealed in 2012 (and from 2013 on).<sup>17, 18</sup>

The Animal Protection Act (consolidated text 1 January 2013) defines a farm animal as ‘an animal kept or bred with the objective of producing animal products’. Furthermore the Act refers to farm animals in the chapters on ‘requirements for keeping animals’ and on ‘the protection of animals upon slaughter and killing’.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Gremmen, K. (2014). *Safeguarding Animal Welfare in the European Fur Farming Industry*. Bachelor Thesis European Public Administration. Netherlands: University of Twente, Enschede

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> EFBA (2010). *Fact sheet: fur farming in Europe*. [http://www.efba.eu/fact\\_sheet.html](http://www.efba.eu/fact_sheet.html)

<sup>17</sup> *Animal Protection Act* of Estonia (13 December 2000, with amendments up to 2006, 21, 162). Consulted on 19 February 2015 on <http://www.legaltext.ee/text/en/X60004K4.htm>

<sup>18</sup> *Animal Protection Act* of Estonia (consolidated text 1 January 2013). Consulted on 19 February 2015 on <http://www.legaltext.ee/et/andmebaas/tekst.asp?loc=text&dok=X60004K6&keel=en&pg=1&ptyyp=RT&tyyp=X&query=loomakaitseeadus>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid



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## **Finland**

Finland is one of the four biggest fur producers in Europe and the biggest fox pelt producer in the world. The Animal Welfare Act does not exactly point out specific legislation on fur-bearing animals, but refers to the Animal Welfare Decree in saying that “*wild species of mammals and birds which may be farmed for the purpose of producing meat or eggs or breeding animals for their production are specified by Decree*”. Furthermore the Act highlights the need to notify the start, ending or changes to any activity concerning the captivity of wild species for the production of meat, eggs or breeding animals for their production.<sup>20</sup> The Act on Support for Rural Development has placed the keeping of production animals such as fur farming under the definition of agriculture.<sup>21</sup>

The Animal Welfare Decree (1996) is more specific on the matter of fur farming. Animals bred for the production of fur (amongst others) have been identified as production animals. Fur-bearing animals kept for production purposes can be killed by electric current, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, shooting or mechanical instrument which penetrates into the brain (after specification of the competent ministry). For other production animals (mammal or bird) only the first two methods are allowed.<sup>22</sup> In 2010 the space requirements for cages of fur bearing animals were revised.<sup>23</sup>

Since March 2012 Finnish citizens have the right to initiate a parliamentary law. The ‘fur farm free Finland’ campaign was the first to hand in such an initiative. In 2013 the campaign had gathered well over the required 50.000 signatures in order to ban fur farming. The

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<sup>20</sup> *Animal Welfare Act (247/1996)*, with amendments up to 1430/2006). Consulted on 19 February 2015 on <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/kaannokset/1996/en19960247.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> *Act on Support for Rural Development (1443/2006)*, with amendments up to 1478/2007). Consulted on 19 February 2015 on <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2006/en20061443.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> *Animal Welfare Decree (396/1996)*, with amendments up to 401/2006). Consulted on 19 February 2015 on <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1996/en19960396.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Evira (2010). Finnish Food Safety Authority. *Turkiseläinten häkkikoot suurenevat* [Fur Animals Cages Become Larger]. Consulted on 23 March on <http://www.evira.fi/portal/fi/elaimet/ajankohtaista/arkisto/?bid=2073>



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Finnish Parliament however has rejected the proposal by a wide margin. The Parliament's Agriculture and Forestry Committee argues that fur production is of big economic significance and should therefore continue to exist in Finland.<sup>24, 25, 26</sup>

Further information: [www15.uta.fi/FAST/FIN/SOCPOL/am-fur.html#Notes](http://www15.uta.fi/FAST/FIN/SOCPOL/am-fur.html#Notes)

## **France**

There are a dozen of fur farms in France where minks are the most common animal species being bred for their fur. France is also the sole producer of fur from Orlylag rabbits which stands under the supervision of the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA).

