HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL EUROPE

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR ANIMALS

2023 Annual Report

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Our work

Ending the cruellest practices

We are committed to eradicating the most egregious forms of institutionalized animal suffering—such as the extreme confinement of farm animals, puppy mills, the fur industry, trophy hunting, animal testing and the dog meat trade. Our success is driven by our effective collaboration with governments, stakeholders, consumers, international bodies and the broader public.

Providing care for animals in crisis

Every year, we rescue and deliver hands-on care to thousands of animals in urgent need, whether through disaster response, addressing cruelty cases or through programmes that help keep people and their pets together. We also bring vital veterinary care to remote and rural communities and provide sanctuary for animals who have been exploited, abused or abandoned.

Strengthening the global animal welfare movement

By fostering partnerships, offering training, providing support and collaborating with organisations, we are working to create a kinder world. Our efforts empower and expand the capacity of animal welfare advocates and organisations in the United States and around the globe.

HUMANE SOCIETY
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Executive Director's welcome

DEAR READERS,

As we close the chapter on 2023, I find it both humbling and inspiring to reflect on the journey of Humane Society International/Europe. Our mission—to protect all animals and ensure their welfare—is a beacon that guides us through both triumphs and challenges. This past year has tested our resilience and commitment, but it has also reaffirmed our vision of a compassionate world where animals are respected and protected.

Our growth over the past few years has been remarkable. We have expanded our campaigns across 10 European countries, impacting policies and lives in ways that once seemed aspirational. However, successes were accompanied by a fair share of trials in 2023. The efforts of animal protection organisations, including HSI/Europe, to influence the European Commission's legislative proposal on farm animal welfare were met with an unexpected setback when the Commission disappointingly delayed its plans to propose legislation on phasing out cage confinement of farmed animals and avoided any commitment on banning fur farming in the EU. This decision was a significant challenge, but it strengthened our resolve to ensure that these crucial issues remain at the forefront of the legislative agenda.

Our fur campaign has faced its own set of successes and challenges. We were part of a broad coalition that garnered close to 1.8 million signatures for the European Citizens Initiative to ban fur farming—a clear indicator of public support. We continue to push for legislative bans in Poland and Romania, and our optimism for achieving these bans soon is strong.

The #NotInMyWorld campaign to ban the import of hunting trophies into the EU has started to bear fruit. The Belgian federal government's Council of Ministers approved a legislative proposal for a ban on the import of hunting trophies of endangered animal species, following concerted lobbying by HSI/Europe and local partners. In France, following our advocacy and in coordination with local allies, a cross-party bill proposal to ban the import of hunting trophies of protected species was presented in Parliament. The leading Italian airline, ITA Airways, announced its support for our campaign by adopting a new corporate policy prohibiting the transportation of hunting trophies on all company flights, both as cargo and as passenger baggage.

Our campaign to end animal testing aimed to influence the expected legislative revision of the EU law on chemicals. This to ensure that there will be no new or expanded animal testing for chemicals. We also worked on preserving the EU ban on animal testing for cosmetics. We have engaged actively with stakeholders in the chemicals industry to jointly advance animal-free approaches to chemical safety assessment.

Throughout these challenges and achievements, our mission has remained clear: to advocate for stronger animal protection laws and to mobilise public and corporate support for animal welfare. This mission has driven our campaigns and inspired countless individuals and organisations to join our cause.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are preparing for a year of renewed vigour and strategic action. We will continue to advocate passionately for the legislative changes needed to phase out cage confinement, ban fur farming and restrict imports of hunting trophies. Our efforts to end animal testing and combat dogfighting in countries such as Italy and Romania will intensify.

The war in Ukraine caused loss of life, destruction and damage. Millions of people had to flee their homes. Together with the Ukrainian Red Cross we have set up a national Pet Care programme to provide pet food and supplies to people who own a companion animal, had to flee their homes and are in need of basic supplies.

Our resilience as an organisation is rooted in the dedication of our team and the unwavering support of our donors and partners. We have seen the power of collective action, and it is this solidarity that will drive us forward. The path ahead may be challenging, but with your continued support, we are confident in our ability to overcome obstacles and achieve our goals.

In closing, I want to express my deepest gratitude to all of you who stand with us. Your support is the foundation of our success and the beacon of hope for countless animals. Together, we will continue to push for a more humane and just world.

With heartfelt appreciation,

RUUD TOMBROCK

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL/EUROPE

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United for Ukraine: Since the beginning of the war HSI is collaborating with corporates and NGOs to deliver pet food and supplies to the impacted areas.

Focus of work and structure

HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL/EUROPE IS AFFILIATED with Humane Society International, the international division of the Humane Society of the United States, and one of the largest animal protection organisations in the world. HSI is active in more than 50 countries, and HSI/Europe operates as its representative for the European Union.

Through the use of science, advocacy, education and hands-on programmes, HSI works around the globe to promote the human-animal bond, rescue and treat cats and dogs, improve farm animal welfare, protect wildlife, promote animal-free testing and research, respond to disasters and confront cruelty to animals in all its forms.

Humane Society International/Europe is a charity registered under Belgian law, having its registered office at Rue Belliard 40, 1040 Brussels, Belgium, and is registered at the crossroads bank for enterprises under the number 0562.718.279. It is also listed in the European Union Transparency Register under ID: 05097472836-90. HSI/Europe has a matrix organisational structure with functions including campaigns, fundraising, communications and operations, as well as geographies. It has four representative offices: in Poland, Romania (both operative since 2019), Germany and Italy (the latter two opened in 2020). It also has an EU office in Brussels. An important goal is to have the flexibility to set up work in European countries without an office. This could be programmatic work, such as in Spain and France, or fundraising, such as in Austria and Switzerland, for a relatively short period or for longer. This structure was well-received and is working very well.

MAI PIU'
Una vita in gabbia
non è vita!

