

## EconWelfare Project – Analysis of animal welfare initiatives in Europe

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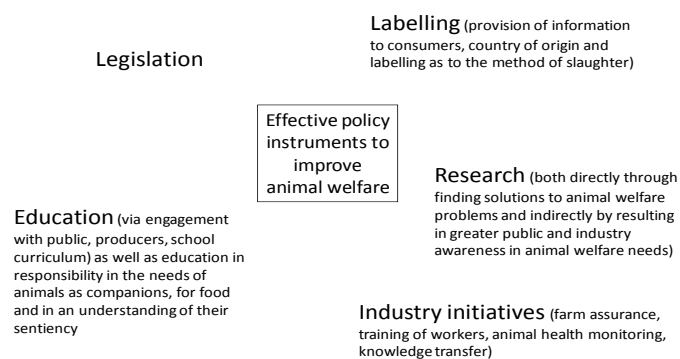
**Abstract:** In the EU funded research project EconWelfare ([www.econwelfare.eu](http://www.econwelfare.eu)) the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) has compiled a database of animal welfare initiatives in Europe. Altogether 84 initiatives from DE, ES, IT, NL, SE, PL, UK and Macedonia were clustered and analysed with regard to their main goals, instruments used, major actors and success factors, taking account of national differences. The assessment of these initiatives showed that some actor networks are successfully aiming at multiple goals (including labelling), using different policy instruments by involving broader networks, whereas a majority of initiatives are focussing on single goals using smaller networks.

**Keywords:** animal welfare, initiatives, actors, goals, instruments, success, Europe, EU Action plan

### Introduction

This publication is based on a report on grouping Animal Welfare (AW) standards and initiatives in eight European and selected 3<sup>rd</sup> countries was compiled as part of the EU funded project “Good animal welfare in a socio-economic context: Project to promote insight on the impact for the animal, the production chain and European society of upgrading animal welfare standards (EconWelfare)”. The project provides scientific support for the development of European policies implementing the Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals for 2006-2010.

The starting point was a systematic classification of different standards and initiatives for animal welfare by the UK Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC, 2008), which has defined the following policy instruments as effective for improving farm animal welfare:



**Figure 1.** Effective policy options for improved animal welfare (Source: FAWC 2008).

### Analysis of animal welfare initiatives in Europe

The analysis of animal welfare initiatives (AW initiatives) is based on a standardised on-line survey approach was conducted by the project partners in Germany (DE), Italy (IT), the Netherlands (NL), Poland (PL), Spain (ES), Sweden (SE), the United Kingdom (UK) and Macedonia (MA). The Swiss project partner was responsible for the survey in Germany. The survey asked for general information about different public and private initiatives for improved animal welfare as well as for specific information concerning objectives, implementation, evaluation and impact of each of them. The source of this

information included legislation and other regulatory documents of the different countries, websites of research institutes, animal welfare and consumer NGOs and interviews with experts (Kilchsperger, Schmid & Hecht, 2010).

The analysis of the animal welfare initiatives was made in two steps. First an analysis of the initially selected initiatives was made with the on-line questionnaire. In a second step a more in-depth analysis was made with a newly elaborated clustering methodology and a higher number of initiatives (totally 84) as in the beginning.

The analysis of the first selected animal welfare initiatives was made mainly with two groups of initiatives: 33 regulatory (e.g. legislation, private standards) and 29 non-regulatory initiatives (e.g. campaigns).

For the group of regulatory initiatives the following characteristics were observed:

- One major group of considered regulatory initiatives was initiated by the government (30%), another group by individual farmers or small groups of farmers (27%) and a third group either by the industry or non-governmental organisations (33%).
- The costs for products with animal welfare standards were estimated by the experts to be higher than for mainstream products, with the exception of transportation costs.
- For organic farming initiatives the most important barriers are to find sufficient farmers to adopt new standards and to a less degree the distribution.
- For non-organic initiatives a major barriers are the production and processing, the distribution and to a less degree the trading of products. For legal animal welfare legislation initiatives no major barriers were reported.
- A majority of initiatives indicated that farmers are not compensated for guaranteeing higher animal welfare standards (between 56% and 94% of the surveyed regulatory initiatives), in particular in the case of non-organic initiatives.