Besides the ban on the production and trade on fur deriving from cats, dogs and seals, the practice of farming animals for their fur is not prohibited in France. In February 2013 a law proposal was formulated by MP Yves Foulon and others that aimed at banning the creation of new farms or the enlargement of existing ones without banning them entirely. The proposal also mentioned that the use of animal fur should be limited through an environmental tax and that fur products should be labelled so that consumers can make informed choices.<sup>27, 28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Parliament mulls how to deal with citizens' initiatives*. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on [http://yle.fi/uutiset/parliament\\_mulls\\_how\\_to\\_deal\\_with\\_citizens\\_initiatives/6534855](http://yle.fi/uutiset/parliament_mulls_how_to_deal_with_citizens_initiatives/6534855)

<sup>25</sup> *100s march against fur farming*. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on [http://yle.fi/uutiset/100s\\_march\\_against\\_fur\\_farming/6694982](http://yle.fi/uutiset/100s_march_against_fur_farming/6694982)

<sup>26</sup> *Parliament says no to fur-farming ban*. Consulted on 19 February 2015 on [http://yle.fi/uutiset/parliament\\_says\\_no\\_to\\_fur-farming\\_ban/6696170](http://yle.fi/uutiset/parliament_says_no_to_fur-farming_ban/6696170)

<sup>27</sup> *Ces élus s'engagent contre l'élevage d'animaux pour leur fourrure*. Consulted on 20 February 2015 on <http://www.politique-animaux.fr/fourrure/ces-elus-s-engagent-contre-l-elevage-d-animaux-pour-leur-fourrure>

<sup>28</sup> Proposition de loi déposées à l'Assemblée nationale No 745 tendant à limiter l'utilisation de fourrure animale en France du 27 février 2013. Consulted on 20 February 2015 on <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/propositions/pion0745.asp>



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Article L214-1 of the 'Code rural et de la pêche maritime' states that all animals as sentient beings should be kept in those conditions that are compatible with the biological requirements of its species. The general provisions of this Code should guarantee the protection of animals against any sort of abuse, maltreatment and poor breeding circumstances of these farms.<sup>29</sup>

Article L214-9 is more specific about fur-bearing animals but only prescribes the need for fur farmers (amongst others) to keep an up-to-date livestock register, which lists the sanitary and medical provisions of the animals.<sup>30</sup> Article R214-78 says that fur animals (amongst others) may be killed outside of slaughterhouses.<sup>31</sup>

### **Germany**

Fur farms are licensed in Germany, but have been banned in the federal states of Bavaria, Hessen, Nordrhein-Westfalen and Schleswig-Holstein.<sup>32</sup> The German farms almost solely produce mink fur. In 2006 the German Government adopted a Regulation on fur farming, which specified the need to increase the minimum cage size and provide a necessary supply of water basins. Due to these changes, many expect that the economic revenue of this practice will diminish and that it will lead to the quasi-abolition of the existing cages in Germany.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> *Code rural et de la pêche maritime*. Chapitre IV : La protection des animaux - Dispositions générales (Articles L214-1 à L214-4). Consulted on 20 February 2015 <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006071367>

<sup>30</sup> *Code rural et de la pêche maritime*. Chapitre IV : La protection des animaux - Dispositions relatives à d'autres animaux (Articles L214-9 à L214-10). Consulted on 20 February 2015 <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006071367>

<sup>31</sup> *Code rural et de la pêche maritime*. Chapitre IV : La protection des animaux - L'abattage (Article R214-6). Consulted on 20 February 2015 <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006071367>

<sup>32</sup> ANIMALS FARMED FOR FUR Consulted on 20 February 2015 on [http://eurogroupforanimals.org/files/otherpolicies/downloads/225/faanimals\\_farmed\\_for\\_fur.pdf](http://eurogroupforanimals.org/files/otherpolicies/downloads/225/faanimals_farmed_for_fur.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Pelztier-Farmen: *Grausamkeit in Gefangenschaft*. Consulted on 20 February on <http://www.peta.de/pelzfarm>



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Section 7 of the Ordonnance on the protection of animals and the keeping of production animals (TierSchNutzTV) specifies the requirements for keeping fur animals. It lays down the general provisions and facility arrangements, but also mentions the specific requirements for mink, polecats, foxes, racoon dogs, beavers and chinchillas.<sup>34</sup>

Further information: [www.rtl.de/cms/news/rtl-aktuell/erntezeit-auf-pelzfarmen-das-grausame-geschaeft-mit-den-nerzen-33c28-51ca-21-1684008.html](http://www.rtl.de/cms/news/rtl-aktuell/erntezeit-auf-pelzfarmen-das-grausame-geschaeft-mit-den-nerzen-33c28-51ca-21-1684008.html)

### **Greece**

There is no specific legislation on fur farming. The fur sector in Greece involves the production of mink fur and is mainly situated in Kastoria and Siatista. Fur farms are subjected to annual inspections by the competent authorities, based on Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes and on the Recommendation of the Council of Europe concerning fur animals adopted by the Standing Committee on 22 June 1999.<sup>35</sup>

Fur production in Greece has been increasing over the past ten years.<sup>36</sup> However due to the severe evolutions in Ukraine, the fur sector in Greece is facing a hard time. Exports to Russia continue to fall because of a Russian blockade of European fur.<sup>37</sup>

