Animal Rights in Greece: Legislation and Perceptions

Gerasimos Filippas
Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law National Technical University of Athens, Greece

Spyridon Stelios
Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law National Technical University of Athens, Greece

Kostas Theologou
Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law National Technical University of Athens, Greece

Abstract:
Animal rights are a controversial issue that often causes ethical dilemmas within modern civilization. Philosophical thought plays a key role in this debate, through various theories that put forward the establishment of moral rights to animals. All this is also reflected in the adoption of strict legal frameworks in favor of animal protection throughout the Western world. In Greece, in recent years huge steps have been taken compared to the past and now a fairly strict legal framework has been adopted for the protection of animals (mainly companion animals) but also for the obligations of their owners. Nevertheless, animal abuse in Greece continues almost on a daily basis. To better understand the parameters that determine the human-animal relationship from an ethical point of view, an empirical study was conducted as part of an ongoing research investigating the perception and level of familiarity of university instructors on this topic. Research findings refer to four thematic categories: a) legal framework, b) animal rights-ethics, c) experimental animals, d) technology and animals and show that the academic background of the participants generally does not play a significant role in their answers.

Keywords: animal rights, legislation, technology, civilization, empirical study.

Introduction
Animal rights is a contentious issue in modern society, frequently resulting in ethical quandaries. Animal rights are now more prominent than ever in the public debate, as seen by the implementation of severe legislative frameworks in most Western countries. Nonetheless, we see forms of abuse that animals face from humans every day, whether they are companion animals, productive animals (those raised for economic reasons in the context of animal husbandry and intended for consumption), or even wild animal species whose ecosystems have been largely destroyed by human actions.

To gain a better understanding of the parameters that determine the human-animal relationship from an ethical standpoint, we examined the legal framework and gathered information on the perceptions and levels of familiarity of humanities and science-engineering university instructors with this topic. On a second level, the interaction between animals and technology was examined, as the latter is an essential component of civilization. An empirical study was undertaken as part of one of the authors'...
ongoing PhD, utilizing a novel and original questionnaire. A major study subject is about the view of animal rights and the ethical treatment of animals. A secondary question concerns the identification of animals in respect to technology.

**Animal Rights**

In modern times, the dramatic transformation in the treatment of nonhuman animals, as well as the animal rights issue, began in 1975 with the release of Peter Singer's book *Animal Liberation*. Singer, in this book as well as in his subsequent writings, such as *Practical Ethics* in 1980, is influenced by utilitarian philosophers, especially Jeremy Bentham. In particular, Bentham emphasized that the capacity for suffering is an essential future that entitled a creature to equal respect, and that the capacity for suffering and enjoyment is not just another attribute like the potential for learning a foreign language or higher mathematics (Singer, 2011). So, Singer believes that any entity capable of suffering will almost always choose not to suffer, and that if we want to attain the highest utility, the best outcomes for everybody involved, we must include this preference, this self-interest (Singer, 2011). Thus, Singer's utilitarian scales balance suffering and need - interests and preferences - and the ability to suffer is required to have preferences based on sentience (Kemmerer, 2006). For Singer, then, all creatures have the same right to have their interests taken into account whenever they happen to have interests, and failure to adhere to this principle of equal consideration of interests would be, and Singer insists on this, a form of speciesism (Milligan, 2015), which in essence is prejudiced behavior in support of the needs of members of the same species opposed to members of other species (Singer, 2002).

Singer's text followed an ongoing wave of activism and a series of public revelations about the unacceptable practices used in animal food production systems and animal testing. The combined impact of this activism, and public awareness of animal cruelty, temporarily reduced animal experimentation and brought about greater oversight of animal food production systems. Bolstered by initial signs of success, Singer's positions were quickly adopted as the theoretical basis for the emerging animal rights movement (Milligan, 2015).