The group of non-regulatory initiatives is characterised by the following findings:

- One important initiator of this category of non-regulatory initiatives was the industry. Other initiatives were initiated by animal interest groups of the government.
- Contrarily to the regulatory initiatives, the experts assessing programs and other non-regulatory initiatives did not necessarily expect cost items for AW-friendly products to be higher than for mainstream products
- The majority of the programs and other non-regulatory initiatives do not mention major barriers for the implementation of their initiatives and the need for financial compensation.

### **Clustering and assessing animal welfare initiatives in Europe**

In order to make an appropriate grouping of initiatives, an expert workshop was held September 2009 in Madrid. One of the main outcomes of the workshop was the development of an assessment system by internal and external experts. Each national research team in the EconWelfare project has assessed their national initiatives with this scoring system.

Altogether 84 initiatives were analysed:

- 40 regulatory initiatives (with production rules either ruled by legislation or voluntary standards), of which 8 have standards for organic production, including the relevant EC regulations for organic agriculture as well as 26 non-organic standards/labelling schemes and 7 governmental AW legislation

- 44 non-regulatory initiatives (with no production rules) of which 29 are education and information initiatives, 5 research initiatives, 3 quality assurance schemes, 2 cross-compliance (financial incentive) initiatives.

The initiatives were grouped as: all initiatives, regulatory initiatives (all, organic, non-organic) and non-regulatory initiatives (all, education & information initiatives).

The outcome of the workshop and the scoring exercise is summarised. The main part is the analysis of the different initiatives, which are characterised systematically, based on their actors, goals and instruments and also related to some success factors.

### Main actors of animal welfare initiatives in Europe

Which were the main actors in these initiatives? The summary of the assessment of the actors in table 1 shows that farmers and farmer groups, major retailers (and for organic farming initiatives also specialist retailers), processors and abattoirs, certification bodies and national governments are mentioned and scored as the main actors in the regulatory initiatives. In the non-regulatory initiatives Animal Welfare organisations and researchers have main roles.

**Table 1.** Main actors in different groups of AW initiatives in Europe.

ACTORS	ASPECTS	All initiatives	All Regulatory initiatives with standards	Organic Regulatory initiatives	Non-Organic Regulatory initiatives	All NON-Regulatory initiatives - no standards	Education and information initiatives
<b>FARMING COMMUNITY</b>	Farmers	1.2	1.4	1.8	1.3	1.8	0.8
	Farmers groups	1.2	1.5	1.8	1.4	0.9	0.9
<b>CHAIN ACTORS</b>	Retailers - specialist	0.4	0.7	1.3	0.5	0.2	0.1
	Retailers - major	0.7	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.4	0.4
	Abattoirs, processing industry	0.9	1.3	1.7	1.2	0.5	0.4
	Input industry	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.4	0.3
	Certification bodies	0.5	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.2	0.1
<b>VET'S</b>	Veterinarians	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.4
<b>CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS</b>	NGOS - Animal welfare	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.0	1.2
	NGOS-Consumers	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.0
	NGOS - others	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.2
<b>PUBLIC REGULATORY AND HALF-PUBLIC ACTORS</b>	European Commission	0.5	0.6	1.0	0.5	0.4	0.3
	National governments	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	0.9
	Agencies	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0
<b>OTHER (PRIVATE) ACTORS</b>	Researchers	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.7	1.1	1.0
	Media	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.7
	Political parties	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2
	Celebrity chiefs	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0
	Schools	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.2

0= no role at all, 1 = give/offer advice, 2 = important role in the process, 3 = main decision makers

Source: Kilchsperger, Schmid, Hecht (2010)

## Main goals of animal welfare initiatives in Europe

The overall analysis of the goals of AW initiatives summarised in Table 2 shows that other relevant goals beside animal welfare were to raise awareness amongst target groups, to highlight and improve AW issues in the public and to respond to consumer concerns.