### **Hungary**

'Act XXVIII of 1998 on Animal Protection and Tolerance' is the main piece of legislation in Hungary concerning animals. There are some

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<sup>34</sup> *Ordonnance on the protection of animals and the keeping of production animals* of 25.10.2001 (in the version published on August 22, 2006) (Tierschutz-Nutztierhaltungsverordnung). Consulted on <http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/tierschnutztv/BJNR275800001.html>

<sup>35</sup> Information obtained through mail to the Head of Animal Welfare Division, Greek Ministry of Productive Reconstruction, Environment and Energy

<sup>36</sup> A Greek fur farmer says: "Fur-farming in Greece is an excellent example of a sustainable activity for the country. Consulted on 20 February 2015 on [http://www.efba.eu/documents/uploads/news\\_88\\_ad\\_10\\_greek\\_experience.pdf](http://www.efba.eu/documents/uploads/news_88_ad_10_greek_experience.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> *Greek fur businesses on the brink with Russian sanctions*. Consulted on 20 February 2015 on <http://furbearerdefenders.com/blog/greek-fur-businesses-on-the-brink-with-russian-sanctions>

references to the subject of fur farming. The Act lays down that “animals shall not be killed for reasons and under circumstances that are unacceptable or intolerable”, but this is not applicable for the production of fur as this is being regarded as “an acceptable circumstance”. A modification in the Act viewed the breeding of cats and dogs for this purpose as an “unacceptable reason” and are therefore not allowed to be bred for their fur. This ban was further specified in Regulation 1523/2007/EC, which was directly applicable in every member state.<sup>38</sup>

Another modification of the Act in November 2011 declared that only chinchillas and angora rabbits may be farmed for their fur, but then again they are the only species being bred in Hungary. Moreover if the Hungarian authorities come across a breeding activity with animal species other than chinchillas and angora rabbits, that cannot be put in a zoo, these animals will be killed in order to safeguard the current state of fauna in Hungary.<sup>39</sup>

Slaughter methods are listed in the (implementation) Decree No. 9 of 1999 (I. 27.) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development on the rules of animal welfare during slaughter. On the regard of fur bearing animals it covers the use of various gases, electrocution or pistols together with hypnotising drugs.<sup>40</sup>

## Ireland

In the Republic of Ireland fur farming is still legal. In Northern Ireland, as part of the UK, the practice has been banned. Currently there are three to five licensed mink farms in the Republic of Ireland where more than 200.000 minks are being farmed. The farming of foxes is being phased out since it is no longer economically viable, but that doesn't mean that fox farming is now illegal.<sup>41, 42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Zoltán, T. J. (2011). *The Regulation of Animal Protection in Hungary*. Károli Gáspár University, Budapest, Hungary

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

<sup>41</sup> The Association for the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals (2012). *Fur Farm Bans*. Consulted on 26 February 2015 on <http://furbearerdefenders.com/downloads/PDFs/furfarmban.pdf>



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In 2011 the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine has established a review group on fur farming which in 2012 presented a report with recommendations. The Review Group recommended that “fur farming should be allowed to continue under licence and subject to enhanced official controls”.<sup>43</sup> This suggestion was followed by Simon Coveney, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

There is a debate in Ireland on this matter. The Irish Council Against Blood Sports (ICABS) started a petition in 2014 for which they need at least 10.000 supporters in order to urge Minister Coveney to ban fur farming. Celebrities in Ireland have called on the Minister to proceed with a ban.<sup>44</sup>

## **Italy**

In Italy mink is the main animal species being farmed for fur. Italy has adopted some strict welfare regulations on fur farming in 2001. Legislative Decree No. 146/2001 is in line with Council Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes. This decree orders that from 2008 on mink must be given an enriched living environment, in which they can behave as normal and natural as possible: climbing on branches, digging holes, nesting and there must be a sufficiently big water basin in which they can swim. As a consequence these strict demands would eventually phase out the practice of fur farming.<sup>45, 46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Compassion in World Farming Ireland. *FarmFacts: Irish Fur Farming*. Consulted on 26 February 2015 on [http://www.ciwf.ie/farminfo/farmfacts\\_fur.html](http://www.ciwf.ie/farminfo/farmfacts_fur.html)

<sup>43</sup> *Report of the Fur Farming Review Group 2012*. Consulted on 26 February 2015 on <http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/publications/2012/ReportFurFarmingReviewGroup2012201112.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> O'Connor, W. (2014). *The mink behind the wire: inside Ireland's fur farms*. Consulted on 26 February 2015 on <http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/the-mink-behind-the-wire-inside-irelands-fur-farms-30495738.html>