Campaigns

Farm animals

Needs and goals

IN THE EU, around 300 million farmed animals spend all or part of their lives in cages—often in barren and cramped conditions with little space to move or express their natural behaviour. This is not only a detriment to animals but also not in line with what European Citizens want—a recent Eurobarometer poll clearly indicates that 84% of Europeans believe that the welfare of farmed animals should be better protected in their country than it is now. Furthermore, in 2020, the European Commission committed to revising and expanding the scope of the existing EU animal welfare legislation in the framework of the EU Farm to Fork Strategy. A year later, in 2021, in response to the European Citizens' Initiative to End the Cage Age, which garnered nearly 1.4 million validated signatures, the Commission also promised to deliver proposals to phase out the caged confinement of animals kept for food by the end of 2023. The goal of our campaign is to end the caged confinement of farm animals. We have been running the campaign actively in Germany, Italy, Poland and Romania, and in 2023, initiated scoping work in France and Spain focused on influencing the Commission's legislative proposal on farm animal welfare. Our campaign activities primarily focussed on influencing politicians and decisionmakers across the political spectrum in these member states and the EU.

Activities and achievements

European Commission

In the first part of 2023, HSI/Europe developed its technical position on minimum welfare standards and gold standards for pigs, egg-laying hens and chickens raised for meat (known as broiler chickens). In July 2023, we organised an event focussing on pig welfare in the European Parliament. The event put forward our position on minimum welfare standards for pigs in the EU and created robust discussion with industry stakeholders on this front.

In October things took unexpected turn when it became clear that the Commission was not going to honour its own commitment to release the promised legislative proposal this year and will revise only the existing animal transport legislation. We took action to express our disappointment at this through opinion pieces in popular media. We also immediately initiated internal consultation to determine a new strategic direction for our campaign focussing on engaging with and demonstrating the support of the corporate sector for higher welfare standards for farm animals. HSI/Europe also made the decision to engage in the 'Animals in Transport' issue given the Commission's decision to only release the legislative proposal on this issue.

Italy

In Italy, the local End the Cage Age coalition, which includes HSI, successfully closed a petition asking the Italian government to support the cage-free transition and handed over more than 110,000 signatures to the Undersecretary of Health and the Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture. An amendment to the Budget Law for 2024 was made to allocate 10 million euros for 2024 and 15 million euros annually from 2025 onwards for the cage-free transition.

Corporate engagement

HSI/EUROPE AND SODEXO developed a master class for Sodexo Continental Europe to support its 33% plant-based meal commitment. The class trains chefs, nutritionists, buyers and marketing teams in the preparation and promotion of plant-forward, animal- and environmentally friendly food. Sodexo COEU's goal is to transition 66 million meals annually to plant-based. This alone would save about 2.4 million animals yearly.

HSI/Europe joined The Pecking Order project, which assesses broiler chicken welfare in the fast-food industry in six countries—France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Romania and Spain. HSI/Europe did the first-ever evaluation of chicken welfare among 16 fast-food brands in Poland and Romania. It revealed that the fast-food industry in Eastern Europe is taking its first steps toward increasing the welfare of chickens used for meat. As a result of our active engagement with corporations on their transition to better welfare standards for farmed animals, De Kuyper Royal Distillers (Koninklijke De Kuyper) has announced a commitment to source only free-range eggs in all of their products by 2030, following cooperation with HSI/Europe on developing a new animal welfare policy. De Kuyper uses approximately 19 million eggs annually.

Fur farming

Needs and goals

THERE ARE ESTIMATED TO BE AROUND 1,000 active fur farms in the EU for mink, fox, chinchilla and racoon dogs, with approximately 7.7 million animals. This is an industry in decline, with 19 of the member states already having either full or partial bans on fur farming, or legislation rendering fur farming economically unviable. The primary focus of our campaign is to continue with this momentum and introduce bans in more member states. In 2023, our focus has been to continue to push for a legislative ban on fur production in Poland and Romania. Our campaign activity mainly included insider lobby work in both countries and also public engagement and mobilisation campaigns. We were among the organisers of the European Citizens' Initiative on banning fur production. We gathered 1.5 million validated signatures, making this the most successful ECI on issues related to animals—three months before the deadline.

Activities and achievements

European Union

HSI/Europe was invited to present the petition concerning fur labelling and the need to increase consumer protection at the European Parliament's Committee on Petitions. We also submitted feedback concerning fur labelling to a European Commission consultation on the revision of the EU Textiles Regulation.

For a third year in a row, HSI/Europe launched the Fur-Free Friday campaign aiming to raise awareness about the sales of fur products during the Black Friday period in the end of November and urge action against fur farming and the sales of fur in Europe by a set of thought-provoking visuals.

In December, in its response to the Fur Free Europe ECI, the European Commission did not announce the expected recommendation to end fur farming and instead delayed until 2026 any decision on proposing a ban. In the week preceding this announcement, HSI/Europe, together with other organisations campaigning against fur farming, organised an event in front of the European Parliament to mobilise support for the ban by Members of the European Parliament.

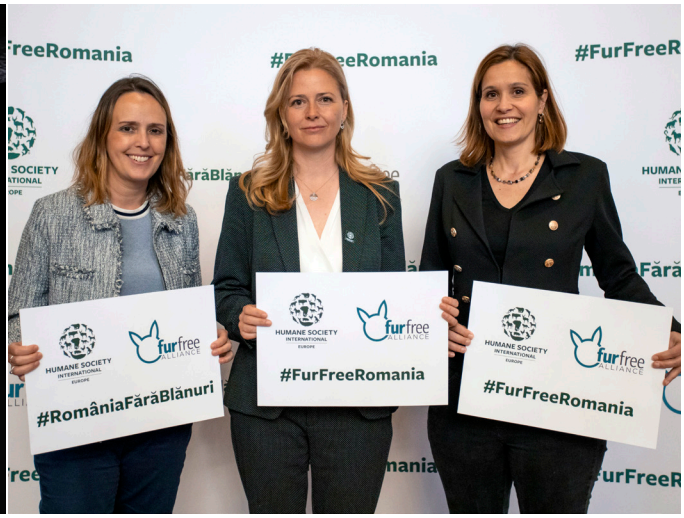
Germany

HSI/Europe lobbied for the increased support of the German government for an EU-wide fur production ban and has had several meetings with key personnel in the German Agriculture ministry, as well as with policymakers from different parties. The German government took an active role in the push for the production ban and also submitted an info note in June 2023. HSI/Europe secured the pro bono support for the Fur Free Europe ECI of several German influencers and bloggers.