However, Tom Reagan spoke boldly about rights in his 1983 book *The Case for Animal Rights*. In this book, Regan established the "Rights View" theory, which holds that certain animals have fundamental rights that must be respected. Specifically, Regan contends that typical mammals aged one year or older have "a welfare," which is required to be regarded as "subjects-of-life." In Regan's theory, animals, humans, or anything is defined as a subject of life has equal inherent value (Regan, 1983). To substantiate his views, Regan states, among other things, that all people except those who are in an irreversible coma or in a permanent vegetative state qualify to be subjects of life. This applies even to children and the mentally retarded. Everyone has inherent value and the rights deriving from it. This means that sentient beings who are unable to decide and act for themselves, as well as those who can decide and act, are both entitled to rights. And since human sentient beings who cannot decide and act qualify to have rights, it is clear that many animals, especially mammals, do as well (Milligan, 2015).

However, when it comes to animal rights, various philosophical theories or approaches are usually included, such as that of abolitionist approach with Gary Francione as the main representative. In particular, in the abolitionist approach, any kind of animal use is rejected. For abolitionists, the basis for this denial is the belief that all persons, regardless of their specific features, have a fundamental, pre-legal moral right not to be considered merely as the resources of others, and that this right prevents human slavery. The existence of moral value necessitates the denial of the property regime, which allows the slave owner to value a man's life and fundamental interests at zero. Since most people reject the position that animals have no moral value, only if we unilaterally declared that animals had no moral value, we could be justified in refusing to extend this right to non-
humans. Therefore, if animals have moral value, they should not be treated solely as resources, and acknowledging their right not to be property would limit any organized exploitation of them (Francione & Charlton, 2017a).

In abolitionism, therefore, animals have a moral significance, so man cannot treat them as commodities and eat, wear, or use them in any way. That is, just as when some people promoted the abolition of slavery in humans, they could not have slaves, so an abolitionist in relation to animal slavery cannot consume animal products. It therefore follows that in abolition, veganism is one way and the only moral basis and logical response to recognizing that animals have moral worth (Francione & Charlton, 2017b).

For feminists, Singer, Regan, and other philosophers rely too much on and overemphasize on logic and reason to determine humans’ obligations to animals (Cochrane, 2010). Thus, unlike them, many of the feminists prefer the ethics of care whose theory comes from the positions of Carol Gilligan in her book ‘In a Different Voice’ (1982) where a feminine view of ethics is characterized as care, responsibility, and relationships, as opposed to a masculine conception of ethics as justice, which deals more with rights and rules. This feminine idea is focused with maintaining connection and the integrity of relationships. While masculine dedication to rights, rules, and an abstract ideal of justice frequently seems like "a mathematical problem with people," the feminine perspective provides a more adaptable, relaxed, and specialized ethics (Donovan & Adams, 2007). The feminist ethics of care regards animals as individuals with sentiments that may be transmitted, and hence humans have moral responsibility to them (Donovan & Adams, 2007). In addition, some ethical care theorists emphasize that our attention should be focused on what animals tell us, not on what other people tell us about them (Donovan & Adams, 2007). In particular, Josephine Donovan argues for a new emphasis on interaction with animals, studying their communication systems, interpreting their body language phenomenologically, and considering these communications in our ethical decisions (Donovan, 2007).

The Greek Legal Framework

In the Greek state since 1848, there have been laws for the protection of animals, but until 1981, protection was mainly linked to the fact that animals were the property of a human being and thus protected by law (Drivas, 2019; Mavromati et al., 2019).

In 1981, initially with Presidential Decree 67, *On the protection of native flora and wildlife and the establishment of a procedure for coordinating and controlling research on them* (Greek Government Gazette, A’ 23/30.01.1981), a large number of species of flora and wildlife in the country were declared protected species, while Law 1197, *On the Protection of Animals* (Greek Government Gazette, A’ 240/03.09.1981) introduced for the first time in Greek legislation concepts such as abandonment of animals, their proper welfare, passive abuse, surgery with anesthesia, as well as the framework of experiments. Such provisions are still in force today, while penalties have been modified and are more severe (Drivas, 2019; Mavromati et al., 2019).