<sup>45</sup> Bont voor Dieren. *Fur Farming* – Section: Curtain falling for fur farming in Europe. Consulted on 26 February 2015 on <http://web.archive.org/web/20051215121641/http://www.bontvoordieren.nl/english/index.php?action=farming>

<sup>46</sup> Ärzte für Tiere. *Italy - Comment on the Italian Animal Welfare Act* – Section: Fur animals in Italy. Consulted on 26 February 2015 on [http://www.aerztefuertiere.de/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=121:italy&catid=136&Itemid=586&showall=&limitstart=2&lang=en](http://www.aerztefuertiere.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=121:italy&catid=136&Itemid=586&showall=&limitstart=2&lang=en)



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## **Latvia**

The fur industry is considered of great importance for Latvia, where 350.000 minks and over 9.000 foxes are being farmed for their fur.

In November 2014 two Latvian animal protection organisations Dzīvnieku brīvība (Animal Freedom) and Sabiedrība pret kažokādām (Society Against Fur) have organised a major manifestation against fur farming in Latvia. More than 150 people participated and demanded to ban this practice.<sup>47</sup> Also several Latvian celebrities have expressed their concerns on the matter.<sup>48</sup>

Since 2011 Latvian citizens can start a petition to initiate new law proposals that have to be discussed in the parliament. Recently 10.000 people signed a petition against the practice of fur farming. In February 2015 the majority of the Latvian Parliament (Saeima) rejected this public initiative.<sup>49, 50</sup>

There is however some discrepancy in the way fur bearing animals are being viewed in Latvia. BNN interviewed Sandra Vilcina, member of the board of the Latvian Fur Farmers Association, and she mentioned that mink and foxes held in fur farms cannot be considered wild

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<sup>47</sup> Fur Free Alliance (2014). *Major protest against fur farming in Latvia*. Consulted on 26 February 2015 on <http://www.information.com/index.php/news/87-major-protest-against-fur-farming-in-latvia>

<sup>48</sup> Worthington, D. (2014). *"Fur" a Better Latvia*. Consulted on 26 February 2015 on <http://www.greenfudge.org/2014/03/01/fur-a-better-latvia/>

<sup>49</sup> RE:IMAGINING DEMOCRACY (2014). *Toolbox of Participation for Latvia*. Consulted on 26 February 2015 on <http://democracyoneday.com/2014/11/20/toolbox-of-participation-for-latvia/>

<sup>50</sup> Baltic News Network (2015). *Saeima does not support initiative to ban fur farming*. Consulted on 26 February on <http://bnn-news.com/saeima-support-initiative-ban-fur-farming-125555>



animals.<sup>51</sup> Although the Animal Protection Law of Latvia mentions in section 10 (10) the procedures and requirements for keeping wild animals in enclosed areas and immediately refers to fur animal farms (amongst others).<sup>52</sup>

In addition the Animal Protection Law focuses respectively on pet animals and seals. section 17 (2) forbids the breeding and using of pet animals for food and fur. Section 35 (1) ensures the international protection of some species of seal pups by prohibiting the import of raw, tanned or dressed furskin or other articles of furskin for commercial purposes.<sup>53</sup>

### **Lithuania**

In Lithuania, as in the other Baltic states, fur farming is considered one of the key economic sectors with over 550.000 minks and 1200 foxes being farmed. There has been a new Lithuanian Animal Welfare Regulation since 2012. Animals being bred for their fur (amongst others) are defined as domestic animals. In addition article 17 on 'slaughter of domestic animals and killing of farmed fur animals, chicks and embryos' prescribes the requirements and methods for slaughter.<sup>54</sup>

In October 2014 animal rights organisation Tušti narvai (Empty Cages) released a video with footage of Lithuanian fur farms. They started a campaign against fur farming in order to raise awareness and find support for a specific legislation that formulates the requirements of fur bearing animals.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid

<sup>52</sup> Animal Protection Law of the Republic of Latvia (with amendments up to 31 March 2010). Consulted on 26 February 2015 on [http://lawyersforanimalprotection.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Animal\\_Protection.pdf](http://lawyersforanimalprotection.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Animal_Protection.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> Republic of Lithuania Law on Welfare and Protection of Animals (No XI-2271, amended on 3 October 2012). Consulted on 27 February 2015 on <http://lawyersforanimalprotection.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/LIT-AW-Law-official-translation.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> Gyvūnų Gerovės Iniciatyvos (2014). *Shocking videos from Lithuanian fur farms released | "Tušti narvai"*. Consulted on 27 February 2015 on <http://ggi.lt/en/atliktas-tyrimas-lietuvos-kailiu-fermose-tusti-narvai/>