Poland and Romania

Following HSI/Europe's 2022 investigation on chinchilla farms in Romania, which resulted in wide media coverage and eventually a legal proposal supported by the Senate to ban fur production, in 2023 we initiated an online petition as part of the campaign to secure support for the ban by the Chamber of Deputies (lower house of Romanian Parliament). A similar campaign with an online petition, urging decision-makers to implement a ban on fur farming, was launched at the end of the year also in Poland.

In May, we organised a roundtable event at the building of the Parliament in Bucharest, where Romanian policymakers and animal protection organisations from across Europe joined forces to call for a ban on fur farming in Romania. Representatives from 13 animal protection groups that are members of the Fur Free Alliance—an international coalition working to end fur farming—were present at the event to support the bill to ban fur farming.



BAN FUR FARMING NOW
FUR FREE EUROPE
BAN FUR FARMING NOW
FUR FREE EUROPE

Trophy hunting

Needs and goals

TROPHY HUNTING, the hunting of wild animals for pleasure and to obtain parts or the entire body for display, impacts the most iconic wildlife, including lions, polar bears and elephants, amongst other species. Humane Society International's campaign to end trophy hunting cites strong evidence this cruel practise causes suffering to hunted animals and has detrimental impacts on wildlife conservation, including the conservation of endangered species. Over 80% of citizens in the European Union oppose trophy hunting and want to end trophy imports. Trophy hunting is also opposed by many conservationists and community leaders in African nations where it is leaving a trail of destruction.

HSI/Europe's campaign focuses on political advocacy and lobbying to develop and deliver import bans that will prevent hunting trophies from being brought into member state countries. Removing the ability to bring their 'trophy' back home will reduce the appeal of this bloody pastime to committed hunters, ultimately reducing the number of animals targeted.

In the short term, we are working to reduce the total number of African lions, leopards and elephants imported as trophies into EU by at least 50%. Developing and implementing robust legislation to prevent trophy imports supports HSI's long-term global goal of reducing the trophy hunting of five species—African lions, elephants, leopards, black rhinos and giraffes—by more than 90%.

Activities and achievements

Belgium

Following over two years of concerted lobbying, working in partnership with supportive Members of Parliament, a legislative proposal put forth by Zakia Khattabi, Minister of Climate, the Environment, Sustainable Development and Green Deal, received a favourable ruling from Belgium's Council of State. This allowed the 2022 parliamentary resolution to be proposed as a Bill preventing the import of trophies from species including jaguars, cheetahs, leopards, elephants, chimpanzees and elephants. The Council of Ministers then supported the legislative proposal, so it could subsequently progress onto the Chamber of Representatives, where it would then be voted on. This momentous development meant that the halting of permits for trophy imports, in place since March 2023, could be finally and permanently implemented in Belgium.

France

A cross-party Bill to ban hunting trophy imports started its parliamentary process at the end of 2023 in France. The legislative proposal, from the 'Ecolo' (Green) Party and the majority coalition was submitted at the National Assembly, with the support of members of the Animal Welfare Commission and the President of the Sustainable Development Committee. This unprecedented development followed a year of swiftly growing political interest and support in the #NotInMyWorld campaign to end hunting trophy imports into France. This started with the submission to the Senate of a unilaterally drafted law proposal to ban certain hunting trophy imports and the adoption by the Assembly of a legal amendment designed to make the investigation by Customs Authorities of potential legal offenses during the import of hunting trophies more straightforward.

Germany

HSI/Europe, as a leading organisation in a coalition of NGOs in Germany, lobbied to finally ban exhibitors selling trips to hunt protected species for trophies from hunting fairs in Germany. As a result of our engagement, the mayor of Dortmund, where the biggest hunting fair in Europe is hosted, established an ethics council to evaluate the exclusion of these exhibitors from the fair. On our request, Prof. Klaus Bosselmann, Chair Emeriti of the IUCN Ethics Specialists Group, addressed the ethics committee to demand the ban of trophy hunting outfitters.

We played an integral part in providing technical advisory about the need to restrict hunting trophy import practises during discussions in April between the German Ministry of the Environment and the German CITES Authorities.

The year ended with a constructive meeting with Environmental Minister Steffie Lemke, in which we reminded of her stated intention to end hunting trophy imports. Her openness to explore the option of a Ministerial Decree was particularly encouraging, and we continue to maintain pressure to develop this route toward ending trophy imports.

Italy

In July, a bill to ban the trade in hunting trophies to and from Italy, inspired by HSI/Europe's campaign, was submitted at the Senate. An amendment to the following year's draft Budget Law that restated the objective to ban hunting trophies, was also made. Refusal by the government to engage on the issue prompted us to publish an open letter to the Minister of the Environment in one of Italy's highest profile newspapers (Corriere della Sera), along with a coordinated Twitter/X 'storm' and email protest, via our supporters and other members of the public. Parliamentary questions made at both the Senate and Chamber of Deputies on World Wildlife Day also called on the Minister of Environment to introduce a hunting trophy import ban.