With Law 4039 of 2012, *On kept and stray pets and the protection of animals from exploitation or use for profit* (Greek Government Gazette, A’ 15/02.02.2012), as well as with its amendments in the following years, the issues previously raised by other laws are now thoroughly regulated. Although Law 4039/2012 had a pioneering character, its ambiguities and its non-implementation in many cases by the competent bodies had the consequence of continuing the pathologies of years regarding the exploitation and abuse of animals in the Greek area. Nevertheless, it helped to make a large part of public opinion more sensitive to any kind of animal abuse.

The most recent Law 4830/2021, *New framework for the welfare of companion animals - program "ARGOS" and other provisions* (Greek Government Gazette A’, 169/18.09.2021) completely redefined the framework for the welfare of companion animals. Specifically, the
The purpose - object of the law as determined by Article 1 is: the protection of companion animals and ensuring their welfare, the strengthening of responsible pet ownership, the establishment of a clear and coherent regulatory framework for the management of stray companion animals and a strategy to drastically reduce their number through adoption programs, with strict adherence to animal welfare rules. Strict rules are now in place to ensure animal welfare, which is governed by five internationally recognized freedoms: 1) Freedom from hunger and thirst, 2) Freedom from unnecessary suffering and strain, 3) Freedom from pain, injury and disease, 4) Freedom from fear and anxiety, 5) Freedom to express normal behaviour.

An innovation of the new legislative framework is the creation of the National Register and its Sub registries. In particular, the National Register of Companion Animals (NRCA) consists of an online database for the registration of companion animals, which is kept at the General Secretariat of Public Administration Information Systems (G.S.P.A.I.S.) of the Ministry of Digital Governance.

An important element of the law is that Article 9 sets out the obligations of pet owners. In particular, the pet owner is obliged to:

a) Sterilize the animal, if it is a dog or cat, within six months of its acquisition and if the animal is over one year old. Alternatively, the owner can pay 150 euros for each animal to send a sample of the animal’s genetic material (DNA) to the Laboratory of Storage and Analysis of Animal Genetic Material. Laboratory findings will make it possible to identify the pet's broodstock and then its owner, who, in case of abandoning the pet, will face all the prescribed administrative and criminal penalties.

b) To respect the deadlines for informing the NRCA whenever there is a need to register or change data concerning her/him or her/his companion animal.

c) Take care of his annual vaccination and veterinary examination, which are proven by the animal's electronic health book or passport.

d) To observe the rules of the animal's welfare, to take care of its care, to clean its environment, to meet its minimum needs, and to ensure comfortable, healthy, clean, and suitable accommodation. Also, the animal should have sufficient contact with the same or another human so that it does not feel lonely, and its mental health is maintained. He/she should also arrange for his training when required.

e) The dog owner ensures that the animal is always walked with a companion and on a leash and takes the appropriate measures so that the dog does not freely leave the area of its property and enter the premises of other properties. Also, the animal should not be tied up for more than 2 hours as long as it resides permanently in the yard; it should be provided with accommodation to rest. Also, the cat owner must ensure that the cat does not live in a cage.

f) Be provided with the passport of her/his animal if he is going to travel with it abroad.

g) Not to abandon her/his pet, and in case he/she wishes to be separated from it, and if he/she has not found a new owner, he/she is obliged to notify the competent authority of the municipality of the place of her/his permanent residence of her/his intention. The municipality takes care of its adoption by announcing it through the Panhellenic Platform for the Adoption of Stray Pets, while the owner who surrenders her/his animal to the municipality will not be able to acquire another pet for a period of three years.

h) Ensure the immediate cleaning of the environment from pet feces.

i) Do not cut the animal’s ears or tail unless there is a medical reason.

j) The owner is responsible for any harm or damage caused by the animal.

