

A Historical Evaluation of Animal Protection Efforts of Non-governmental Organizations in Turkey

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Summary

The Holy Scriptures and early legal documents comprise various regulations related to the ownership of animals by man and the use of animals by mankind for various purposes. In these scripts, it is indicated that the maltreatment and intentional harm of animals is unrighteous from the standpoint of both law and ethics. Animals were valued greatly in early Turkish communities, who lived on animal husbandry. In these communities, the right to live and subsistence of animals were secured by means of legal sanctions, and it was demanded that animals not be inflicted any pain. At the dawn of the 20th century, both ongoing modernization efforts and the first mass culling of the excessively increased stray animal population triggered the establishment of the first non-governmental organization that aimed to defend animal rights and protect animals. Since the establishment of the first animal protection organization in Turkey in 1912, the number of non-governmental organizations operating in this field has increased to 155 over the course of a 99-year-period. The present study was aimed at the investigation of the historical development of the animal rights and animal protection issue in Turkey within the scope of the efforts of non-governmental organizations.

Keywords: *İstanbul Society for the Protection of Animals, Turkish Society for the Protection of Animals, Animal rights, Protection of animals, Non-governmental organizations*

Türkiye’de Sivil Toplum Örgütlerinin Hayvanları Koruma Çalışmalarının Tarihsel Bir Değerlendirmesi

Özet

İnsanların hayvanlara sahip olma ve onlardan çeşitli alanlarda yararlanmalarına ilişkin olarak kutsal kitaplar ve ilk yasal metinlerde çeşitli düzenlemeler bulunmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, hayvanlara karşı kötü davranma ve kasıtlı zarar vermenin, hem hukuksal hem de ahlaki açıdan doğru olmadığı da ifade edilmiştir. Hayvancılıkla geçimini sürdüren Eski Türk toplumlarının yaşamında hayvanlar büyük önem taşımıştır. Hayvanların yaşam ve nafaka hakları hukuksal yaptırımlarla korunmuş ve onlara eziyet edilmemesi istenmiştir. XX. yüzyılın başlarında modernleşme çalışmaları ve sokak hayvanı sayısındaki aşırı artışla birlikte gerçekleşen ilk toplu itlaf uygulaması, hayvan hakları ve hayvanları koruma alanında çalışmalar yapmak üzere ilk sivil toplum örgütünün kurulmasına neden olmuştur. Türkiye’de, ilk hayvanları koruma derneğinin kurulduğu 1912 yılından itibaren geçen 99 yılda benzer amaçlı derneklerin sayıları 155’e ulaşmıştır. Bu çalışma, Türkiye’deki sivil toplum örgütlerinin çalışmaları çerçevesinde, hayvan hakları ve hayvanları koruma konusunun tarihsel gelişimi incelemek amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: *İstanbul Hayvanları Koruma Derneği, Türkiye Hayvanları Koruma Derneği, Hayvan hakları, Hayvanları koruma, Sivil toplum örgütleri*

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, an egocentric mentality has dominated the relations of mankind with other living beings.

The valuation of humans above animals and the belief that, by nature, humans are superior to all other living



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beings, emerge in almost all philosophical, religious and legislative texts^{1,2}. Although the Holy Scriptures and early legal scripts accord the right of humans to own and make use of animals, and refer to the maltreatment and intentional harm of animals as unrighteous both juridically and ethically, they do not include clear provisions on animal rights or animal welfare^{3,4}.

The increase in the number of areas, in which animals are used, brought to question the concept of the "maltreatment of animals"⁵. The first modern legal regulation, which prohibited the maltreatment of animals by humans, is the "Act against Cruelty to Horses-Sheep"⁶, which was adopted by the Parliament of Ireland in 1635. It has been observed that, in parallel with other social reform movements, the animal protection movement flourished during the 18th and 19th centuries⁵. The inhumane practices to which animals were exposed provoked the reaction of the civil society, and thus, the first non-governmental organization for the protection of animals was established in 1824 in Britain, under the name of "The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals"^{1,7,8}.