In contrast to political delays, in December, leading Italian airline ITA Airways announced a new corporate policy to prohibit the transportation of hunting trophies on all company flights, as either cargo or passenger baggage. This was a significant testament to the company's commitment to wildlife conservation, as well as a substantial contribution to ending trophy hunting and fostering business practices that acknowledge the global community's responsibility for biodiversity protection.

Poland

In 2023, thanks to the efforts of HSI in Poland, discussion on a proposal to ban hunting trophy imports from endangered and imperilled species took place for the first time ever in the Polish parliament. The proposal reached the environmental committee stage in the parliament's lower chamber (Sejm) before snap elections were called, delaying further potential progress until after the formation of a new government.

Spain

We worked with the Spanish All Party Group on Animal Welfare on a Motion for Resolution calling for an end to hunting trophy imports into Spain to be proposed at the Congress of Deputies, Spain's lower legislative chamber. An early and unexpected general election announcement delayed planned progress. Subsequently, working with local political and NGO partners, we sought to ensure the issue of hunting trophy imports featured in election manifestos, and we ensured the ongoing visibility of the issue to relevant Ministries and potential returning Ministers.

Trophies of hunted big cats in the National Wildlife Property Repository, Denver, Colorado, USA. Photo by Britta Jaschinski/Photographers Against Wildlife Crime.

European Commission

We continued to persuade policymakers in Brussels to maximize scrutiny of hunting trophy imports, with the ability to do so having been made possible through the implementation of the revised EU Action Plan Against Wildlife Trafficking. Working with our coalition of NGO partners in Brussels, we also encouraged the EU's CITES team in the Commission's Directorate General for the Environment to increase transparency of wildlife-related decision-making; Including any basis for permitting certain hunting trophy imports, to enable us to provide evidence showing why a precautionary approach should result in them being halted. We also lobbied current and future Council Presidencies, including Spain and Belgium, to highlight the need for the European Commission to show leadership on the issue, by listening to the majority of European citizens who oppose trophy hunting and want to see an end to hunting trophy imports.

Corporate Engagement

HSI/Europe does outreach to the transport industry by securing more and extended online policies to ban the transport of hunting trophies of threatened and endangered species. In 2023 HSI/Europe moved the following companies to improved policies or communications on policies: Air France and Air France Cargo, Emirates and Emirates SkyCargo, Finnair, ITA Airways and ITA Airways Cargo, LOT Polish Airlines, Virgin Atlantic Cargo and Volotea. So far, 45 transport companies have policies in place.

Animals in research and testing

Needs and goals

ALTHOUGH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION has committed to develop a roadmap to replace animal testing for chemicals, its recent actions and proposals are setting the stage for increased animal use. It is vital that no new or expanded animal testing requirements are allowed to be introduced via revisions to EU regulations for chemicals (REACH) and classification, labelling and packaging (CLP) or delegated acts. Obsolete processes that favour "tick-box" animal testing should be replaced by risk-based prioritisation and modern approaches to testing and assessment, which take into account the latest scientific developments. Additionally, major policy decisions should be subject to full review and debate by the European Parliament and Council, and the Commission should not circumvent this process by means of Delegated Acts.

Our campaign to end animal testing aimed to influence the expected legislative revision of REACH to ensure that there is no new or expanded animal testing requirements, preserve the EU ban on cosmetics animal testing and set ambitious targets for reducing and replacing animal testing. We focus this work in six countries—the Netherlands, Spain, France, Germany, Poland and Italy. Our primary approach is lobbying governments and regulatory bodies, and engaging with industries.

Activities and achievements

Germany

In May, HSI's country director in Germany, Sylvie Kremerskothen Gleason, met with Dr. Ophelia Nick, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, to discuss ways to reduce animal testing in the EU and Germany. They also exchanged proposals on how to implement alternative methods more quickly and effectively. Employees from the Ministry of the Environment, who deal with the risk assessment of chemicals, were also digitally connected. Now that the EU Chemicals Regulation is being revised, this dialogue is extremely important to ensure that animal welfare receives even more attention and that the phasing out of animal testing can be promoted without compromising human safety.

In August, HSI/Europe organised a roundtable for German political, regulatory, academic, industry and NGO stakeholders to discuss the forthcoming revision of the EU chemicals regulation and the urgent need for reforms to speed the transition to animal-free safety assessment. The participants agreed that the revision of REACH is a unique opportunity to lay the foundation for a paradigm shift: to advance animal-free approaches to chemical safety assessment and to recognise them as the new gold standard.

European Union

In January, it was confirmed that the Save Cruelty Free Cosmetics—Commit to a Europe Without Animal Testing European Citizens' Initiative, launched in 2021 with HSI/Europe among its organisers, had smashed the requirement of gathering at least 1 million validated signatures, reaching over 1.2 million statements of support from European citizens. In July, the Commission committed to the following in its formal answer to the initiative:

- Developing a roadmap to end all mandated tests on animals for industrial chemicals, pesticides, biocides and human and veterinary medicines
- Exploring the creation of an expert scientific committee to provide advice on the development and uptake of non-animal approaches
- Proposing an action of the European Research Area to coordinate national policies to replace the use of animals in laboratories and speed up development and implementation of non-animal methods
- Organising one or more workshops with experts to determine future priority areas of research to accelerate the transition to animal-free science.

In November, HSI/Europe hosted an online roundtable with different stakeholders aimed at discussing what unsolved or emerging public health issues and unmet medical needs should be prioritized in the EU research and policy agenda, and what strategic solutions should be put in place to tackle them.

In December, HSI presented the NGO perspective at the first Commission workshop on its roadmap to phase out animal testing of chemicals. This workshop was the first step in developing and implementing a defined strategy with the ultimate goal of eliminating animal testing in the assessment of chemicals within European regulatory frameworks.

TOP: Roundtable for German stakeholders to discuss the revision of the EU chemicals regulation.