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## **Luxembourg**

In May 2016 the Minister of Agriculture of Luxembourg, Fernand Etgen, presented a new law designed to ensure the dignity, the protection of life, safety and welfare of animals<sup>56</sup>. The proposal for a revised animal welfare law includes a ban on killing animals only for fur. The proposal was approved by the veterinary college on July 8<sup>th</sup>.<sup>57</sup>

## **Malta**

No information about the situation in Malta could be found: [www.esdaw.eu/malta-eu.html](http://www.esdaw.eu/malta-eu.html)

## **The Netherlands**

With a production of almost 5 million pelts a year, the Netherlands are one of the biggest producers of mink pelts. Animal welfare is very important and therefore fur farming in the Netherlands is “expected to be of higher welfare than the European standards”.<sup>58</sup>

The Animal Health and Welfare Act of 1992 specifies the recommendations for animals regarding housing, killing, production, transport, hygiene and medicines. Except for mink, most of the fur bearing animals are not allowed to be farmed for their fur in the Netherlands.

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<sup>56</sup> <http://www.gouvernement.lu/5967296/06-securite-animaux>

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.lepointveterinaire.fr/actualites/actualites-professionnelles/160830-le-luxembourg-entend-protoger-la-dignite-de-l-animal.html>

<sup>58</sup> Gremmen, K. (2014). *Safeguarding Animal Welfare in the European Fur Farming Industry*. Bachelor Thesis European Public Administration. Netherlands: University of Twente, Enschede



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Since 1998 it is illegal to keep foxes and chinchillas for fur production, a ruling that came into force in 2008. This happened on the grounds of severe welfare conditions in these farms.<sup>59</sup>

The question of mink production has come into view since 2002. Since that date, the Dutch government has been trying to ban mink production and in 2012 the Dutch Senate finally passed a law to ban the production of mink pelts with a transition period of 10 years. This resulted in a protests on account of the Dutch Federation for Fur Farmers (NFE). They brought the case to court, which judged that the law was unconstitutional as there was no compensation for the farmers. In February 2016 the Dutch National Court of Appeals decided to uphold the mink ban, stating that the mink farmers were sufficiently compensated for their financial loss by the phase-out period of 11 year and the accompanying measures of the new law.<sup>60</sup> The NFE filed for a cassation appeal.

A drafted action plan by the Dutch Federation for Fur Farmers (NFE) in 1995 was transformed into the Welfare Regulation in 2004, which specifies the requirements for farming fur bearing animals. The Product Board for Livestock, Meat and Egg (PVE), which is commissioned by the Dutch ministry of economic affairs, is in charge for measures of control and sanctions. Every year each farm receives a report that formulates the key findings together with sanctions if necessary.<sup>61</sup>

## **Norway**

The legislation on fur bearing animals is found in the Animal Welfare Act of 2009 and more specific in the Regulation on fur animals (Pelsdyrforeskriften) nr 296 (2011).<sup>62</sup> The Regulation on the welfare of animals kept for production purposes (Foreskrift om valferd for

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid

<sup>62</sup> *Pelsdyrforeskriften nr 296* <https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2011-03-17-296>



produksjonsdyr) nr 885 (2006)<sup>63</sup> implements Council Directive 98/58/EC on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes. The Recommendations from Council of Europe have not been implemented.

Following a government report<sup>64</sup> about fur farming, a public hearing was conducted in 2015.<sup>65</sup> In December of 2014 the Norwegian documentary “Inside Fur” was released on public television channel NRK around the same time as the official report was presented.<sup>66</sup>

State subsidies to fur farms were removed in 2015.<sup>67</sup>

## **Poland**

Fur farming and especially for the production of mink fur is an important sector in Poland. The country is one of the biggest producers of mink pelts in Europe. However according to the Polish Fur Breeders and Producers Association (PZHIFZF) also coypu, chinchilla's, rabbits, foxes, polar foxes, raccoon dogs and ferrets are being farmed for their fur.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> *Foreskrift om valferd for produksjonsdyr nr 885* <https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2006-07-03-885>

<sup>64</sup> NOU 2014:15 *Norsk pelsdyrhold – bærekraftig utvikling eller styrt avvikling?*  
<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/93e812069c06488a87213d0b93cab5cc/no/pdfs/nou201420140015000dddpdfs.pdf>

<sup>65</sup> NOU 2014:15 *Norsk pelsdyrhold – bærekraftig utvikling eller styrt avvikling?* <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/nou-2014-15/id2353568/>, accessed on 24 April 2015

