

06.04.2026

PRESS RELEASE

Animals beaten and slaughtered conscious: new evidence exposes serious welfare violations and potential criminal offences in Greek slaughterhouses

New evidence collected in 2024 and 2025 reveals serious animal cruelty in two slaughterhouses in Northern Greece, including practices that may amount to criminal offences under national law.

The findings show animals subjected to severe and avoidable suffering during transport and slaughter. In particular:

- Sheep and goats were killed without prior stunning, while fully conscious;
- Animals unfit for transport were still taken to the slaughterhouse instead of being euthanised;
- Injured and dying animals were left without care overnight;
- Animals were kicked, beaten, dragged and subjected to electric shocks, including on sensitive areas;
- Basic safeguards to ensure a humane death were missing or not properly applied.

These practices breach EU law and may also constitute acts of animal cruelty under national legislation. What emerges is not only a failure to apply the rules, but a profound lack of care and responsibility towards animals. Allowing animals to suffer or be killed while conscious is unacceptable and deeply troubling.

With Easter approaching—a peak period for slaughter—there are growing fears that these abuses continue and escalate, affecting even greater numbers of animals.

The evidence has been submitted to the Greek authorities and to the European Commission. It indicates repeated non-compliance and raises serious concerns about the effectiveness of official controls. Greece has already faced an EU infringement procedure in the past for similar violations. The recurrence of such practices raises concerns that the situation has not been properly addressed.

The organisations call on the Greek authorities to investigate immediately, suspend operations where necessary, initiate criminal proceedings, and ensure effective controls in line with EU law.

The European Commission is urged to take this new evidence into account and act where necessary.

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