BOTTOM: Jay Ingram, director of chemicals at HSI, presents the NGO perspective at the first Commission Workshop on a roadmap to phase out animal testing of chemicals.

Sylvie Kremerskothen Gleason, country director for HSI in Germany, at her meeting with Dr Ophelia Nick, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, to discuss ways to reduce animal testing in the EU and Germany.

Other work

Dogfighting and animal abuse

IN ITALY, our advocacy efforts led to an amendment to the 2024 budget law that will provide more financial resources for training and enforcement against dogfighting. As part of the project IO NON COMBATTO to halt and repress the phenomenon of dogfighting in Italy, together with our partner organisation Fondazione CAVE CANEM we launched two informative brochures. One brochure was designed to help citizens report animal abuse and alleged dogfighting, and the second aimed to teach middle school students about the connection between animal abuse and juvenile deviance.

Stray animals in Romania

IN 2023, HSI/Europe started to provide veterinary services to underserved communities by collaborating with Romanian NGOs involved in access to care and spay and neuter work, while also identifying opportunities for policy and advocacy. Strategic in-country partnerships will not only help us reach animals in dire need of services, but they will also strengthen HSI/Europe's presence in Romania as an organisational player in companion animal welfare. Given our work in other animal welfare policy initiatives, we are well positioned to consider policy and advocacy work pertaining to the management of free roaming dogs.

We focused on providing veterinary outreach in underserved communities and shelters in areas of systemic poverty across Transylvania and in the outskirts of Bucharest. We partnered with local organisations who provide veterinary services and who work in collaboration with their relevant local government agency to ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of our work. Our Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment team will serve as a resource to ensure interventions are evidence-based and effective. We also engaged in the provision of access to veterinary care in Pata Rat near the city of Cluj-Napoca, one of the most underserved communities in Romania, with up to 100 families living off a landfill with their animals. There are hundreds of owned and free-roaming dogs who live alongside pigs, horses and cows on a vast hilly area. With local partner Tac Social, we are providing veterinary care for animals in Pata Rat, including spay/neuter, vaccination, deworming and flea treatment, and we are raising awareness about animal welfare in the community. Thanks to the efforts of HSI/Europe, more than 2,000 cats and dogs received lifesaving care, spay/neuter surgeries, vaccinations and treatment against parasites.

Wildlife protection

IN 2023, the European Commission declared its intention to downgrade the protection status of wolves in the EU. It claimed that the concentration of wolf packs in the EU has become a danger for farm animals and potentially for humans, and it announced the collection of data on "challenges related to the return of wolves" for an 18-day period. HSI/Europe and other NGOs wrote to President von der Leyen, arguing that this public consultation violated the Commission's Better Regulation rules. We questioned its necessity given the recent Fitness Check of the Nature Directives and Member States' reports under the Habitats Directive, including existing derogations for large carnivores. Nearly 300 NGOs, including HSI/Europe, signed a joint letter calling on the Commission to uphold the protection of wolves.

The European Parliament's Committee on Legal Affairs adopted its position on the Commission's proposal to revise the Environmental Crime Directive. Various amendments proposed by HSI/Europe and NGO colleagues, which significantly strengthened the legislative text, were adopted by Members of the European Parliament. Environmental crime stands as the third most lucrative organised criminal activities in the world, growing at a rate of 5%-7% per year. A 2019-2020 evaluation revealed that the effectiveness of the initial EU directive from 2008 addressing environmental protection via criminal law was limited. Few cases resulted in sentences, imposed sanctions were too low to deter criminals, and cross-border cooperation was not consistently occurring. Recognising these shortcomings, in 2021 the European Commission presented a proposal aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the directive.

Trade policy

HSI/EUROPE—in collaboration with HSI/Australia—organised a hybrid event at the European Parliament to explore how the trade deal between the EU and Australia, which is currently under negotiation, could potentially positively impact animals in both agriculture and the wild.

Disaster response

ON 6 FEBRUARY 2023 a devastating earthquake with a magnitude of 7.8 struck southern and western Türkiye and north-western Syria. The death toll in Türkiye alone reached 60 000 people, with more than double injured. The most affected area was Hatay province and its capital Antakya, where more than 80% of all buildings were completely destroyed or partially damaged. Tens on thousands of animals perished as well.

An international disaster relief team from Humane Society International, consisting of experienced responders from the United States, Europe, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia and India was deployed to provide emergency relief to thousands of dogs, cats and other animals caught up in the devastating earthquake.

In the first three weeks after the earthquake more than 1,500 animals - dogs, cats, rabbits, goldfish, a rooster, budgies, reptiles and more, found alive in abandoned apartments, damaged buildings or wandering the streets - have been brought to receive medical care at just the three main veterinary field clinics set up by local veterinarians and groups in the city of Antakya, where HSI's team was working. In the months after the disaster, HSI continued to support local veterinarians to operate one of the few clinics that have reopened and provided critical care to both owned and street animals. HSI also added support to those organising street feeding for the large cat and dog population which was struggling after most of the community who used to provide daily care was relocated out of the city.

Support for Ukraine

Needs and goals

AS UKRAINE MARKS the second year since Russia's invasion, the humanitarian situation in the country remains critical. Throughout 2023, the escalation of hostilities caused significant loss of life, destruction and damage to critical public infrastructures and productive assets. The war has had an impact on every aspect of the lives of Ukrainians. Millions of people had to face yet another winter without power amid freezing temperatures while thousands grappled with unemployment and soaring prices of all basic necessities such as food, fuel and medicines. Animals, too, are among the victims, many living in the streets in fear and depending on kind-hearted people, volunteers and animal shelters for their care and survival. Thousands of pet dogs and cats in Ukraine were left homeless when their human families were forced to flee the war, either to different countries or to different parts of Ukraine. Many rescued animals arrive at the shelters either sick, injured or traumatized. However, animal shelters and small organisations dedicated to helping and caring for these animals are struggling to maintain their services and lack basic medical supplies and equipment. Supporting shelters and organisations in Ukraine with pet food, pet supplies and veterinary care continued to be our focus. Thanks to the generous donations from our supporters, like Mars, Incorporated, who have been funding our programme in Ukraine since the start of the war, we have remained committed to helping our partners in Ukraine and elsewhere in Europe throughout 2023, ensuring Ukrainian animals received lifesaving support.