In early Turkish communities, who lived on animal husbandry, animals were valued greatly. Following the acceptance of Islam by the majority of Turkish people, the emotional concern and affection for animals further grew, and the right of animals to live and their subsistence were respected, such that these rights were secured by legal sanctions⁹. Furthermore, it is well known that, a series of orders and instructions were implemented and administrative measures were taken to ensure that animals were treated well, not harmed, provided with water and feed, not burdened with a load exceeding their capacity, not forced to fight with other animals for the amusement of humans, and not separated from their offspring; and it is also known that persons who acted contradictorily were warned and imposed sanctions¹⁰⁻¹³.

In the present study, the historical development of the animal rights issue will be reviewed in the scope of the efforts of non-governmental organizations, which have rapidly increased in number as from the 1980s in Turkey.

MATERIAL and METHODS

First-hand resources obtained from the Ottoman and Republican archives of the General Directorate for State Archives under the Prime Ministry, and documents belonging to our private collection constituted the material of the study. Furthermore, books, manuscripts and other publications relevant to the subject were also made use of. The study was assessed by methods of analysis and synthesis commonly used in medical history research. The subject was dealt with in chronological order.

RESULTS

The Perception of Animals in the Ottoman State and the Establishment of the First Animal Rights Organization

The construction of specific units for the treatment of animals in different regions of the Ottoman territory, the establishment of charitable foundations for the care of animals, the construction of buildings for the housing of animals, the declaration to the public of orders for the proper treatment of draught animals by their owners, and the practices performed for the care and protection of animals as a reflection of the respect and affection for animals in the Ottoman society have also been narrated in travel books written by foreigners, who visited the Ottoman territories¹⁰.

It has been reported that, during this period, legal arrangements were adopted on the working conditions of animals of economic value¹¹. Despite the lack of a legal regulation related to the protection of stray animals, such as cats and dogs, it was a general custom to will, in testaments and deeds of trust of pious foundations, the feeding of stray dogs with bread and meat at certain times of the day by paid workers^{9,13}.

Following the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy on 23 July 1908, both the pressure caused by the westernisation movement and the rabies threat posed by the stray dog population, which was estimated as 60 or 80 thousand at the beginning of this century, brought about the first mass culling^{14,15}. Nearly 80 thousand dogs were collected from the streets of İstanbul and were left for dead on the island Hayırsız Ada^{15,16}. This event prioritized the establishment of an organization for the protection of animals.

The idea of establishing an organization for the protection of animals in Turkey was frequently articulated, particularly after the culling policy implemented by the Committee of Union and Progress on stray dogs in 1910, yet, this intention could be accomplished only after the Balkan War broke out; and during the period in-between, various activities were conducted to raise awareness particularly among children¹⁴. As a matter of fact, under the chapter "societies of mercy" of the booklet titled "Twelve Lessons on How to Treat Animals Properly", which was published in this period for use in primary education, the necessity for the establishment of non-governmental organizations for the protection of animals was highlighted with wide coverage of the sphere of activity of such organizations¹⁷.

One of the major events that prioritized the establishment of non-governmental organizations for the prevention of cruelty to animals was the attempt of Mrs. Alice Washburn Manning (*Fig.1*), who had come to Turkey



Fig 1. Mrs. Alice Washburn Manning

Şekil 1. Bayan Alice Washburn Manning

from the United States in 1902, to stop the ongoing mass deportation of stray dogs to the island Hayırsız Ada, as well as her efforts to spread affection for animals among people¹⁸. Influenced by the community so-called the "Armies of Mercy", which was established in Boston in 1822, with an aim to protect animals, Manning, founded a small group with a number of students and tutors from Robert College, which they named "Arms of Mercy". This group, which was one of the first relief agencies of the period, set its mission as to spread affection for animals among children and to teach them how to treat animals in need¹⁸⁻²⁰.

The cooperation of a large number of local people with the Arms of Mercy to protest the bull fights organized in İstanbul in 1912, contributed to the realization of the establishment of an animal protection organization, which had been frequently articulated after the mass culling that took place on the island Hayırsız Ada, and owing to the efforts of the spouse of the British Ambassador, Lady Lowther, the "*İstanbul Himâye-i Hayvânât Cemiyeti*" (İstanbul Society for the Protection of Animals) was established in 1912 in İstanbul within the structure of the Beyoğlu Municipality^{18,21}.

