

# Online Survey - Animal Welfare Levy

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## 1 General information

General information about the online survey based on the JEEA checklist:

1. **The subject pool and recruiting procedures.** Participants were recruited online via Prolific. We asked for a representative sample of the UK population (N=500). We obtained in total 501 answers.
2. **When and where experiments were conducted (manually, online etc.)** The study was published on Prolific on 30 November 2023. The questionnaire was set up online through LimeSurvey.
3. **Procedures to test for comprehension before the experiment (e.g. practice trials, quizzes etc.).** Three attentions checks were set up on the first screen after the presentation of the model. We retained in the analysis only the participants who passed the attention checks.
4. **Matching procedures, especially for game theory experiments.** Not applicable.
5. **Subject payments, including whether artificial currency was used, the exchange rate, show-up fees, average earnings, lotteries.** Participants were paid on a hourly wage of 9 pounds, as suggested by Prolific at the time of data collection, i.e., 0.75 pound for the completion of the survey.
6. **The number of subjects in each session.** Participants were randomly allocated with equal probability between the two treatments. In total, 236 participants faced the “Life Not Worth Living” version, and 265 faced the “Negative Welfare” version of the questionnaire.
7. **Any use of deception and/or any instructional inaccuracies.** None.
8. **How long a typical session lasted, and how much of that time was instructional.** The survey was expected to take 5 minutes, and the median response time was 4 minutes 29 seconds.

## 2 Instructions

**Screen 1** In this short questionnaire, we will show you a framework for animal welfare for farmed animals. This model was developed by animal welfare experts and focuses on the "Five Freedoms" that are considered essential to the welfare of the animal.

The Five Freedoms include:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from discomfort
3. Freedom from pain, injury, or disease
4. Freedom from fear and distress
5. Freedom to express normal behavior

To evaluate the welfare of animals on this scale, recent work has proposed to assess the level of violation of these freedoms, i.e., the extent to which each freedom is actually limited by the farming conditions the animal experiences.

The violation levels can take the following values for each of the Five Freedoms:

- No violation (0 point)
- Mild violation (1 point)
- Moderate violation (2 points)
- Severe violation (3 points)
- Very severe violation (4 points)

Researchers propose to compute an indicator of the animal's welfare by summing the violation points. The sum can take values ranging from 0 (no violation point at all) to 20 (all freedoms have very severe violations).

How many Freedoms are considered in the above model?

[1 2 3 4 5 No answer]

How many violation points can be assigned to a specific Freedom in the above framework?

[1 2 3 4 5 No answer]

Check all the Freedoms of animal welfare that the model contains:

- Freedom from hunger and thirst
- Freedom from discomfort
- Freedom from pain, injury, or disease
- Freedom from fear and distress
- Freedom to express normal behavior

**Screen 2** We show you below two examples of how the violation point scheme can be used to assess the welfare of animals.

Imagine that a farmed animal has restricted access to food and water and that the very small amounts of food it has access to are of poor quality and low variety. It lives indoors with many other animals in a confined space that is overcrowded and noisy, without an appropriate place to rest. The ground is covered in animal waste, which releases chemicals such as ammonia. The space lacks appropriate ventilation and control of light and temperature, such that the animal suffers from aversive odours, light intensity, and temperatures. The routine is well-established and there are no unpredictable events. The animal belongs to a rapid-growth strain. The animal lives in an area where there are very limited risks of disease or poisoning. However, because of its rapid growth, the animal suffers from functional impairments, obesity, and poor fitness within its environment. Obesity is also a source of chronic injuries in the form of broken bones. The stall is not enriched, such that the animal has no opportunities to interact with the environment. The harsh living conditions (e.g. unrestricted breeding, resource limitations, lack of refuges) give rise to exclusively negative interactions with other animals, such as aggression without the possibility of escape.

The animal-welfare expert could assign the following grades:

- Freedom from hunger and thirst: very severe violations (4 pts)
- Freedom from discomfort: very severe violations (4 pts)
- Freedom from pain, injury, or disease: very severe violations (4 pts)
- Freedom from fear and distress: very severe violations (4 pts)
- Freedom to express normal behavior: very severe violations (4 pts)

The sum of violations would be 20/20.

Choose one of the following answers:

- The example is very clear
- The example is rather clear
- The example is rather unclear
- The example is unclear

Imagine that a farmed animal has free access to fresh water and drinks in appropriate amounts. It also has free access to food, and the diet is nutritionally well-balanced and contains a variety of food items of diverse texture and taste. The animal lives indoors with outdoor access and has plenty of space to move about freely. The ground is clean and the space contains some relatively comfortable resting areas. The space is well-ventilated and dissipates most odours and air contaminants. The noise, temperature, and light levels are well-controlled throughout the day and night to the levels preferred by the animal. The animal lives in an area where there are very limited risks of diseases or poisoning. The animal has good fitness within its environment and suffers from no functional impairment. Due to the well-adapted environment and provision

of health treatments, the animal faces very little risk of injury or disease. The environment is enriched with various opportunities to explore, move around, and make choices. There are a few other animals of the same sex living on the site, with whom the animal can play. There are limited threats or risks of predation, and the animal can retreat into the shelter to rest safely when needed.

The animal-welfare expert could assign the following grades:

- Freedom from hunger and thirst: no violation (0 pts)
- Freedom from discomfort: no violation (0 pts)
- Freedom from pain, injury, or disease: no violation (0 pts)
- Freedom from fear and distress: no violation (0 pts)
- Freedom to express normal behavior: no violation (0 pts)

The sum of violations would be 0/20.

Choose one of the following answers:

- The example is very clear
- The example is rather clear
- The example is rather unclear
- The example is unclear

**Screen 3 - Life not worth living framing.** We have shown you before two examples of an animal's welfare with extreme violations. The sum of violation points was either at the minimum (0/20) or at the maximum (20/20).

Some people consider that once a given number of violation points is reached, the negative experiences of the animal tend to outweigh the positive experiences such that one could say that its life is no longer worth living.

This threshold value is particularly important because it might justify some intervention to ensure that the animal's life is worth living.

In your eyes, above which number of violation points do you think that the negative experiences of the animal become so important that one would say its life is no longer worth living?

- Life becomes not worth living at 1 violation point and above
- Life becomes not worth living at 2 violation points and above
- ...
- Life becomes not worth living at 20 violation points and above
- Life is never not worth living

**Screen 3 - Negative welfare framing.** We have shown you before two examples of an animal's welfare with extreme violations. The sum of violation points was either at the minimum (0/20) or at the maximum (20/20).

Some people consider that once a given number of violation points is reached, the negative experiences of the animal tend to outweigh the positive experiences such that one could say that the overall welfare tends to be negative.

This threshold value is particularly important because it might justify some intervention to ensure that the animal's welfare is positive.

In your eyes, above which number of violation points do you think that the negative experiences of the animal become so important that you would say that the animal has a negative welfare overall?

- Welfare becomes negative at 1 violation point and above
- Welfare becomes negative at 2 violation points and above
- ...
- Welfare becomes negative at 20 violation points and above
- It is never negative