<sup>66</sup> *Brennpunkt viser omstridt pelsdokumentar* <http://www.aftenbladet.no/nyheter/okonomi/NRK-Brennpunkt-viser-omstridt-pelsdokumentar-3580000.html>, accessed on 25 February 2015

<sup>67</sup> *Statsstøtte till pels fjernes* [http://www.dyrevern.no/politikk\\_samfunn/politikk/en-seier-for-demokratiet](http://www.dyrevern.no/politikk_samfunn/politikk/en-seier-for-demokratiet) accessed on 15 May 2015

<sup>68</sup> Gremmen, K. (2014). *Safeguarding Animal Welfare in the European Fur Farming Industry*. Bachelor Thesis European Public Administration. Netherlands: University of Twente, Enschede

The Polish Animal Protection Act contains no specific section on fur bearing animals. The Polish ministry of agriculture has developed a regulation that specifies the minimal conditions of keeping farm animals and which has been amended four times.<sup>69</sup>

The Polish Fur Breeders and Producers Association (PZHIFZF) refers to the Law on the Organization of Animal Breeding and Reproduction, which has been amended in DZ. U nr 133, item 921 in 2007.

In 2011 the question was raised whether or not to include the American mink in the list of alien plants and animals species, which if released to the environment can threaten native species or natural habitats set up by the Regulation of the Minister of the Environment. This idea has been rejected by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development saying that the American mink is not considered a wild animal but is in fact a farm animal. The Ministry refers to the Act of 29<sup>th</sup> June 2007 on the Organization of Animal Breeding and Reproduction, which regulates the breeding conditions of farm animals (amended in 2007 in Journal of Laws No. 133, item. 921). Moreover the Ministry says that American mink doesn't pose a threat to the Polish (and European) wildlife because farms are well secured from animal escapes.<sup>70</sup>

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/a1250e/annexes/CountryReports/Poland.pdf>

“The PZHIFZF is the first association which introduced a certificate designed to confirm the high level of animal welfare on a farm, the professional preparation of farmers, preservation of the environment and the sustainable re-use of food (PZHIFZF, 2014a). However, special provisions on how to obtain this certificate or how many farms currently hold such a certificate are not available.”

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid

<sup>70</sup> Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats – Standing Committee, 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting Strasbourg, 27-30 November 2012. Consulted on 3 March 2015 on

<https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&InstranetImage=2133367&SecMode=1&DocId=1918314&Usage=2>



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## **Portugal**

Fur farming is not prohibited in Portugal and mainly revolves around rabbit fur, although there is also fur production deriving from chinchilla, fox and mink. There is no reference to fur farming in the Protection of Animals Act of 1995, but was regarded in two other pieces of legislation.<sup>71, 72</sup>

Firstly Decree-Law No. 64/2000 implementing Council Directive No. 98/58/EC of 20 July concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes covers animals bred or kept for the production of skin or fur amongst other farming purposes.<sup>73</sup>

Secondly Decree-Law No. 28/96 implementing EU Council Directive No. 93/119/EU of 22 December concerning animal protection during slaughtering contains the general and specific requirements and methods for restraining, stunning and killing animals bred or kept for the production of fur and that of other products. The requirements for fur animals in specific are listed in Annex G and need to be in compliance with the general provisions of the Regulation.<sup>74</sup>

[www.information.com/downloads/pdfs/1006Animal\\_Report\\_the\\_real\\_fashion\\_victims.pdf](http://www.information.com/downloads/pdfs/1006Animal_Report_the_real_fashion_victims.pdf)

[http://faolex.fao.org/cgi-bin/faolex.exe?database=faolex&search\\_type=query&table=result&query=ID:LEX-FAOC008334&format\\_name=ERALL&lang=eng](http://faolex.fao.org/cgi-bin/faolex.exe?database=faolex&search_type=query&table=result&query=ID:LEX-FAOC008334&format_name=ERALL&lang=eng)

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<sup>71</sup> 92/95 (Protection of Animals Act). Consulted on 3 March 2015 on <https://www.animallaw.info/statute/portugal-cruelty-portugal-animal-welfare-law>

<sup>72</sup> ANIMAL (2006). *The Real Fashion Victims. An undercover investigation into the secret world of the rabbit fur trade in Portugal*. Consulted on 3 March 2015 on [www.information.com/downloads/pdfs/1006Animal\\_Report\\_the\\_real\\_fashion\\_victims.pdf](http://www.information.com/downloads/pdfs/1006Animal_Report_the_real_fashion_victims.pdf)

