



MEETING 2.8.2023/ INTERREG

- Finland's new national Animal Welfare Act – details etc.



New Finnish national Animal Welfare Act - into force 1.1.2024

- New Animal Welfare Act (693/2023) comes into force **1.1.2024**
- the Act was prepared for over a decade (2010- 2023)
- general requirements for the treatment and keeping of animals, applies to all animals

Key points:

- Meeting the essential behavioural needs of animals (freedom to move)
- Positive lists (pets, production animals, animals kept in circus)
- Continuous drinking water for mammals and birds
- Banning of surgical castration of piglets
- Restriction of extreme breeding

Restrictions to the sale of puppies and kittens (“puppy mills”)

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- **Construction of new tied-stalls** for cows will be prohibited from 1.1.2024
- Keeping horses or beef cattle in tied-stalls will be prohibited from 1.1.2028 (in 5 years)
- Dairy cows and heifers kept in tied-stalls must have an **outdoor access on 90 days** / grazing season (former was 60 days/grazing season)
- **Construction of new farrowing cages** in pig production will be prohibited from 1.1.2024
- **Long-term use of breeding cages** of sows (> 8 days) will be prohibited from 1.1.2035 (in 12 years)

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- **Drinking water available all time** for all kept animals in permanent establishment (some exceptions f.ex newborn, extreme weather/wintertime reasons, still minimum demand 3 times/day)
- **Mandatory pain relief** (anesthesia and pain killers) for painful procedures like disbudding of calves
- **Surgery castration of piglets prohibited from 1.1.2035** (in 12 years), but pain relief (pain killers) mandatory from 1.1.2024, local anaesthesia + pain killers mandatory from 1.1.2027 (3 years)
- Same time stunning in slaughter – religious slaughter (the same than before in Finnish legislation, no changes)
- **Controls: authorities (customs as new), procedures, sanctions, camera surveillance for critical points in slaughterhouse**, etc.

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Positive lists as new:

- Only the keeping of new animal species that can be kept in accordance with the requirements of the Act is allowed:
- fulfilment of essential behavioural needs
- meeting physiological needs
- appropriate establishments, medical care possible.

Annex to the law:

- positive list of production animals: mammalian and avian species
- positive list of animals kept in circuses and travelling animal exhibitions

List of companion and hobby animals in a decree later on

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- “**Animal breeding** must aim to produce viable, functionally capable and healthy animals.”
- An animal may not be used for breeding if:
 - 1) the breeding combination to be used is likely to cause the offspring disorders or other characteristics that cause significant harm to the offspring's wellbeing
 - 2) it is unable to reproduce naturally due to an inherited characteristic or disorder
 - 3) breeding is likely to cause significant harm to its wellbeing.
 - > Decree on breeding with species-specific restrictions is under prepare

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- Import and sale of puppies and kittens
 1. Import ban
 - Prohibition to import puppies and kittens under six months of age if the intention is to sell the puppies further in Finland within four months of import
 2. Minimum requirements for advertising the sale of dogs and cats