

*Dr. Caroline Lucas*

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for the South East of the UK**

Commissioner Byrne  
Rue de la Loi 200  
Brussels

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Dear Commissioner

In July 1999 the European Union took a step forward in prohibiting the battery cage for egg laying hens when it agreed Council Directive 1999/74/EC.

On 19 October Germany implemented Directive 1999/74/EC when the Bundesrat passed the Hen Husbandry Ordinance. The Hen Husbandry Ordinance implements higher standards than required by the Directive and is to be congratulated for that reason. The Ordinance prohibits the installation of battery cages, which are only ca. 50 cm high, regardless of whether they are modified cages or conventional cages. Conventional battery cages (with 550 cm<sup>2</sup> per hen) are only permitted until 31 December 2006 and modified cages are only permitted until 31 December 2011.

Under Article 13 of the Directive Member States are required to implement the Directive before 1 January 2002 and inform the Commission thereof. I would be most grateful if you could therefore let me know:

- which Member States have informed the Commission that they have implemented Council Directive 1999/74/EC?
- which Member States have introduced standards significantly higher than those required by the Directive?
- what steps does the Commission intend to take to ensure that Member States implement Council Directive 1999/74/EC without any further delay?

Yours sincerely

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