

Animal welfare in Romania



Romania has been a member of the European Union since 2007. The country's politics is known for its corruption and animal welfare is at a very low level. There are an estimated 2–3 million stray dogs in Romania and approximately 100,000 in the capital of Bucharest.



The population of strays flourished in the late 1980s. After the departure of Communist dictator Ceausescu. He had suburban areas replaced with flats and apartments, leaving no space for the dogs and cats. Pet animals were abandoned on the streets of the capital. After the revolution in 1989 the government were forced to cancel a proposed cull of stray dogs after their plans were widely criticised. Among others, the French actress Brigitte Bardot wrote an open letter to the Romanian government condemning the cull.

Attacks by strays and incidents of people being bitten are used to justify the brutal mass killing of the dogs. The subsidy that the government receives from the European Union to spay and neuter the dogs, disappears into the pockets of corrupt government officials and so-called 'helpers'. It is thought that a cull is a cheaper option to deal with the stray population but the question arises whether the Romanians want to solve the problem anyway.



Street dogs have been the subject of [corruption](#) for decades. The killing of strays is done by contract. Many members of the committee that deal with the [new law PL912](#) have an interest in these companies and award contracts to friends and relatives. This new law, which may be signed by President Traian Basescu in November 2011, will allow local authorities to independently decide the fate of strays. Stray dogs will be rounded up from the streets and held in shelters for 30 days. If they are not adopted during that time, they will be killed. Animals which are euthanized in Romania are killed by the cheapest possible means. Previous attempts to control the street dog population through euthanasia were barbaric and ineffective and included shooting, poisoning and beating them to death.

Incidents of people being bitten are used to justify the brutal mass killing

Parliament voted by 168-111 to pass the law which has angered animal welfare groups worldwide who have lobbied for months against the measure. The controversial decision on the mass cull of strays has been delayed on a number of occasions. For months animal welfare groups from across Europe have gathered at the Romanian parliament, urging law makers not to pass the legislation.

Local governments have already secretly started the cull of stray dogs. 220 dogs were recently dispatched – in one night! - in a shelter in Botosani.

What they do not want to understand is that [spaying and sterilizing](#) is much better and cheaper than catch and kill. Similar actions in the past have already proven their success, and the country now has far fewer stray animals. "Euthanasia" is widely morally reprehensible and has become out of date. Moreover, the reverse is also true: despite that in recent years more than 200,000 animals were slaughtered, the problem of stray dogs continues.

The Romanian government has never studied the report [Guidelines for Dog Population Management of WSPA](#) and WHO (World Health Organization).

It literally says: "Each habitat has a specific carrying capacity for each species. This specific carrying capacity depends on the availability of resources (shelter, food, water). The density of a population of higher vertebrates (including dogs) is almost always near the carrying capacity of the environment. Any reduction in population density through mortality is rapidly compensated by better reproduction and survival. In other words when dogs are removed, the survivors' life expectancy increases because they have better access to the resources, and there is less competition for resources".

Legislation

There is [legislation](#) in Romania, but unfortunately it does not protect the strays.

Legislation of PL 912/2007 was adopted by the Romanian Parliament after the PD-L (Liberal Democratic Party) started a [misleading and manipulative campaign](#) to gather signatures from the public. The Liberal Democratic Party used the EPP's logo (European People's Party) on its petitions, deceiving people into believing that the capture and killing of strays was on the advice of the EPP.



Misleading and manipulative campaign by PD-L (Liberal Democratic Party).

Politics

According to the government officials, the adoption of law PL 912/2007 is now inevitable and the heavy handed tactic of capturing and killing strays will be introduced.

In March, the [European Commission called on the Romanian parliament](#) not to vote for the law.

Already since 2006 the EU tried to get approved a written statement and recently (on October 13, 2011) that finally succeeded with the [written declaration 26/2011](#).



Only the signature of Prime Minister Traian Basescu is needed to ratify the adopted law. During his time as Mayor of Bucharest, Basescu ordered the cull of 100,000 dogs which took place over a three year period at a cost of €5,000,000.00.

This mass cull proved to be completely ineffective and a waste of tax payers money. Premier Basescu recently admitted to having made mistakes regarding the issue of strays, however there is a large probability that he will sign for the new law.

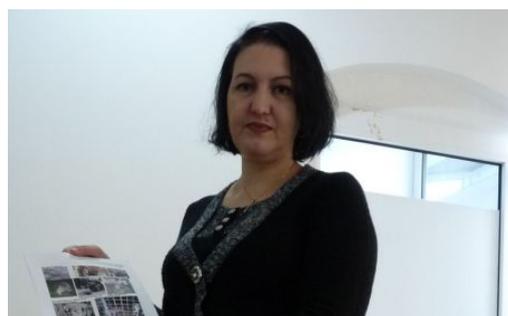


For a long time there are protests around the world.

Democratic Liberal Party PDL:
"We want a clean and safe Bucharest for our children."
"The city must be regained for its citizens."

FNPA **Federatia Nationala pentru
Protectia Animalelor**

☞ Cea mai inalta datorie a omului este de a cruta animalele de cruzime - Emile Zola



Carmen Arsene (FNPA)

Carmen Arsene, active with the [FNPA](#) (Federatia Nationala pentru Protectia Animalelor), dedicated many years to animal welfare. In a [joint press release](#) they explain the situation.

The FNPA has published an extensive [report](#) on the stray dogs in Romania. In April 2011 Codrut Fehrer has published a report about [the stray-dog business in Romania](#).

Several members of the European Parliament have asked the European Commission about animal welfare in Romania:

[Emma McClarkin \(ECR\)](#)

[William \(The Earl of\) Dartmouth \(EFD\)](#)

PVV MEP Daniel van der Stoep has written to the European Commission questioning the barbaric ways in which Romania's municipalities are dealing with stray dogs (Botosani county).

People were outraged about this law which was expected to be finally adopted end of 2011 in Romania.

"The Romanians first should try to sterilized or neuter all stray dogs before 'finishing them as barbarians'."

Van der Stoep cites the Romanian development "EU unworthy" and wants Bucharest to refund EU contribution to Brussels.

 The European Parliament's
Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals
Working to ensure that full regard is paid to the welfare requirements of animals



In March 2011, Several MEPs from the Intergroup [called on Romania](#) to respect the Lisbon Treaty and not to enter law PL 912/2007. Also in the Netherlands, within the House of Representatives, questions have been raised on the killing of strays in Romania.

NGO's in Romania

FNFA Federatia Nationala pentru Protectia Animalelor

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www.4animals.ro/

www.animed.ro/

www.apam.ro/

www.cta-hobby.ro/

www.gia.org.ro

www.nature.ro

www.rolda.org

www.romaniaanimalrescue.com

www.savethedogd.ro

www.whitefang.platinumnet.ro

www.zdreanta.3x.ro