**Table 2.** Characteristics and relevance of the main goals of different groups of AW initiatives.

GOALS	ASPECTS	All initiatives	All Regulatory initiatives with standards	Organic Regulatory initiatives	Non-Organic Regulatory initiatives	All NON-Regulatory initiatives - no standards	Education and information initiatives
<b>ANIMAL RELATED GOALS</b>	Animal welfare: system focussed	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.1	2.3	2.2
	Animal welfare: animal focussed	1.7	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.8	1.7
	Sustainability	1.1	1.4	2.3	1.1	0.9	0.9
<b>CHAIN RELATED GOALS</b>	Profit in high value chain	1.0	1.3	1.8	1.1	0.7	0.4
	Competitive market	1.0	1.5	1.8	1.4	0.6	0.5
	EU livestock production	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.4
	Risk management in the chain	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.2	0.6	0.4
<b>FARMER RELATED GOALS</b>	Support farmers	1.3	1.4	2.0	1.2	1.2	1.0
	Farmers skills	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.1	1.4	1.2
<b>SOCIETY RELATED GOALS</b>	Awareness amongst target groups	1.7	1.5	1.8	1.4	1.9	2.3
	Knowledge AW	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.4	2.0	2.1
<b>CONSUMER RELATED GOALS</b>	Food safety	0.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	0.5	0.4
	Transparency	1.2	1.7	2.3	1.5	0.7	0.8
	Customer fidelity	1.2	1.7	2.4	1.5	0.7	0.6
	Consumer concerns	1.8	2.2	2.6	2.1	1.4	1.4

0= not relevant, 1 = somewhat relevant, 2 = relevant, 3 = very relevant

Source: Kilchsperger, Schmid, Hecht (2010)

## Main instruments used by animal welfare initiatives in Europe

In table 3 the main instruments used by animal welfare initiatives in Europe to promote animal welfare are summarised. These are: regulatory instruments, which are both public (legislation, EC Regulations for organic production) and private combined with penalties; labelling, which may be public (public only for organic products) or private; financial incentives (private and public), Codes of practise (assurance schemes or guidelines) in combination with standards requirements and private information campaigns or other forms.

**Table 3.** Main instruments in different groups of AW initiatives.

<b>INSTRUMENTS</b>	<b>ASPECTS</b>	All initiatives	All Regulatory initiatives with standards	Organic Regulatory initiatives	Non-Organic Regulatory initiatives	All NON-Regulatory initiatives - no standards	Education and information initiatives
<b>REGULATORY</b>	Regulation: Public	1.2	1.5	2.7	1.2	1.0	0.6
	Regulation: Private	1.2	1.8	1.9	1.8	0.6	0.6
	Penalties (fine)	0.9	1.5	2.0	1.3	0.4	0.3
	Cross Compliance	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.1
<b>LABELLING</b>	Labelling: Public	0.5	0.8	2.4	0.3	0.2	0.2
	Labelling: Private	1.3	1.9	1.9	1.9	0.7	0.7
<b>FINANCIAL, INCENTIVES</b>	Incentives: Public	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.2
	Incentives: Private	0.9	1.5	2.2	1.2	0.3	0.3
<b>ASSURANCE, GUIDANCE</b>	Codes of practise: Public	0.8	0.9	1.2	0.8	0.7	0.5
	Codes of practise: Private	1.2	1.7	2.2	1.6	0.7	0.5
<b>EDUCATION, INFORMATION</b>	Education: Public	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.8	1.0
	Education: Private	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.4	0.8	0.9
	Training: Public	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.7
	Training: Private	0.6	0.8	1.4	0.6	0.4	0.4
	Information: Public	0.9	0.9	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.9
	Information: Private	1.2	1.3	2.0	1.1	1.2	1.5
<b>DEVELOPMENT</b>	Research: Public	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.5	0.9	0.7
	Research: Private	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4

0= no role at all, 1 = give/offer advice, 2 = important role in the process, 3 = main decision makers

Source: Kilchsperger, Schmid, Hecht (2010)

A specific analysis was made with regard to the country-specific issues of the different initiatives, which shows that there are relevant differences between the goals, the use of instruments and the involvement of actors between different European countries. For example creating awareness among citizens and also a demand by consumers for AW friendly products was generally scored higher in DE, IT, NL and SE compared with PL, ES and MK.

### Success factors of AW initiatives

In order to better identify success factors of different initiatives, an analysis was with regard to four impact factors: improving welfare of the animals involved, creating awareness among citizens, generating demand among consumers and inspiring others to develop new animal-friendly initiatives. Generally the regulatory initiatives were considered as more successful to improve AW for all four factors than the non-regulatory initiatives, including education and information initiatives. The organic farming standards schemes had the highest score of all clustered groups.

