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## European Rabbis Encouraged by EU Court Adviser's Opinion in Favor of Shechita

 by Algemeiner Staff



Instructions to respect ritual slaughter requirements on display at the Cléveval sheep slaughterhouse, in Corbas, France, May 4, 2016. Photo: Reuters / Robert Pratta.

Jewish leaders in Europe reacted positively to an EU court adviser's [recommendation on Thursday](#) to overrule a Belgian law that requires animals to be stunned before they are slaughtered – a measure that violates both Jewish and Muslim religious laws on the killing of animals for human consumption.

The recommendation was made by the advocate general of the Court of Justice of the European Union, Gerard Hogan, who said that an EU law of 2009 stating that animals





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should normally be stunned before they are slaughtered included a clear exception for slaughter prescribed by religious rites.

“We welcome the Advocate General’s opinion that the bans on Shechita in two Belgian regions are not lawful,” Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt — president of the Conference of European Rabbis (CER) — said in a statement.

Goldschmidt added that his organization trusted “that the Court will take note of the Advocate General’s opinion when it comes up with its judgement later this year.”

Other Jewish leaders emphasized that the case was a vital test of the EU’s commitment to freedom of worship.

“I welcome the Attorney General’s Opinion that individual member state moves to ban kosher slaughter run contrary to EU law and are a breach of commitments to respect freedom of religion,” Rabbi Menachem Margolin — chair of the Brussels-based European Jewish Association (EJA) — said in a statement. “I sincerely hope that the European Court of Justice will echo his opinion in due course and reaffirm the positive commitment to pluralism and respect to religion showcased by AG Hogan in his Opinion.”

The legal battle over ritual slaughter in Belgium originated with a 2017 decree in the Flanders region to amend its law on protection and welfare of animals by requiring all animals be first stunned.

After Jewish and Muslim associations challenged the ban, Belgium’s Constitutional Court referred the case to the EU Court of Justice for a final ruling.

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