

# Letter Template to the EU MEP's

Dear ,

Millions of EU citizens care deeply about animal welfare and are sickened to see constant reports of horrific animal cruelty, and look to the EU and their MEPs to help improve animal welfare across Europe. Marina Yannakoudakis, London MEP, raised the issue about the need for countries seeking to acquire EU membership to demonstrate certain standards of animal care. The Commission has also stated and that aligning national animal welfare legislation with EU law is a prerequisite for EU membership, so I want to bring to your attention Serbia, who has recently been granted full candidate status.

Not only are the conditions entirely inhumane in most, if not all state shelters, but it is common knowledge amongst Serbian animal welfare activists that shelters are used to launder money from public budgets. Population control and promotion of spaying and neutering as well as implementation of the animal welfare law is not in any shelter manager's interest because they want and need a constant flow of new dogs so they can receive more money and justify the funds spent each month from the budget.

In the case of the shelter in Pozega, activists were not only prevented from taking a severely emaciated, suffering dogs to veterinary care, but were also refused dogs that were previously reserved for adoption, with adoption fees paid in advance. Once in the dark, cold chambers of the shelter, these dogs are never let outside, are starved, beaten and injected with T61 injection with no proper sedatives or preparation.

Due to sterilisations performed by incompetent veterinarians, dogs die of infection. Instead of surgical thread, rope is used to saw sterilisation wounds. I even have access to images from the state dog shelter in Pozega, which show horrifically starving dogs eating their sibling who was left dead in their pen amongst other dogs.

Approximately 70-90 dogs are killed every week in Pozega shelter. Local Authorities pay 100 Euros for each dog to the pound, which means the shelter earns around 400.000 Euros per year. Very little, if any of those funds are used towards dog care. It should also be stated that the shelter charges 28 Euros per dog for adoption fees. Even if you reserve and pay for a specific dog, the shelter staff often refuse to surrender the animal, in their words "out of spite".

Thirteen criminal charges have been filed against the management of the pound, but they continue to operate against animal welfare laws in this country.

There is clear evidence now that people who take pleasure in harming animals are also a potential danger to other people, especially children. All abuses get discovered and publicised widely in the media and internet, and millions of people do not want to visit or trade with countries who treat animals like this as they are simply not trusted, so the authorities should have an incentive to take action.

I would urge you please to raise these issues with the European Parliament's Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of animals (<http://www.animalwelfareintergroup.eu/>). I understand that each MEP is invited to participate in these regular animal welfare meetings. It is imperative that the European Parliament discusses the matter of animal welfare with their Serbian counterparts and urgently demands a full investigation into the state shelters and animal abuse cases.

The European Parliament states that “The EU has among the world’s highest standards of animal welfare”. The Eurogroup for Animal Welfare is strongly urging the European Commission to adopt adequate measures to ensure that all pet animals are properly treated to protect their health and welfare. If it is Serbia’s wish to join the EU it would seem that until their government takes crimes against defenseless, sentient animals seriously they will not be a fit country to be accepted into the EU.

Thank you very much for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,