**Table 4.** Assessment of success factors of different groups of AW Initiatives.

	<b>SUCCESS FACTORS</b>	All initiatives	All Regulatory initiatives with standards	Organic Regulatory initiatives	Non-Organic Regulatory initiatives	All NON-Regulatory initiatives - no standards	Education and information initiatives
<b>Question 1</b>	Improving the welfare of the animals involved	3.7	4.0	4.4	3.9	3.4	3.2
<b>Question 2</b>	Creating awareness among citizens	3.2	3.4	4.0	3.3	3.0	3.2
<b>Question 3</b>	Generating a demand among consumers	2.7	3.1	3.6	3.0	2.4	2.6
<b>Question 4</b>	Inspiring others to animal-friendly initiatives	3.0	3.3	3.4	3.3	2.8	2.8

Score: 1 = very little, 2 = little, 3 = medium, 4= high, 5=very high

Source: Kilchsperger, Schmid, Hecht (2010)

The analysis and assessment of the Animal Welfare Initiatives has shown that a few actor networks have already been quite successful in reaching multiple goals, using different policy instruments involving broader networks.

However the authors identified several other initiatives with a number of weaknesses, such as:

- Goals that are sometimes too narrow (e.g. more focus on technical stable systems than on Animal Welfare);
- Some instruments that are not used sufficiently in combination with each other (e.g. labelling schemes with education in non-organic schemes);
- Some important or potentially interesting actors are neglected or even not enough involved (e.g. farmers in campaigns or in the design of research projects).

The detailed analysis of over 80 animal welfare initiatives showed a great variety of approaches, which can be very complementary for a further development of animal welfare.

### Progressive aspects of some private animal welfare initiatives

Several of these examples can inspire consumers, farmers and other actors in giving more emphasis to animal welfare. They indicate possible instruments, which might be considered in the further work in the EconWelfare project. A few interesting examples are shortly described.

*Interesting private standards schemes with strong link to major retailers:*

- Naturama, IT (Esselunga wholesaler, strong brand, eggs, broilers, beef, high market share);
- Good Egg Awards, IT (AW NGO, several large companies, price for higher AW);

- Volwaardkip, NL (Cooperation of farmers, AW NGO and industry, robust broilers with outdoor run, niche);
- Marks & Spencer, UK. (own farm assurance scheme with high AW standards including imports);
- Elmwood Range, UK (improved AW standards, own standards + Freedom Food standards, market power);
- Soil Association, UK (organic standard above EU Organic regulation, partly also with supermarkets).

*Interesting private standards schemes with strong link to specialist retailers*

- all German organic standards: Bioland, Naturland, Demeter, DE (all animal products, farmers lead);
- Neuland, DE (highest AW standard in DE, short chains);
- Carnesi, IT (organic, private company, meat);
- Milieukeur Varkens, NL (Food industry +AW NGO, pork, standards with point/bonus system, short chain);
- System Quality Meat Program, PL (new quality assurance with improved AW, beef producers & chain);
- Carnes Valles del Esla, ES (farmers group, chain development, niche market);
- Livestock markets, ES (lead by Livestock Association, good practise guide).

*Assurance schemes with main farmers organisations based on national legislation*

- Arlagården, SE (milk producers, assurance scheme based on SE AW legislation, active follow up);
- Broiler Welfare Program, SE and Laying hen welfare Programme, SE

*Education and training:*

- Training for Farmers & Transporters, ES (national wide, public-private partnership, courses);
- Farmer Training, PL (AW Issues, implementation EU rules);
- REDE, SE (2 AW-NGOs, school AW education);
- Codes of good agricultural practice, UK;
- Educational videos on animal welfare, MK (for producers & consumers, GTZ project);
- Several others with education and training but less predominant.

*Information and campaigns:*

- PROVIEH, DE (AW NGO);
- Free Laying Hens from Battery, NL (AW-NGO);
- Green Knowledge Cooperation, NL;
- Adopt a chicken, NL (organic platform);
- Klub Gaja, PL (AW NGO);
- Do you know what you eat? PL (AW NGO, poultry).

*Other initiatives – financial incentives, etc.*

- GAK Rural Development, DE (few Länder in Germany, direct payments for AW measures);
- Measure 215, IT (Emilia Romagna, direct payments to farmers for AW measures);

- AW direct payments, CH (2 systems: outdoor access, free stable systems);
- Tierschutz-TUeV, DE (Approval system for husbandry equipment, NGOs, government recognition);
- Pigs in ComfortClass, NL (assessment system);

More information can be found in the EconWelfare report D1.1 (Kilchsperger et al. 2010).