Regarding animal abuse, Law 4830/2021 protects all animals, not just companion animals. Specifically, they are prohibited:

a) abuse, mistreatment, and cruelty of any kind of animal, b) killing and torturing animals (bestiality and sexual abuse of animals). Furthermore, with the exception of films and
audio-visual educational material, the possession, sale, trade, and presentation, as well as the distribution, via the Internet, of any audio-visual material, such as videos or other types of film or photographic material, is prohibited in which depicts any act of cruelty against an animal, as well as sexual intercourse between animals or between animals and people, for the profit or sexual enjoyment of those who watch or participate in it. Also, fighting between animals is prohibited.

In addition, an important element of this article and law is that in the event of a traffic accident where an animal is injured, the perpetrator of the act is obliged to immediately notify the municipality where the accident took place or the Greek Police to ensure that the animal receives the appropriate veterinary care from the municipality’s relevant services.

As far as stray animals are concerned, they are subject to the jurisdiction of the municipalities within the administrative boundaries of which they are located. Municipalities are responsible for the care, collection, and management of stray pets and are required to have a comprehensive operational program for the management of stray animals, with the necessary budget of individual funds for its implementation and a specific timetable for the implementation of each action. Now, each municipality is responsible for the collection, sterilization, and management of stray pets as well as their transport to cooperating veterinary clinics and shelters. Also, it must set up well-trained crews of people, who specialize in collecting stray pets, as expressly provided in article 3 paragraph 2 and 3 of Law 4830/2021.

Regarding the criminal framework for animal abuse, article 34 lists the criminal sanctions and article 35 lists the administrative sanctions.

For example, it is punishable by a prison sentence of at least 1 year and a fine of up to 15,000 euros, the abuse, ill-treatment, and cruelty of any kind of animal, such as drastic and non-natrogenic restrictions on normal movement, such as the horseshoe, unauthorized training methods, work not intended for the species of animal, unlawful breeding, and willful injury by simple bodily harm.

Of course, the law also provides for more severe penalties, namely imprisonment of up to 10 years and a fine for up to 50,000 euros for several violations, such as the killing and torture of animals by deliberately causing severe physical pain or physical exhaustion dangerous to their health.

Finally, regarding Law 4830/2021, special reference should be made to Article 31 entitled: Education, training, and promotion of animal welfare. In this article, the competent services of the Ministries of the Interior and Education and Religious Affairs, in collaboration with other bodies, are tasked with organizing training seminars as well as the promotion by the mass media of information and training programs aimed at owners of companion animals as well as people engaged in the breeding, training, trade, and keeping of such animals. Also, these programs are addressed to local communities so that they are aware of animal protection legislation. In addition, it is particularly important that Article 31 provides, through events, speeches, screenings, seminars for the treatment and handling of stray animals, and other educational programs, the awareness and development of animal welfare and the responsible ownership of companion animals in kindergartens and primary and secondary schools. These programs are part of an independent unit only for animals and ensure for each school class of primary and secondary education at least one (1) per year animal welfare educational activity.

**Animal Cruelty in Greece**

Beyond the strict legal framework that exists regarding the protection mainly of companion animals, and while animal sentiment, allegations of animal cruelty, and various animal activism have increased in recent years, however, to a large extent, especially in relation to other European countries, in Greece we often witness animal abuse that may come from their owner or from third parties and involve stray or kept...
animals. Moreover, there are not a few times that animal abuses such as those occurring on the island of Santorini with mongoose victims have aroused the international outcry of animal welfare associations and activists. PETA Germany has published three different investigations exposing the miserable living conditions of these animals, which are forced to serve as ‘taxis’ at this tourist attraction where tourists can pay to be carried by donkeys and mules up a grueling 500 steps to the town of Fira. The latest testimony from the summer of 2022, while the new law was in force, shows that the animals of Santorini still suffer daily and that donkeys must carry enormous loads with little break from the harsh Mediterranean sun and no access to food or water. Photos were also taken showing several animals with open, untreated wounds. PETA Germany shared these photos with horse experts, who confirmed the harsh conditions the animals are in in Santorini (PETA, 2022). Even Oscar-winning actress and honorary PETA board member Anjelica Huston wrote a letter to Greece's prime minister in 2023, urging him to ban the transportation of donkeys and mules to the island of Santorini (VonSosen, 2024).