The administrative board of the Society was composed of military and civil bureaucrats, who had played a major

ⁱ The original name of the organization affiliated to the "Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals" is reported as the "American Band of Mercy"

role in late Ottoman history and contributed to the shaping of the domestic and foreign policies of the Ottoman State. The spouse of the British Ambassador, Lady Lowther, was named president of the Society; the Undersecretary of the British Embassy, Doctor F. G. Clemow, was appointed as the paymaster, while Alice Manning, who was a tutor at Robert College, was appointed as secretary¹⁴.

The aim of the establishment of this organization was described as follows in the second article of its charter:

1- To prevent cruelty and injustice to animals and to serve for the saving of animals, to the extent possible, from the poor conditions they lived under;

2- To raise awareness among people, and particularly among children, with a view to establish feelings of justice, kindness and amity for animals²¹.

After the Ottoman State entered World War I, the Society was obliged to cease its activities in 1914¹⁴. On the other hand, based on a report prepared on horses wounded at war²² and on written correspondence of the Society with its counterpart, the Society for Animal Protection in Genevaⁱⁱ, in the same period, it was determined that information was acquired on the protection of animals, and particularly horses, in war time, which demonstrates that the animal protection issue was continued to be tackled with keen interest.

The Development of Non-governmental Organizations for the Protection of Animals in the Republican Era

At the end of long and devastating years of war, and at the dawn of a new era of restructuring in Turkey, it was decided unanimously at the Izmir Economic Congress, held between 17 February-4 March 1923, that the government would support organizations founded for the protection of animals²³. "The Turkish Society for the Protection of Animals", which was the first animal protection organization of the newly founded Turkish Republic, was established in 1923 as the continuation of the İstanbul Society for Animal Protection, and was based in İstanbul with branch offices foreseen to be opened in the course of time. The newly founded Society officially launched its activities on March 6, 1924, under the presidency of the Former Full General Zeki Baraz^{14,24,25}.

The activities targeted by the "Turkish Society for the Protection of Animals" included, the purchase of animals that did not have the strength to serve humans and suffered pain, thereby, the prevention of their suffering, and when required their euthanasia; the ensurance of the appropriate transport of animals by train wagons and vessels; the prevention of the conduct of animal experiments and the ensurance that such experiments were performed by experts; the ensurance of the treatment of animals owned by poor people free of charge; the

ⁱⁱ BOA, (31.12.1914): HR.HMS.ISO, 55/1

prevention of the practice of the veterinary profession by people lacking a diploma of veterinary medicine; the organisation of public events at elementary and high schools; the reward of people who took good care of their animals; the ensurance of the protection of birds and the performance of continuous inspection by means of various institutions^{25,26}.

In the first years of the Republican era, the improvement of the livestock sector and the control of contagious animal diseases were prioritized, and legal sanctions to be imposed in the event of the maltreatment of animals were stipulated in two of the articles of *"The Turkish Penal Code"* numbered 765¹¹, which was adopted on March 1, 1926. In the same period, articles related to the protection of animals were included in the internal regulations of the municipal police; and to ensure the full implementation of these provisions, conferences were held and films were run at regular intervals at the Police Academy as from 1928²⁷.

At the dog pound constructed in the Şişli neighbourhood of İstanbul province in 1926, not only stray animals and animals owned by poor persons, but also animals left by their owners at the customs house due to their being a subject of customs duties, were cared for, medically examined and treated; and furthermore, it was aimed to rehome these animals within a certain period of time. Nonetheless, it is known that, the Society was in favour of the euthanasia of animals that were not able to be rehomed. In 1927, the Society was moved to a new building, which had been constructed as a hospital, in Nişantaşı¹⁴. It was ascertained that, the Society, which developed with the contributions of the Robert College circle, kept in touch with the Society for Animal Protection in the United States throughout the period it remained active, and also benefited from the occasional financial contributions of the American organization, which had also steered its reorganization^{25,26}. These financial contributions continued even after the death of Mrs Manning in 1960; however, after it was decided by the administrative board of the society in 1990 that the euthanasia of animals would no longer be allowed, the American financial support was cut^{9,28}.

Leaflets published by the society contained information on how maltreated animals could be protected, and it was particularly underlined that animals abandoned to the street and those that were deliberately inflicted pain be either brought to the premises of the society or be notified to the society²⁹. Furthermore, with an aim to establish a humane approach to animals, conferences were held and painting and debate competitions were organized at primary schools³⁰; and in order to prevent the slaughter of pregnant animals, precautionary measures were taken by both the Slaughterhouse Directorates in İstanbul and Ankara and also the Ministry of Agriculture; and the competent authorities were applied to for the prevention

of the overloading of horse-drawn carriages and the use of these carriages by unauthorized persons²⁷.