It is important that also non-regulatory initiatives can get financial support for their information and education activities.

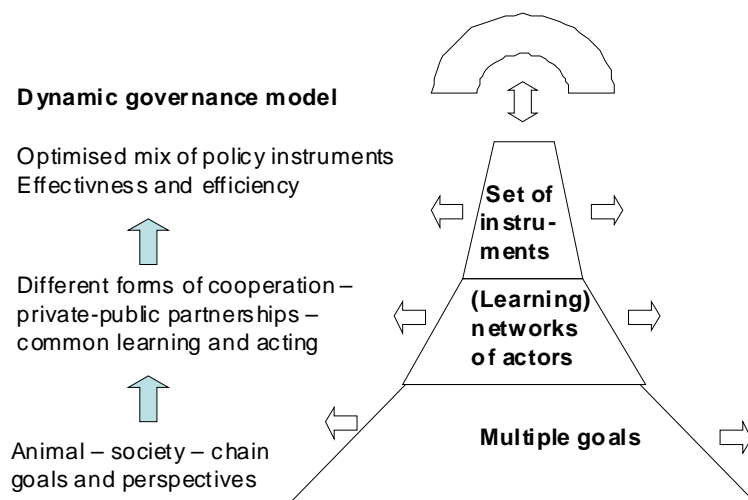
## Conclusions and role of governance

The challenge of the project is to come to more dynamic governance models, fit for the specific context in which the governance should be applied. This could mean that both the public and private sectors focus on the common multiple goals necessary for Animal Welfare to be successful. Reflections have to be made in which way the different policy instrument could be used and combined in the best way for achieving the multiple goals. Then it must be decided which partners (old and new ones) are needed and which actor networks have to be established or enlarged.

This process can lead to the formation of new and/or more dynamic governance structures, where an optimised mix of policy instruments (or even a national action plan), appropriate for the country and regional context, will be the outcome.

The role of the public bodies in a more dynamic governance model would be:

- to interact in a participatory process with the private actors;
- to design better framework conditions to translate multiple goals with the best effectiveness and efficiency;
- to facilitate the formation of multiple acting and learning networks; and
- to develop and offer appropriate instruments – possibly with little bureaucracy and costs – which allow a good implementation of better animal welfare.



**Figure 8.1.** Dynamic governance model for promoting animal welfare.

Such a dynamic governance model should facilitate the transition to better Animal Welfare, stimulating and facilitating private initiatives, supporting public-private partnership and where market mechanisms fail - setting regulatory, labelling or other framework conditions like financial incentives for farmers and other actors.



If we look at the conditions in the different countries regarding how Animal Welfare can be promoted, we see still quite some important differences related to the national and regional context, e.g. the level of animal welfare, culture, public awareness and farmers' skills in a certain EU country. Roughly, regarding awareness and actual welfare levels, among the partner countries three main groups can be distinguished: a) countries with high consumer welfare awareness (like Sweden, The Netherlands, Germany and United Kingdom), b) countries with a relatively low development of citizens and consumer awareness (like Italy and Spain) and c) relatively new member states and candidate member states with an upward pressure to meet EU minimum requirements (like Poland and Macedonia). Because of these differences, it is important that that an optimised dynamic governance model (e.g. an optimised mix of policy instruments) should be tailor-made for the context of a country (and region). There is a certain hierarchy in levels of animal welfare, awareness and skills, which differ from country to country. Furthermore there is also more or less a hierarchy in policy instruments itself to achieve these higher AW levels, ranging from full and only legislation to completely free market (although this is unfortunately not always a linear relationship with AW levels of course).

The challenge of the EconWelfare project is to discover effective policy instruments that are able to help a certain type of country to reach the next higher Animal Welfare level in the hierarchy, as by doing so the aims of the European Community Action Plan on AW can be met. As countries are in different states/levels of welfare development, we will need varying policy instruments to realise improvements. Where appropriate in the following work packages, a further analysis of the AW initiatives can provide clearer insight in (the hierarchy of) policy instruments that are best matching to achieve the specified goals/next higher levels of animal welfare. This way the project aims to connect promising policy instruments to animal welfare development levels of (groups of) countries.

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