However, cases of animal abuse in Greece do not only concern cases of passive abuse of animals for economic reasons, as in the case of equidae in Santorini, but cases of active abuse against animals are also very common. Areios Pagos, Greece’s Supreme Court for civil and criminal law, has frequently intervened, directing the appropriate local head of the Public Prosecutor’s Office to examine accusations of animal mistreatment. One such case, according to an article in the digital edition of the Kathimerini newspaper (Mandrou, 2024), took place on January 29, 2024, when the Supreme Court instructed the head of the Athens Public Prosecutor’s Office will investigate the death of a dog in West Attica who looks to have been beaten with a metal rod. This was, of course, not the only example, but one of several recent extremely awful cases of mistreatment against companion and working animals, a pattern that has led to Greece being placed on European blacklists. This Supreme Court decision follows similar initiatives, such as the case of Oliver, a husky dog slain in Arachova, western Boeotia, in November. The incident is being investigated, and veterinarians have conflicting accounts on whether the dog was murdered by a human or a group of dogs. Another current investigation involves the killing of four horses in Grevena, western Macedonia. Horses were then butchered, perhaps for their meat (Mandrou, 2024).

Of course, it must be said that, with the new law, more and more animal abusers are coming before the Greek justice system. Specifically, on January 16, 2024, a 33-year-old man accused of systematically killing cats in the center of Athens was sentenced by the Mixed Jury Court of Athens to 8 years in prison without parole. In addition to his prison sentence, he was also fined 20,000 euros. The sentences imposed on him related to the murders of two cats, although the incidents of abuse for which he had been reported were more (Iliopoulou, 2023). This sentence creates a positive res judicata for similar cases in the future.

The Empirical Study

Sample

Availability sampling was used. The sample from the population (university instructors) was selected because of its practicability and accessibility. Participants were selected since they were conveniently available to participate in the study and not because they met certain statistical criteria.

The sample consisted of 12 instructors of National Technical University of Athens (NTUA) and National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (UoA). Specifically, from NTUA, questionnaires were distributed to several Joint Postgraduate Programs. From UoA were distributed to "Animals: Ethics, Law, Welfare" postgraduate program which is organized by the Philosophy Department and the Hellenic Pasteur Institute.

The selection of this sample is made because these instructors have either humanitarian or
technical backgrounds and this difference, we believe, will highlight interesting findings.

**Questionnaire**

An open-ended questionnaire was used to conduct the survey. The questions were formulated after discussions with experts in the field of animal ethics and the history and philosophy of technology. Before conducting the research, a small-scale pilot study was conducted on five instructors who initially completed the questionnaire. Then, through interviews and feedback, the design of the research questionnaire was improved. To conduct the research, approval was requested and granted on 23/03/2023 by the Research Ethics and Ethics Committee of NTUA. The survey was conducted between March and August 2023 (Fillipas et al., 2023).

**Questions**

1) Statement of Informed Consent

I declare that:

(1) I have been informed about the purpose and objectives of the research,

(2) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time,

(3) I consent to the storage, processing and publication of my personal data by the research team in anonymized form and exclusively for scientific purposes,

(4) I am aware that the responsibility for the management of research data lies with Filippas Gerasimos, PhD candidate in the Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law of the School of Applied Mathematics and Natural Sciences of the National Technical University of Athens, email: gfilip@mail.ntua.gr, who certifies the protection of my personal information.

I agree with the above and agree to participate in the research.

2) Gender

Male

Female

Other

3) Status

Humanities teacher

Teacher of science-engineering sciences

4) Age

31-40

41-50

51-60

61 and up

5) Do you think animals should have rights? If so, specify the types of these rights.