In 1950, the society acquired the status of "non-profit organization"ⁱⁱⁱ, and today it continues to operate under this status. The activity report of the society for the year 1952 indicates that speeches related to animals and the law that secured their protection were broadcasted on national radio channels, informative posters were put up in various provinces by the Directorates of Veterinary Services, persons who intended to establish similar organizations in other provinces were supported, letters were written to municipality slaughterhouses with an aim to prevent the slaughter of pregnant ewes, attempts were made to prevent the overloading of draught animals, measures were taken to ensure that sick and wounded animals were referred to either the hospital owned by the society or other hospitals by municipal police officers, and efforts were made to prevent the suffering of show animals. The report also indicates that, in total, 9322 animals, including both owned and stray animals, were euthanized by humane methods²⁷.

While the Turkish Society for the Protection of Animals continued with its activities, similar organizations were established in other provinces, and in 1956 the "Association for the Protection of Animals" was founded in Ankara with clear reference, for the first time, to the European Federation of Animal Protection Organizations^{iv}.

As stipulated in the 4th subparagraph of Article 15 of the Municipal Law No 1580^v, which entered into force in 1930 in Turkey, *"In order to control contagious human and animal diseases and prevent their spread, cooperation will be established with the state organization for measures implemented in accordance with laws, by-laws and instructions"*. Accordingly, municipalities were assigned with the duty of removing stray cats and dogs from the streets in the scope of the control of rabies disease²⁸.

It is reported that, from the 1930s to the 1980s, for a period of nearly fifty years, the İstanbul Municipality continued to cull dogs. On the other hand, the idea of housing animals in animal care units instead of their culling was realized for the first time in 1976 by the "Society of Animal Rightists" in İstanbul-Samandra. However, as this assignment laid additional financial and administrative burden on municipalities, until the end of the 20th century, none of them attempted to conduct such an activity. The first municipal animal care unit was constructed in 1994 by the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality²⁸.

The culling of stray animals by either shooting or poisoning prioritized the organization of animal rightists. Furthermore, public initiatives launched for the protection of the environment and nature, as well as increased media

ⁱⁱⁱ BCA, 1950: 030.18.01.02/122.41.4

^{iv} BCA, 1956: 030.01.00.00/123.788.5

^v Official Gazette dated 14 April 1930 and numbered 1471

Table 1. Number of members of animal protection organizations per province**Tablo 1.** İllere göre hayvan koruma derneklerinin üye sayıları

Province	Number of NGOs	Number of Male Members	Number of Female Members	Province	Number of NGOs	Number of Male Members	Number of Female Members
Adana	2	56	34	Kastamonu	1	24	16
Adıyaman	1	11	7	Kayseri	2	18	0
Ağrı	1	26	0	Kırklareli	1	59	0
Aksaray	1	0	0	Kilis	1	0	0
Amasya	1	33	1	Kocaeli	5	31	0
Ankara	5	54	174	Kütahya	1	0	0
Antalya	6	74	87	Malatya	2	29	8
Aydın	6	104	166	Manisa	5	35	23
Balıkesir	5	50	85	Mersin	3	23	35
Bilecik	1	2	15	Muğla	12	233	153
Bitlis	1	0	0	Nevşehir	1	18	2
Bolu	1	27	58	Osmaniye	2	108	0
Bursa	1	6	10	Rize	1	0	0
Çanakkale	3	54	63	Sakarya	2	53	0
Denizli	3	33	15	Samsun	6	123	18
Düzce	3	81	17	Sinop	1	3	41
Elazığ	1	14	12	Sivas	1	22	15
Erzincan	1	6	1	Şanlıurfa	1	0	0
Erzurum	2	115	0	Tekirdağ	2	92	1
Hatay	4	18	0	Tokat	1	0	0
İğdır	1	23	0	Trabzon	1	29	51
İsparta	1	0	0	Uşak	1	6	21
İstanbul	22	687	653	Van	1	16	0
İzmir	17	452	290	Yalova	1	15	20
Kahramanmaraş	5	373	4	Yozgat	1	96	0
Karabük	1	20	30	Zonguldak	2	17	38
Karaman	1	16	0				
TOTAL					155	3385	2164

coverage of the criticism of stray animal culling and the reactions of animal rightists further supported this trend. The protestation of stray dog culling in various parts of İstanbul province, increased even more after the Habitat II Conference held in İstanbul in 1996^{9,28}.

