

Urban animal welfare in Belgium: strategies for uptake

Ciska De Ruyver



INVITATION DOCTORAL DEFENSE AND LECTURE

URBAN ANIMAL WELFARE IN BELGIUM:
STRATEGIES FOR UPTAKE

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PROMOTORS

Prof. dr. C. Diederich
Faculty of Science, UNamur

Prof. dr. C. Moons
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, UGent

Venue

The **public defense** (in English) will take place on Friday **November 8, 2024, at 13h** at the University of Namur. A reception follows the defense. A livestream is foreseen.

Université de Namur

Room PA11 (map in attachment)

Rue Grandgagnage 7, 5000 Namur

The **public lecture** (in Dutch) will take place on Thursday **November 21, 2024, at 19h**. A short reception will follow the lecture. A livestream is foreseen.

Ghent University - Faculty of Law

Auditorium G (map in attachment)

University Street 6, 9000 Ghent - ENTRANCE 8

Register

If you wish to attend the **public defense** in Namur, please register before November 4, 2024 via SMS on mobile phone no. +32 (0)486 99 65 63 or by email at ciska.deruyver@ugent.be. If you wish to follow the livestream, please send your email address to ciska.deruyver@ugent.be before November 4.

If you wish to attend the **public lecture** in Ghent, please register before November 14, 2024 via SMS on mobile phone no. +32 (0)486 99 65 63 or by email at ciska.deruyver@ugent.be. If you wish to follow the livestream, please send your email address to ciska.deruyver@ugent.be before November 14.

Jury members

Prof. dr. S. Arndt
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Universiteit Utrecht, The Netherlands

Prof. dr. K. Hannes
Faculty of Sociology, KULeuven

Dr. C. Hirtenfelder
The Animal Turn, Austria

Prof. dr. F. Meijboom
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Universiteit Utrecht, The Netherlands

Prof. dr. G. Pontarotti
Faculty of Science, Université de Namur

Dr. T. Sharp
Department of Regional NSW, Australia

Doctoral dissertation summary

The 2018 UN World Urbanization Prospects report predicts that by 2050, 68% of the human population will live in urban areas, which will lead to an increase in interactions between humans and non-human animals. Animal welfare research has hitherto mainly focused on controlled environments such as laboratories, animal industry and zoos. In urban environments, on the other hand, the complexity of ecosystems and the effects of human-animal interactions must be taken into account. The thesis in this dissertation is that animal welfare science should be further developed to tackle the specific challenges of urban contexts. In addition, current urban biopolitics gives priority to human interests and often ignores the perspectives and welfare needs of both domestic and commensal animals.

The dissertation presents five publications, looking at the development, implementation and public perception of governmental policy and management that influences the welfare of urban animals. Two research questions are developed based on the identified research gaps in order to study the ethical, scientific and policy-related aspects of urban animal welfare in Belgium. On the one hand, how do governmental policy and its implementation influence the welfare of urban animals (domestic and commensal), with particular attention to cats, dogs, pigeons, foxes, mice and rats? On the other hand, what strategies can enhance the harmonious urban coexistence of these animals and humans from the point of view of animal welfare? Answers to these questions will be provided during the public defense.

Curriculum Vitae

Ciska De Ruyver was born on March 22, 1973, in Ghent. In 1986, she obtained the diploma of Moral Scientist in Ghent. She then worked successively for the Flemish government, the VHLORA, the VLUHR, the IOB at the University of Antwerp and the Ethology and Animal Welfare Research Group at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Ghent University. Fascinated by scientific research, she started a doctoral study in 2021 at the Unité de recherche vétérinaire intégrée of the University of Namur and the Ethology and Animal Welfare Research Group at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Ghent University.

Ciska De Ruyver is the author of fifteen scientific publications and reports. She has spoken at various national and international conferences and symposia.