<sup>73</sup> Decree-Law No. 64/2000 approving EC Council Directive No. 98/58 of 20 July on animal protection. Consulted on 3 March 2015 on [http://faolex.fao.org/cgi-bin/faolex.exe?database=faolex&search\\_type=query&table=result&query=ID:LEX-FAOC023950&format\\_name=ERALL&lang=eng](http://faolex.fao.org/cgi-bin/faolex.exe?database=faolex&search_type=query&table=result&query=ID:LEX-FAOC023950&format_name=ERALL&lang=eng)

<sup>74</sup> Decree-Law No. 28/96 approving EU Council Directive No. 93/119/EU of 22 December concerning animal protection during slaughtering. Consulted on 3 March 2015 on [http://faolex.fao.org/cgi-bin/faolex.exe?database=faolex&search\\_type=query&table=result&query=ID:LEX-FAOC008334&format\\_name=ERALL&lang=eng](http://faolex.fao.org/cgi-bin/faolex.exe?database=faolex&search_type=query&table=result&query=ID:LEX-FAOC008334&format_name=ERALL&lang=eng)



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### **Romania**

Romanian fur production is mainly focused on chinchilla. <http://www.furinformationcenter.eu/facts/facts-european-fur-production.aspx>

### **Slovakia**

<http://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/slo124799.pdf>.

### **Slovenia**

In March 2013 several changes have been made to the Animal Protection Law. A majority of the Slovenian Parliament (95%) voted in favour of a ban on fur farming with a phase-out period of two years. So from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2015 on farming or hunting animals for their fur, skin or feathers is forbidden.<sup>75</sup>

There are two remarks worth mentioning. Firstly the law does not forbid the slaughter of animals for their fur. However since it is not a common practice in the fur industry for fur farms to bring their animals to another country for slaughter, this part of the legislation will not result in actual slaughter of fur bearing animals in Slovenia. A second remark points out that fur farming or hunting is only a small sector in Slovenia and consequentially the ban will not have a significant economic effect.<sup>76</sup>

In 2003 the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food adopted a regulation on the ways of killing animals for veterinary reasons and animals reared for fur. It is stated that animals need to be killed along with a minimum level of pain and the slaughter equipment should

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<sup>75</sup> Animal Protection Law of 1999 (official consolidated text) (ZZZiv-UPB3, with amendments up to 31 March 2010). Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://faolex.fao.org/docs/html/slv130568.htm>

<sup>76</sup> The Vegan initiative (2013). *Slovenia passes a progressive animal protection law*. Consulted on 6 March on <http://veganska-iniciativa.blogspot.be/2013/03/slovenia-passes-progressive-animal.html>



be designed and used in such a way as to achieve a rapid and efficient execution in accordance with the provisions of this Regulation. The regulation also mentions that the staff must have the proper knowledge and skills in order to kill the animals in a humane and efficient manner. The Veterinary Administration of the Republic of Slovenia is responsible to check the slaughter equipment and has to organise trainings in order to provide the staff with the appropriate skills and knowledge. Section III of the regulation focusses on the methods of killing animals reared for fur production sums the permitted killing methods and their requirements.<sup>77</sup>

### **Spain**

American mink is considered Invasive Alien Species in Spain since 2007. Art. 61.3 of the Act 42/2007 of 13 December of Natural Heritage and Biodiversity contains a general ban on possession, transport, trafficking and trade of the species included in the Catalogue of Invasive Alien Species.

In 2015 three Spanish ecologist organizations challenged diverse provisions of the Regulation of the Royal Decree 630/2013, of 2 August that established the Spanish Catalogue of Invasive Alien Species. In 2015 the Spanish Supreme Court stated that the way the Regulation develops the Catalogue violates Art. 61.3 of the Act 42/2007 of 13 December of Natural Heritage and Biodiversity, which contains a general ban on possession, transport, trafficking and trade of the species included in the Catalogue.

The Spanish Supreme Court's Decision which prohibits American mink farming has been appealed to the Constitutional Court by the affected sectors.

Report on the legal status of fur farming in Spain:  
<http://www.acabemosconelespecismo.com/pieles-y-cuero/>

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<sup>77</sup> Regulation 3701 on killing animals for veterinary reasons, animals bred for fur production and surplus day-old chicks and embryos in hatchery waste (Št. 323-296/2003). Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://faolex.fao.org/docs/html/slv101703.htm>



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The regulation of fur farming is not very elaborated in Spain. The issue is mentioned in two decrees. Firstly the Royal Decree 348/00 of 10 March 2000 on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes simply refers to fur bearing animals. Royal Decree 54/1995 of 20 January 1995, which regulates the protection of animals being slaughtered, sums up the authorized methods and special requirements for killing animals for their fur in Annex F.<sup>78, 79, 80</sup>