The cosubstantiation of rabies disease with stray dogs prevented the public from approving dogs being put on the street after neutered and vaccinated. As the culling of stray animals was prohibited pursuant to Circulars No 1998/6^{vi} and 1999/34^{vii} of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection of the Ministry of Environment, municipalities were instructed to neuter and vaccinate stray animals and house them in animal shelters. On the initiation of the İstanbul Governorship, the number of animal shelters, which was only 4 in 1999 increased to 42 in 2001. However, the poor management of these shelters

^{vi} Animal Culling. 01 May 1998

^{vii} Related to Animal Culling. 23 December 1999

draw the strong reaction of animal rightists, and a group of people referred to as the “animal shelter volunteers” committed themselves to the improvement of the poor conditions the animals were exposed to at these shelters^{9,28}.

According to the 2005 data of the Department for Non-governmental Organizations of the Ministry of Interior, which keeps the records of all such organizations in Turkey, there are 297 non-governmental organizations that operate in the field of animal protection. Unfortunately, most of these organizations are associations named as, for instance, “The Association of Lovers and Protectors of Poultry”, but in fact, they carry out activities such as cockfighting, which are irrelevant to the protection of animals. According to further official information provided from other public institutions and by internet search, it was determined that approximately 110 organizations operate in the area of “animal protection” and “animal rights”. Data was not able to be obtained on the number of members

of each of these organizations³¹. Upon application to the Department for Non-governmental Organizations of the Ministry of Interior in 2011, it was stated that the number of organizations related to animals was 155 in 2009. Furthermore, it was ascertained that some organizations were named in reference to animals (ie. "Society of Canary Lovers") and operated at local level, yet, their exact number was not able to be determined. Information on the number of members of animal protection organizations per province is presented in *Table 1*^{viii}. As can be seen in this table, 155 animal protection organizations exist in 53 of the provinces of Turkey with a total number of 5549 members, 3385 of which are male and 2164 female. However, the organizations in 8 of the provinces had no registered members, whilst the organizations in 12 provinces did not have any female members.

Further to these organization efforts, an "Animal Rights Federation" was established in 2008, which at present has 18 member organizations and 70 provincial representatives in 54 provinces³².

In recent years, several email groups have been set up and web pages have been developed and disseminated with an aim to facilitate communication and cooperation between animal care units and animal protection organizations based in different provinces of Turkey, and to create a discussion platform for the development of permanent solutions for stray animals. These groups have given priority to certain issues, including the exchange of views of persons, who care for stray animals; the publication of notices regarding animals waiting to be rehomed at care units; and the share of information on health problems frequently encountered in animals. The members of these groups are of different age and background and have come together on the common ground of protecting stray animals³¹.

As a result of the initiative launched in the 1980s by the animal rightist Prof. Dr. İsmet Sungurbey, Head of Department of Civil Law of Istanbul University Faculty of Law, for the adoption of an "Animal Protection Law", two drafts were prepared in view of international law in 1995, yet, no legal regulation was enacted until 2004^{9,31}.

Until the Section for the Protection of Nature, which also deals with stray animals, became operational with the establishment of the Ministry of Environment^{ix} in 1991, municipalities were the only bodies responsible for the environmental problems caused by stray animals³¹.

Activities required for the control of stray animals were defined as the respect of the right of animals to live, the prevention of uncontrolled reproduction, the housing of stray animals under appropriate conditions, and their

rehoming³¹. Accordingly, it was targeted to:

- terminate animal culling,
- establish parks and care units for the protection of animals,
- neuter and vaccinate stray animals,
- identify animals with individual numbers

Turkey became a party to the "European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals" in 2003^x; and one year later the "Animal Protection Law"^{xiii} entered into force. The Animal Protection Law, which was developed with an objective to "ensure the comfort, and righteous and proper treatment of animals, to protect them against pain, suffering and intentional harm, and to prevent any kind of victimhood of animals" is composed of 33 articles and two provisional clauses. At present, the responsibilities assigned by the Law are conducted by the Department for Game and Wild Animals of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry at the central level, and by the Sections for the Protection of Nature and National Parks of Provincial Environment and Forestry Directorates at the local level.

