

# Champion **Chicken Welfare** legislation for a healthier EU

The time to act is now.

## The Current Challenge

Each year, over 6.4 billion broiler chickens are slaughtered in the European Union, with Poland, France, and Spain leading production. Intensive farming methods prioritize rapid growth and high-density housing, leading to significant welfare concerns, such as:



**6,400,000,000+**

Broiler chickens in the EU are slaughtered annually.



### Overcrowding and Barren Environments:

Chickens are kept in cramped, barren spaces preventing natural behaviours.



### Health Issues from Rapid Growth:

Selective breeding for fast growth causes lameness, heart problems, and respiratory issues.



### Stress and Disease Susceptibility:

Poor welfare conditions increase stress and disease risk, resulting in reliance on antibiotics, raising public health concerns.

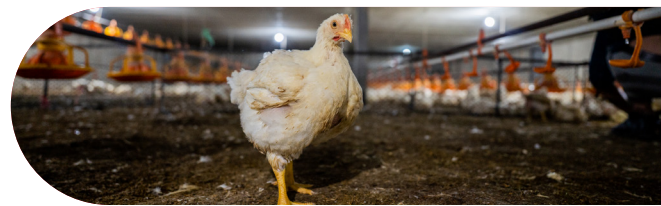
These practices not only **compromise animal welfare** but also raise **ethical and public health-related questions** that demand immediate attention.

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## Legislation Is Needed

Companies like Carrefour, Domino's, and Sodexo have committed to higher welfare standards, **alongside 380+ other businesses**. While these efforts are commendable, industry-wide progress requires legally binding regulations.

Without EU-wide legislation, businesses improving welfare face unfair competition from low-welfare producers, market distortion allows weaker regulations to undercut responsible companies, and patchwork solutions fail to ensure meaningful, large-scale improvements across the entire poultry sector.



## A Clear Path Forward

The European Chicken Commitment (ECC), a science-based policy framework, outlines the key reforms to improve broiler welfare:



**Legal Compliance:** All producers must adhere to EU animal welfare laws and regulations, regardless of their location.



**Better Living Conditions:** Natural light, enriched environments, and space for natural behaviours.



**Lower Stocking Density:** Max. 30kg/m<sup>2</sup>, with minimal thinning to reduce stress and overcrowding.



**Humane Slaughter:** Methods that minimize suffering.



**Healthier Breeds:** Slower-growing breeds prevent health problems linked with rapid growth.



**Independent Audits:** Regular third-party assessments.

## Policymakers Must Act Now

We urge policymakers to urgently revise the Broiler Directive to reflect scientific advancements and public demand. We need:

1. **Stronger Legislation:** Set higher welfare standards, and include EFSA's recommendations on broiler welfare, specifically on stocking density and use of slower growing breeds.
2. **Corporate Responsibility:** Encourage more companies to commit to the European Chicken Commitment.
3. **Support for Farmers:** Provide financial aid to transition to higher welfare production.

**Stronger meat chicken welfare means better food, safer public health, and a resilient Europe that upholds its values — it's time for EU action.**



**91% of Europeans** believe farm animal welfare is important.  
Source: Eurobarometer, March 2023



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