Activities and achievements

AFTER THE START OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE, HSI established a wide network of partner organisations in all neighbouring countries to provide help for the incoming refugees and their pets, thus preventing them for being separated. HSI also worked with the transport industry to provide safe passage for Ukrainian refugees and their pets into countries where they sought shelter. In 2023, as the number of refugees coming from Ukraine to other European countries decreased, we focused our efforts on providing help inside Ukraine. In 2023, HSI renewed the partnerships with key local animal welfare organisations inside and outside Ukraine with a focus on activities designed to meet immediate needs such as pet food. The ultimate goal of these activities is to keep people and their companion animals together, as well as to provide emergency care to animals on the streets.

In the months following the outbreak of the war, millions of Ukrainians were forced to flee their homes, either seeking refuge in safer parts of the country or leaving Ukraine altogether, as remaining in the war zones posed a grave threat to their lives. For many, the heart-wrenching decision to evacuate was made even harder by the anguish of leaving their beloved pets behind. These pets were not just animals; they were cherished family members, offering comfort and a precious sense of normality amidst the chaos. To help these people and their animals, in September 2022, we joined forces with the Ukrainian Red Cross—Ukraine's biggest humanitarian organisation with a wide network of branches all over the country. We launched the National Pet Care Programme, the first of its kind, to provide vital relief in the form of pet food, pet supplies and pet carriers to internally displaced people with pets. In 2023 the programme covered 14 regions in Ukraine - Kyiv, Khmelnytskyi, Donetsk, Rivne, Zaporizhzhia, Chernihiv, Volyn, Poltava, Zhytomyr, Ternopil, Cherkasy, Chernivtsi, Mykolaiv and Kryvyi Rih. In regions such as Donetsk where congregating in centralised locations poses risks, volunteers from the Red Cross facilitate door-to-door deliveries to ensure the safety of recipients. In select districts, such as the Podil district in Kyiv, additional partnerships enable internally displaced Ukrainians to access complimentary veterinary care. The programme has been extended until the end of 2024 and HSI and the URC have set the ambitious goal to help 100,000 dogs, cats and other pets and 40,000 pet guardians by that time.

In Ukraine, we also supported Homeless World—a small organisation that specializes in the rescue and treatment of injured animals. With a rescue centre near the city of Bila Tserkva, south of capital Kyiv, Homeless World provides medical care and rehabilitation to the animals. Thanks to our funding, last year the organisation was able to purchase a fully equipped animal ambulance, the only known one of its kind in the country, and recruit enough staff to continue with their rescuing operations.

In Poland, we extended our collaboration with SOS Animals—an animal charity that runs a shelter where they house and rehome rescued and abandoned animals from Ukraine. They assist refugee families with transport, veterinary care and acquiring the necessary paperwork to safely travel with their pets across the EU. SOS Animals has also provided a safe home at their shelter for those pets who could not continue the journey with their human companions and have been sending pet food to areas in Ukraine impacted severely by the war.

In Romania, we continued to support three of the organisations involved most actively in rescue work in Ukraine. With our support, Save the Dogs and Other Animals sent tons of pet food from Bucharest to Odessa and Kharkiv, and they ran dog and cat population management campaigns in Odessa, Izmail and Mykolaiv. Red Panda provided humanitarian aid to people and their pets who fled the war in Ukraine. Every week their team assists refugees and their pets with pet food and supplies and provides veterinary care.

They also sent pet food to their partners in Ukraine. Sus Inima helps those refugees and their pets who find it difficult to arrange accommodation, because many places for Ukrainian refugees do not allow pets. With our support, Sus Inima manages a house with a garden that can accommodate four families and their pets.

We extended into 2023 our Vets for Ukrainian Pets scheme, run in collaboration with the Federation of Veterinarians in Europe and the Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations to provide free of charge veterinary care to pets from Ukraine and ensure that refugees can safely stay and travel with their pets across the EU. Ukrainian people who have fled the war with their pets had access to free veterinary treatments of up to 250 Euro in 38 European countries.

Emergency response

ON THE 6TH OF JUNE 2023, the biggest dam in Ukraine was blown, prompting a state of emergency in the southern Kherson region, around the Dnipro River and at the border with the Russian-occupied town of Nova Kakhovka. Thousands of people in southern Ukraine were forced to flee their homes as water levels rose sharply, flooding villages and towns, including parts of the regional capital Kherson. Many people had to evacuate quickly and could not take any animals with them. Volunteers and animal rescue organisations from the neighbouring cities, including Odessa and Mykolaiv, launched search-and-rescue operations on inflatable boats to save stranded and distressed animals who were desperately trying to escape the floodwaters on rooftops, trees and ruins of buildings. To make the situation even worse, the efforts of the rescue teams to bring people and animals to safety were hampered by Russian shelling from across the Dnipro River and by the many hazards, such as floating landmines and unexploded ordnance brought up by the water, electrical wires hanging over the water and drifting debris.

Many of the organisations HSI is partnering with joined the relief efforts in Kherson and rescued hundreds of animals from the flood, and they dispatched trucks with pet food to the impacted areas. The Ukrainian Red Cross was able to quickly respond to the emergency in Kherson by deploying rescue teams from their local branches. The Mykolaiv branch sent 1.3 tonnes of pet food to Kherson. The emergency response team from Kryvyi Rih went to the Kherson region and distributed almost 400 kilograms of pet food to local residents who were impacted directly by the flood. The Ukrainian Red Cross Society in Ternopil, in cooperation with HSI, donated 880 kilograms of food to the Center for Sterilization of Stray Animals in Dychkiv, Ternopil, who took care of 26 dogs evacuated from the Chance shelter in Oleshky, in the flooded area near Kherson.