The Animal Protection Law enabled animal protection organizations to articulate their demands more persistently³¹. Pursuant to the Law numbered 5199, representatives from animal protection organizations are required to be included in Provincial and District Animal Protection Commissions. The representation of non-governmental organizations in these commissions facilitated the communication of the demands for the termination of culling, the improvement of animal shelters under the name of animal care units, and the conduct of efficient inspections by the relevant competent authorities. Apart from administrative initiatives, it was requested from the Presidency of Religious Affairs that sermons, which would further contribute to the spread of affection for animals, be preached. Application to media organs for the presentation of educational broadcasts on both national and local channels; acknowledgement of channels, producers and newspaper columnists, who give support to animal protection activities; and the criticism of unfavourable broadcasts are among the diverse daily activities carried out in this field³¹.

Membership rate to animal protection societies has been found by Özkul³³ with "To identify the Turkish people's approach to animal rights concept" conducted research, as 4%. In the same survey, 17% of respondents stated that adequate attention has been given to animal rights in Turkey. In addition, it has stated in between the results of the project that participation in civil society activities aimed at the protection of animals will contribute positively to the development of the concept of animal rights.

^{viii} Data of the Department for Non-governmental Organizations of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Turkey as of March 2011

^{ix} Statutory Decree No: 443 published in the Official Gazette dated 21 August 1991 and numbered 20967

^x Decision No: 2003/616 published in the Official Gazette dated 20 October 2003 and numbered 25265

^{xiii} Law No: 5199 published in the Official Gazette dated 1 July 2004 and numbered 25509

DISCUSSION

According to official data, the 155 non-governmental organizations for the protection of animals, established in 53 provinces of Turkey, have 5549 members in total, 3385 of which are male and 2164 female. However, it has been determined that, the organizations in eight out of the 53 provinces do not have any registered members, whilst in 12 provinces; the organizations do not have any female members. Provinces with no female members are mostly eastern and south-eastern provinces of lower socio-economic level. On the other hand, such organizations give the impression that, in fact, they do not advocate animal rights and serve different purposes. However, as the name of each organization is not available, the exact number of organizations that may be serving different purposes was not able to be determined. In this context, it was considered that assessments should be made based on 119 organizations in 34 provinces, with 2803 male and 2164 female members. Since the establishment of the first animal protection organization in 1912 in Turkey and over the course of a 99-year-period, the number of non-governmental organizations operating in this field has increased to 119, and the "Animal Protection Law" and its implementing regulations have been put into force. Although reliable data is not available on the number of members of these organizations in previous years, the total number of members has been reported as 5549 for the year 2009.

It has been observed that, since the establishment of the first animal protection organization, certain activities, including cooperation with public institutions, raising public awareness by means of communication tools such as the dissemination of posters and organization of conferences, and the establishment of affection for animals among primary school children, are in continuation. On the other hand, some approaches, such as euthanasia have been completely abandoned. Therefore, it can be stated that, in Turkey, activities aimed at the protection of animals, are conducted as the devoted work of "benevolent" people.

Nevertheless, as animal shelters, particularly those established by public authorities, are referred to as "animal prisons", the primary demands of non-governmental organizations are the termination of culling practices, and the release of animals to the streets after neutered and vaccinated.

Reference was made to the establishment of a federation, for the first time, in an example given in a text written in 1956. However, it was not until 2008 that an Animal Rights Federation was established. It can be suggested that this organization shall improve cooperation between existing organizations and contribute to the conduct of more effective work.

In Turkey, efforts aimed at the advocacy of "the right to live" and "the protection of animals" mainly addresses stray animals. Reliable data on the population of stray animals is not available due to the activities conducted not being reported on a regular basis. Similarly, the exact number of animal shelters and animal care units cannot be determined as most of the shelters established by benevolent individuals remain unknown.

As a result, it can be said that the activities of non-governmental organizations in Turkey for the protection of animals mostly carried out in the form of dedicated efforts of charitable individuals for stray animals.

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