



THE VOICE OF EUROPEAN HUNTERS

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Dear Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of Poland and members of the Lower Chamber of Government,

We strongly urge you as **President of Poland** and members of the **Lower Chamber of Government** to reconsider the proposed changes to the Polish hunting law because they are not in line with the Bern Convention and Article 2 of the Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

FACE is very concerned about the amendments voted and accepted by the Polish Senate to the hunting law in Poland as they would literally kill longstanding Polish hunting traditions, culture and methods. The following changes voted by the Polish Senate will have major impacts on hunters:

1. A ban on the disturbance of wild animals in the case that there is no hunting purpose

Result: The amendment prevents hunters from effectively training and trialling their hunting dogs and falconers from training their birds of prey – an activity which is globally recognised as “Intangible Cultural Heritage” by UNESCO;

2. The appointment of the President of the hunters’ association by the Minister of Environment and the possibility to dismiss this person by the Minister after the opinion of the advisory board

Result: The amendment eliminates the self-governance of the Polish Hunting Association and is a direct attack on the principle of democracy;

3. There will be no penalties for the obstruction of a hunt

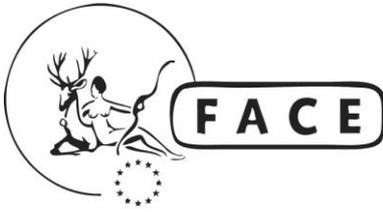
Result: The amendment allows opponents of hunting to conduct effective blockades and sabotage hunts with no punishment;

4. The ban of the participation of youths in hunting up to the age of 18

Result: The amendment eliminates the possibility of transferring hunting traditions from generation to generation.

FACE fundamentally opposes the ban on the participation of youth in hunting, which is common in all European hunting cultures. Hunting is a natural and healthy way to source organic meat for the household. The participation of youth in hunting provides key knowledge about nature and a deep understanding of wildlife management and animal welfare. It is positive for the children’s mental and physical development.





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FACE believes it is a fundamental right for parents to educate their children according to their own beliefs and customs, which this ban fails to respect. In this context, FACE wants to highlight Article 2 of the Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms: *“the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.”* This new law also contradicts many key principles set out in the European Charter on Hunting and Biodiversity, which was adopted by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention in November 2007.

We strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed changes to the hunting law.

Yours sincerely,

Ludwig Willnegger
Secretary General

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