6) Do you know about the new law regarding companion animals (4830/2021)? If so, list 1 to 3 points of the law that you consider most important.

7) The new law provides severe penalties for those who abuse animals. Do you agree or disagree with this? Please justify your answer briefly.

8) Do you agree with the view that someone who abuses animals can potentially abuse people? Please justify your answer briefly.

9) Are you for or against neutering pets? Please justify your answer briefly.

10) Are you for or against neutering stray pets? Please justify your answer briefly.

11) What is your opinion on veganism* in terms of diet and lifestyle?

*By veganism we mean strict vegetarianism. According to the definition of the Vegan Society (1979): “Veganism is a philosophy and a way of life that aims to exclude – to the greatest possible and feasible extent – any form of exploitation and abuse of animals for the production of food, clothing or for any other reason and, by extension, promotes the development and use of alternative products without animal ingredients, for the benefit of humans, animals and the environment. In the diet implies the exclusion of all products derived entirely (meat) or partially (dairy / eggs) from animals.”
12) Do you think that laboratory animals should be used for commercial purposes, such as in research for new cosmetics or household cleaners? Please justify your answer briefly.

13) If you answered No to the previous question, do you know what alternatives are available?

14) Do you think that laboratory animals should be used for scientific purposes, such as for example in research into new vaccines or cancer? Please justify your answer briefly.

15) If you answered no to the previous question, do you know what alternatives exist?

16) In nature there are examples of animals that create elaborate nests and structures, such as beavers, swallows and bees. For some researchers, these constructions suggest that animals possess technology. What is your opinion?

17) According to researchers, some animals use tools. For example, chimpanzees cut branches from trees and after removing the leaves, stuff them into the holes of termite nests. They then pull the branches out of the ground and eat the termites that have climbed onto them. Do you agree with the view that such objects used by animals are tools? Briefly justify your answer.

18) Do you think that the terms "Society" and "Civilization" are concepts that apply exclusively to the human species or can they apply to other animals as well? Please justify your answer briefly.

19) Technology is one of the building blocks of human civilization. Do you think that if we accept that animals have Technology, then we must accept that they also have Civilization? What is your opinion?

Findings

Before proceeding to the findings of the study, we consider it useful to present indicatively the answers to two questions of two participants (A & B). Specifically, questions 9 & 10 refer to neutering and the answers of the two participants indicate a non-agreement.

Participant A: Male / Instructor of science-engineering / 51-60 years old

Q9: I am against, I consider it a deprivation of a basic function with which nature has endowed all creatures.

Q10: I am against, I consider it a deprivation of a basic function with which nature has endowed all creatures.

Participant B: Male / Humanities instructor / 41-50 years old

Q9: Yes, on a case-by-case basis.

Q10: Yes, to control their population and better protect them.

Regarding the overall findings, of the respondents who participated in the research, six participants (4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9) stated that they are instructors of humanities, while the other six (1, 2, 3, 10, 11, and 12) stated that they are science-engineering instructors.

For the optimization of the analysis, the questions were categorized according to the general topic to which they referred.

- Topic: Legal framework (Q: 6, 7, 9, 10)

First, regarding question 6 in relation to whether the respondents are aware of law 4830/2021, most of them, specifically 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 12, do not know the law, compared to 4, 8, 10, and 11, who know it and mention some of its points that they consider more important. However, all 12 respondents in question 7 agree with one of the main points of the law, which concerns the provision of severe penalties for those who abuse animals. Also, in questions 9 and 10 concerning the sterilization of pets and stray pets, respectively, a procedure that also has a key role in law 4830/2021, the prevailing trend in the answers is in favor of sterilization of both pets and stray pets. Specifically, respondents 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12 are in favor of neutering pets and stray pets. On the other hand, respondent 1, while he understands the logic of sterilization, nevertheless considers that by sterilizing animals, man interferes in a super-fundamental biological activity. Also, strongly against the sterilization of pets and stray pets are respondents 5 and 11, since they consider that
they should live a full life and that in the case of sterilization they would be deprived of a basic function with which nature has endowed all creatures.

