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EU animal welfare policy: Developing a comprehensive policy framework

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Abstract

Many EU citizens are concerned about animal welfare. The policy literature has responded to these concerns by suggesting a variety of policy instruments to policy makers. However, a gap in knowledge exists regarding which instrument should be applied under which conditions in the policy environment. This article presents the results of multiple inductive case studies of eight European countries to better understand the contingencies to animal welfare policy instruments and to further complement the framework of policy instruments available to policy makers. The qualitative evidence from this study is presented in the form of a policy decision tree indicating instruments likely to be effective under given conditions. The findings suggest that a “one size fits all” solution for animal welfare in the EU is unlikely to be effective and that although a market-based policy within the current EU context is in

many cases inevitable, the barriers are numerous and require policy instruments tailored to the specific context.

Highlights

► Animal welfare policy becomes a supranational policy issue (EU-level). ► A “one size fits all” solution is unlikely to be effective in the EU. ► Although policy options are diverse, they are all inter-linked. ► A market-based policy approach should be central.

Keywords

- Animal welfare;
 - Policy making;
 - EU policy;
 - Qualitative research
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