During the first days after the Nova Kakhovka dam was destroyed, Save the Dogs and Other Animals' partners deployed teams on boats to rescue as many animals as possible from the rooftops of submerged houses. The animals were brought to safety, cleaned and checked by veterinarians. Many were covered in oil and sludge. Save the Dogs and Other Animals sent a truck with over 20 tonnes of pet food to their partners who distributed it to shelters and volunteers taking care of the animals affected by the floods.

Our partner Red Panda sent one truck with 500 kilograms of pet food from Bucharest, Romania, to Kherson on the 7th of June. Many volunteers from Red Panda's network in Odessa joined the rescue teams in Kherson. Red Panda sent them transport cages that were bought with the help of HSI and were used to facilitate the transport of rescued dogs and cats to Odessa.

Impact

THROUGH COLLABORATION with our partners, we made a positive impact in the lives of people and pets affected by the conflict. To achieve our goal, we focused on four main areas of intervention:

Pet food

- 486.7 tonnes of food distributed in Ukraine
- 2.3 tonnes of food distributed in Europe
- 200 humanitarian relief centers supplied, including in the areas next to the frontlines, where staff and volunteers distributed the aid to internally displaced people across 14 regions in Ukraine
- Over 400 volunteers distributed food
- 1 permanent center in Romania supplied with pet food for weekly distribution to refugee pets

Pet supplies and accessories

- 44 tonnes of cat litter distributed
- 3,530 litter boxes distributed
- 2,530 pet carriers distributed
- 9,150 packs anti-tick/flea drops supplied

Managing animal population

- 4,021 spay/neuter surgeries performed over three large scale campaigns in Ukraine

Medical care and safe space

- Over 300 pets rescued via a mobile ambulance in Ukraine with at least 50 lifesaving surgeries performed to seriously injured animals
- Over 50 refugee pets traveling with their families from Poland across the EU assisted with spay/neuter, vaccinations, microchipping, ongoing vet care and transport
- 723 applications processed for veterinary treatments across 38 countries in Europe
- 260 refugee pets treated in Romania, including X-rays, vaccinations, blood analysis, minor surgeries and consultancies, and pesticide treatments
- 1 house with a garden that can accommodate four families and their pets secured, providing a safe space where refugee families and their pets arriving in Romania could find sanctuary

Fundraising strategy of HSI/Europe

OUR STRATEGY IN 2023 was to continue investing in our three key fundraising areas, whilst also being mindful of the overall return on this investment. We focus on balancing short-term investment with significant medium-term growth to ensure we can fund our ambitious work to end animal cruelty across the world.

Our three key fundraising areas are:

- Individual giving
- Philanthropy
- Legacies/bequests

We invested significantly in individual giving in 2023—expanding both our digital (social media and email) campaigns and television advertising. These campaigns have a focus of inspiring regular donations from our supporters, with these donations becoming significantly gainful over the medium term. The expansion of our philanthropy work in 2023 was also very successful, with HSI/Europe securing many substantial donations from corporate partners and charitable foundations throughout the year.

In 2023, HSI/Europe was honoured to receive over €1 million in significant philanthropic contributions from our esteemed private donors, foundations, and corporate partners. These exceptional gifts have empowered us to advance critical campaigns, including our efforts to protect farmed animals, global advocacy work for an end to the dog meat trade, and provide disaster relief following the devastating earthquake in Türkiye.

The Heidi Ott Stiftung HelferHilfe – Tiere in Not, founded by the compassionate Heidi Ott in Switzerland, has been a beacon of hope for animals in need. We were deeply grateful to receive €5,000 from the foundation this year, which supported a broad spectrum of HSI's lifesaving programmes around the world.

We are also profoundly thankful for the extraordinary support of Open Philanthropy, which donated €971,400 to further our campaign to end the use of cages and crates for farm animals in Europe. Although the European Commission has failed to yet deliver its promised legislative proposal to end caged confinement, Open Philanthropy's generous commitment ensures that we can continue to fight tirelessly for the millions of animals suffering in the farming industry.

Our enduring partnership with The Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation remained a cornerstone of our work in 2023. The Foundation's generosity was felt across several vital areas, including a €55,000 donation for our disaster response efforts in Türkiye and €40,000 to support essential veterinary services at our United States sanctuary, Black Beauty Ranch.

Our work for animals both in Europe and across the world would not be possible without the generosity of our extraordinary supporters. We are deeply grateful to everyone who donated to us in 2023.

From Italy, Mrs. Luisa Angelini has long been a passionate advocate for HSI's global initiatives. Her deep commitment to ending the dog meat trade in Asia has been truly transformative. Thanks to her donations, HSI has made significant strides, including helping to ban the dog meat industry in South Korea. Our work continues in countries across the region—Viet Nam, Indonesia, India, and China—where countless animals still need our protection.

Luisa Angelini:

> *"As someone who has always believed in the importance of compassion, I am deeply connected to the mission of HSI. Caring for animals, especially dogs and cats, has been a cornerstone of my family's values, and I am proud to support HSI's tireless efforts to alleviate the suffering of animals worldwide. The cruelty of the dog meat industry is something that moves me profoundly, and I am honoured to contribute to HSI's campaign to end this horrific practice. I hope others will join us in the fight to end animal cruelty and create a kinder world for all beings."*

We also wish to extend our sincere gratitude to zooplus, Europe's leading online pet supplies retailer, who generously supported HSI's 2023 rescue operations in response to the devastating earthquake in Türkiye. By matching donations from their customers, zooplus raised an incredible €131,000 for our animal rescue fund, helping us deliver lifesaving aid to animals in crisis.