- Topic: Animal rights – ethics (Q: 5, 8, 11)
The topic of questions 5, 8, and 11 concerns the ethical treatment of humans towards animals. Specifically, in question 5, 11 out of 12 respondents believe that animals should have rights, while only respondent 5 believes that they do not. Respondents who believe that animals should have rights mention rights such as the right to welfare, and respondent 8 considers that animals should have rights stemming from humans' obligation to protect them and preserve their flourishing.

In question 8, which is based on Kant's well-known position, respondents 1 to 8 and 11 strongly agree, substantiating their answer. Respondent 9 does not agree, and respondent 4 believes that there is no linear connection between animal abuse and humans but that these two issues generally reveal the personality of man in matters of respect for life. Respondent 10, while not agreeing, believes that animal abuse has a self-existent gravity and should not be evaluated in comparison based on the abuser's potential behavior (good or bad) towards humans. Finally, respondent 12 essentially accepts the animal-human abuse connection, considering that animal abuse may be a sign of more general violent and aggressive behavior, which, in the right circumstances and under the right conditions, can lead to manifestations of abusive behavior towards another human being.

In question 11 regarding veganism, respondents 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 are some less and others more positively disposed towards it. Indicatively, respondent 4, although he generally agrees, nevertheless has his objections regarding nutrition because he considers that the full possibility of replacing animal sources with plant sources has not been scientifically proven. On the other hand, respondent 12 considers that it can provide humans with all the necessary nutrients needed for a balanced diet, while as a way of life, it reflects a greater empathy towards the feelings of animals. Also, respondent 7 considers veganism to be an alternative that contributes to the protection of animals and their placement next to humans as equal members. Of course, it should be mentioned that respondents 3, 6, and 8 completely disagree with veganism, considering it an exaggeration.

- Topic: Experiments (Q: 12-15)
In question 12 concerning the use of laboratory animals for commercial purposes, most of the respondents disagree with their use, and only respondent 7 agrees as long as their lives are not endangered and the potential damage they will suffer is treatable and reversible. In question 13 on whether they know what alternatives exist for not using laboratory animals for commercial purposes, only respondents 4 and 5 know specifically, and respondents 1 and 11, although they don't know, think that people can stay with the old cleaners and cosmetics as long as they work fine.

Regarding question 14 on the use of laboratory animals for scientific purposes, the answers differ as only respondents 1, 2, 8, and 11 disagree with their use, and in particular, respondent 11 states that they should not be used because the final experimental animal and the one concerned by the research is only the human being. Respondents 3 and 9 agree to their use, respondents 4 and 5 agree with their use, as long as there are no alternative routes, and respondent 7 since they were raised for these purposes, but again under certain conditions and safety precautions for the experimental animals. Respondents 10 and 12 also agree, stressing that, unlike the case of animal experiments for commercial purposes, the case of animal experiments for scientific purposes is more important and the stakes are higher. Still, respondent 6 does not know the answer, as the issue of laboratory animals for scientific purposes is more complicated than that of laboratory animals for commercial purposes. Regarding alternatives to the use of laboratory animals for scientific purposes, respondents 1, 4, and 11 are aware of some, such as computational and mathematical models, and it is also recommended to experiment on human
volunteers who will be fully aware of the possible side effects.

- Topic: Technology and animals (Q: 16-19)

To question 16 whether animals have technology, 7 of the respondents, namely 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10, accept that they have technology, against 5 of them, which are 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12, who consider that they do not have. The main argument of most respondents who believe that animals do not have technology is that the constructions that certain animals create are imposed by instinct and do not evolve.

