

# **‘No more effective than training’: Brussels to ban controversial dog collars**

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**Controversial dog collars – such as those that give electric shocks, choke chains and spike collars – will soon be banned in the Brussels - Capital Region for welfare and ethical reasons.**

The office of the region’s minister for animal welfare, Bernard Clerfayt, confirmed the decision to Belga Newsy Agency on Monday. The ban had already been proposed by the Brussels Animal Welfare Council; the minister now intends to follow this and impose the ban.

“The use of electric, choker or spike collars is not without danger for dogs and has long been controversial. Several studies tend to show that this type of collar is no more effective than positive training techniques for dogs,” Clerfayt’s cabinet said.

## **Higher risk of aggression**

Electric or “shock collars” have a remote device that triggers an electronic pulse, which can be varied in strength. They are most commonly used to reduce or prevent dogs from being aggressive. However, in certain instances, they can inflict unnecessary harm and suffering.

Research has shown that dog training methods using electric collars lead to a higher risk of aggression, fear, anxiety and other undesirable behaviours while reducing the quality of the relationship with the dog’s handler.

Experts have stressed that, especially without “perfect timing between the undesirable behaviour and the electric shock, the dog fails to make the association and could develop aggressive behaviour.”

As part of the recommendation to ban such collars, the Brussels Animal Welfare Council called for the promotion of positive training methods. Shock collars are expected to be prohibited in Flanders from 2027 while the competent minister in Wallonia is working to introduce a similar ban.