### **Sweden**

The Animal Welfare Act “applies to the care and treatment of domestic animals and laboratory animals. It also applies to other animals if they are kept in captivity.” Moreover section 4 states that “animals shall be accommodated and handled in an environment that is appropriate for animals and in such a way as to promote their health and permit natural behaviour.”<sup>81</sup>

In the early 1990s fox farming was subjected to criticism because the animals did not have the possibility to express natural behaviour. This led to a revision of the Animal Welfare Ordinance, further elaborated in Ordinance (2007:484): new rules on fox husbandry like digging holes, moving around, socializing with others, were added. Due to these specific requirements fox farming was no longer economically viable and was phased out in Sweden. There is however no direct legislative ban on the breeding of foxes for their fur. Similarly in 2014 the Swedish Board of Agriculture issued new provisions for the keeping of chinchillas, like bigger cages, which led to the abolition of chinchilla farms in Sweden.<sup>82, 83, 84</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> *Royal Decree 348/00* of 10 March on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes. Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2000-4698>

<sup>79</sup> *Royal Decree 54/1995* of 20 January on the protection of animals being slaughtered. Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-1995-3942>

<sup>80</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment. *Animal welfare of farm animals*. Consulted on 6 March on <http://www.magrama.gob.es/es/ganaderia/temas/produccion-y-mercados-ganaderos/bienestanimal/animales-de-granja/>

<sup>81</sup> *The Animal Welfare Act* of 1988 (last amended by SFS 2009:303 of 1 January 2010). Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/09/03/10/f07ee736.pdf>

<sup>82</sup> Mille et al. (2009). *The best animal welfare in the world? – an investigation into the myth about Sweden*. Djurens Rätt: Sweden. Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://www.djurensratt.se/sites/default/files/best-animal-welfare-in-the-world.pdf>



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## **Switzerland**

Fur farming is prevented by legislation which only allows their keeping under what are effectively zoo conditions. There are no fur farms in Switzerland. Fur animals are viewed as wild animals. In order to be held in captivity, wild animals have to be kept in conditions that are equivalent to those required in modern zoos.<sup>85</sup> This makes fur farming non-profitable, so it no longer exists in the country. The first Animal Welfare Law came in 1978, and the ordonnance that that regulates the keeping of wild animals in 1981.<sup>86</sup>

## **United Kingdom**

The United Kingdom was the first country to ban fur farming in Europe. Before the ban the UK was responsible for an annual production of almost 1.3 million mink pelts.<sup>87</sup> Fur farms in England and Wales had to be shut down by the first of January 2003. Even though Northern Ireland and Scotland had no fur farms they also banned the practice.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *Species Protection Regulation* of 8 November 2007. Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://www.lagboken.se/Views/Pages/GetFile.ashx?portalId=56&cat=27548&docId=170794&propId=5#>

<sup>84</sup> Djurens Rätt (2014). *Chinchillor*. Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://www.xn--djurensratt-x5a.com/vara-fragor/djur-i-palsindustrin/chinchillor>

<sup>85</sup> Federal Act on Animal Protection of March 9. (1978). Switzerland; Bundesamt fur Veterinärwesen. (1999). Swiss regulations concerning fur farming. Letter of 14.07.1999

<sup>86</sup> Personal message, Katja Polzin, Swiss Animal Protection, August 3, 2015.

<sup>87</sup> Gremmen, K. (2014). *Safeguarding Animal Welfare in the European Fur Farming Industry*. Bachelor Thesis European Public Administration. Netherlands: University of Twente, Enschede

<sup>88</sup> Respect for Animals. Facts & Reports – Fur Farming. Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://www.respectforanimals.co.uk/facts-and-reports/fur-farming/53/>



The Animal Welfare Act of 2006<sup>89</sup> covers the general provisions for the protection of animals and is applicable for all (domesticated) animals under humane control or animals not living in a wild state. The Fur Farming (Prohibition) Act of 2000<sup>90</sup> states that it is forbidden to breed and slaughter animals for the value of their fur. Fur deals as by-product from meat production are however allowed.

The ban was contested by five European countries, namely France, Spain, Italy, Denmark and Finland, because they claimed that the ban breaches the European principle of free movement of goods.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Animal Welfare Act 2006. Consulted on 6 March 2015 on [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/45/pdfs/ukpga\\_20060045\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/45/pdfs/ukpga_20060045_en.pdf)

<sup>90</sup> Fur Farming (Prohibition) Act 2000. Consulted on 6 March 2015 on <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/33/introduction>

<sup>91</sup> Ward, S. (2000). *UK Government Still Fuzzy on Morals, Ethics*. FUR COMMISSION USA. Consulted on 6 March on <http://www.furcommission.com/old/news/newsE99m.htm>