In question 17 on the use of tools by animals, most of the respondents agree that the various objects used by animals are tools. Specifically, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, and 12 accept the use of tools by animals. Respondent 7 considers them to be tools, but not like human technological components used by humans, and argues on this by saying that "In this example, the branch is not a crowbar but just a branch. If it was a crowbar tool, chimpanzees would carry it with them all the time possibly, in a case, they would share it, make it better, etc." Furthermore, 8 considers that any answer must take into consideration the definition of the tool.

In question 18, regarding the terms "Society" and "Civilization", respondents 1, 2, and 4 consider that the two terms could also refer to animals. On the other hand, respondents 6, 8, and 9 consider that these terms refer exclusively to the human species. Respondent 3 considers that the term "Society" also refers to other animals, while the term "Civilization" does not. The answer of respondent 5 is identical, as he also has reservations about the term 'Civilization', as do respondents 10 and 12, who consider that animals build societies with rules and hierarchies, but for the term "Culture," they consider that it refers only to the human species since it gives meaning to beliefs, values, and perceptions. Furthermore, respondent 11 considers that "In the purely anthropocentric sense of the concept, society has only the human species. But in a broader sense, there are clearly social relationships in animals too (e.g. herds, hives, etc.)."

Finally, in question 19, respondents 1, 4, and 9 accept the premise that if we accept that animals have technology, then we must accept that they also have culture. Specifically, respondent 4 considers that this assumption does not create a problem between human and non-human species since the issue concerns the gradations and qualitative characteristics of the above expressions per species as well as the limit of their development in these areas.

On the other hand, most respondents do not agree with this assumption, namely 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 12. The answers they give to justify their point of view are summarized as follows: The relationship between technology and civilization is neither causal nor bidirectional. Technology is a structural component of civilization, but the existence of culture is not presumed by the existence of technology since the term culture has other components, such as the development of fine arts, philosophy, etc. Also, as respondent 11 answers, both technology and civilization are evolutionary, and this is not the case for any animal species. Also, respondent 8 considers that any answer must take into consideration the definition of Civilization.

In all 4 categories of questions, it appears that from the examination of the answers, no significant differences are observed between the two groups of instructors, i.e., those who are from humanities and those who are from science-engineering.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This article initially reviewed the legal framework for animals in Greece. Although the current law 4830/21 is very strict against any kind of abuse of animals by humans, animal cruelty continues. Article 31: Education, training, and promotion of animal welfare, could provide a solution to the problem of abuse, contributing to the formation of a new value system in which future generations will respect non-human animals.

Through the empirical study, we attempted to distinguish the perceptions of humanities teachers and science-engineering teachers on four topics: a) legal framework, b) animal rights-
Ethics, c) experimental animals, d) technology and animals.

According to findings, instructors are positive about one of the key features of the new law on animals, namely the severe penalties for those who abuse animals. Also, we see that most of them agree on a second feature of the law, which concerns the sterilization of pets and stray pets. This finding is not in accordance with the view that neutering an animal violates its rights since sexual intercourse in animals involves pleasure (Balcombe, 2006).

With regard, now, to the ethical treatment of humans towards animals, the answers show that there is a satisfactory level of knowledge about the rights of animals as well as acceptance of these rights by the respondents. Furthermore, the answers to questions 12-15 show that the use of laboratory animals is approved for scientific rather than commercial objectives. This is quite contradictory, given that most people utilize many everyday items made using laboratory animals.

Regarding the research question about the relationship between animals and technology, we see that several respondents agree that animals have technology. However, most of them do not accept the assumption that if we accept that animals have technology then we must also accept that they have civilization. This finding could lead to further investigation in future research.

References


Iliopoulou, E. (2023). Athens: The man who killed cats in Botanikos was sentenced to 8 years prison without parole. Retrieved from https://www.zoosos.gr/athina-katadikastike-8-
chronia-fylaki-choris-anastoli-o-andras-pou-skotone-gates-ston-votaniko-vinteo/#axzz8TsVg9w7z