Financials

FINANCIALS		2023
INCOME		
Donations		€2,398,399
Grants	Trusts and Foundations	€95,000
	HSI US	€2,765,462
Interest Income		€14,074
Total Income		**€5,272,935**
EXPENSES		
Compensation	**Total**	€**1,363,917**
	Fundraising	€286,555
	Campaigns and Communications	€1,077,362
Non-Compensation	**Total**	**€4,438,860**
	Fundraising	€1,222,402
	Campaigns and Communications	€2,054,147
	Grants to other organisations	€1,162,311
Total expenses		**€5,802,777**
Net Loss		**(€529,842)**

IN 2023, HSI/Europe raised EUR 5,272,935 thanks to the generous donations of supporters through various fundraising campaigns and events, as well as grants from individual and corporate trusts, foundations, and Humane Society International---the U.S. organisation we are affiliated to.

Our total spending for 2023 was EUR 5,802,777, which breaks down as follows:

- **Compensation:** EUR 1,363,917
  - **Fundraising:** EUR 286,555
  - **Campaigns and Communications:** EUR 1,077,362
- **Fundraising Campaign Costs:** EUR 1,222,402
  This includes the cost of our digital marketing campaigns, fundraising events, and professional fundraising services, as well as media and digital advertising to attract new supporters and donations.
- **Campaigning Programmes and Communication Costs:** EUR 2,054,147
  These include 1) the costs for engaging experts to support our efforts in promoting animal welfare at both EU and national levels, along with social media advertising aimed at policymakers, and 2) general costs needed to deliver our programmes and manage the office, including legal fees, travel, utilities, and other operational expenses.
- **Grants:** EUR 1,162,311
  Funds awarded to other non-profit organisations to further our shared mission of promoting animal welfare, providing direct care, and rehabilitating animals.

For 2023, HSI/Europe ended with a net loss of EUR 529,842. As planned and agreed by the organisation, losses are funded by HSI US via inter-company grants.

Global achievements of Humane Society International and the Humane Society of the United States

IN 2023, Humane Society International and the Humane Society of the United States made remarkable strides in their joint mission to create a better world for animals. The year was marked by several groundbreaking victories that spanned continents and touched on every aspect of animal welfare, showcasing the organisations' unwavering commitment to ending cruelty and protecting animals everywhere.

One of the most significant achievements came in South Korea, where the government took a historic step by passing a bill to end the dog meat trade by 2027. This victory was the culmination of over a decade of relentless campaigning, bringing hope for millions of dogs who have long suffered in this cruel industry.

In Canada, we helped enact a ban on the trade of elephant ivory and rhino horn, setting a powerful precedent for wildlife protection globally. This was complemented by HSI′s legal efforts in South Africa, where a challenge to the government's trophy export policy safeguarded elephants, rhinos and leopards from being hunted. These actions underscored HSI's dedication to protecting wildlife from exploitation and harm.

The year also saw significant progress in farm animal welfare. In the United States, the HSUS played a crucial role in protecting California's Proposition 12, a landmark law that mandates humane treatment for farm animals. The Supreme Court′s decision to uphold this law, which bans the extreme confinement of pigs, hens, and calves, was a major victory for farm animals and set a new standard for animal welfare nationwide. On a broader scale, HSI's work in Brazil led to an agreement to serve 22 million more plant-based meals, highlighting a shift toward more sustainable and humane food systems.

In its ongoing battle against puppy mills, the HSUS secured a critical victory in Oregon, which became the seventh U.S. state to ban the retail sale of dogs in pet stores. This law is a significant blow to the puppy-mill-to-pet-store pipeline, which perpetuates the suffering of countless breeding dogs. Furthermore, the HSUS's advocacy on Capitol Hill gained substantial support for the Puppy Protection Act, with over 220 bipartisan co-sponsors, signaling a growing political will to end the cruelty of puppy mills.

HSI also continued to lead the charge in the fight against animal testing. In a year of notable legislative achievements, Brazil, Canada and Chile joined the ranks of countries banning cosmetic

testing on animals. Canada′s new law, recognised as the world's strongest prohibition on the sale of animal-tested cosmetics, was particularly groundbreaking. Meanwhile, in South Korea, HSI's efforts contributed to the phasing out of horseshoe crab blood in testing, with synthetic alternatives now taking precedence.

In times of crisis, HSI was there to provide critical support. Throughout the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the organisation delivered essential supplies and veterinary care to pets and their families affected by the war. HSI's global response efforts included rescuing animals in the aftermath of disasters, such as the wildfires in Maui and the earthquakes in Türkiye, ensuring that thousands of animals received the care they needed in the wake of devastation.

Capacity building and education remained at the forefront of HSI's mission. The organisation trained over 1,300 law enforcement officers across Latin America on how to combat wildlife trafficking and handle animals humanely. In India and Latin America, HSI's community engagement efforts focused on educating people about peaceful coexistence with animals, furthering the cause of animal welfare at the grassroots level.

HSI's advocacy extended into the corporate world, where it successfully lobbied major companies such as Mondelēz International to commit to using 100% cage-free eggs by 2025. This corporate shift, along with the legislative efforts in the U.S. to expand veterinary telemedicine and support pet-inclusive housing policies, demonstrated the comprehensive approach of HSI and the HSUS to creating systemic change for animals.

Our mission

Advancing the welfare of animals in more than 50 countries, Humane Society International works around the globe to promote the human-animal bond, rescue and protect dogs and cats, improve farm animal welfare, protect wildlife, promote animal-free testing and research, respond to disasters and confront cruelty to animals in all of its forms.

HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL EUROPE

Humane Society International/Europe
Rue Belliard 40, 1040 Brussels, Belgium | EU Transparency Register ID: 05097472836-90 | info@hsieurope.org | hsi.org

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