

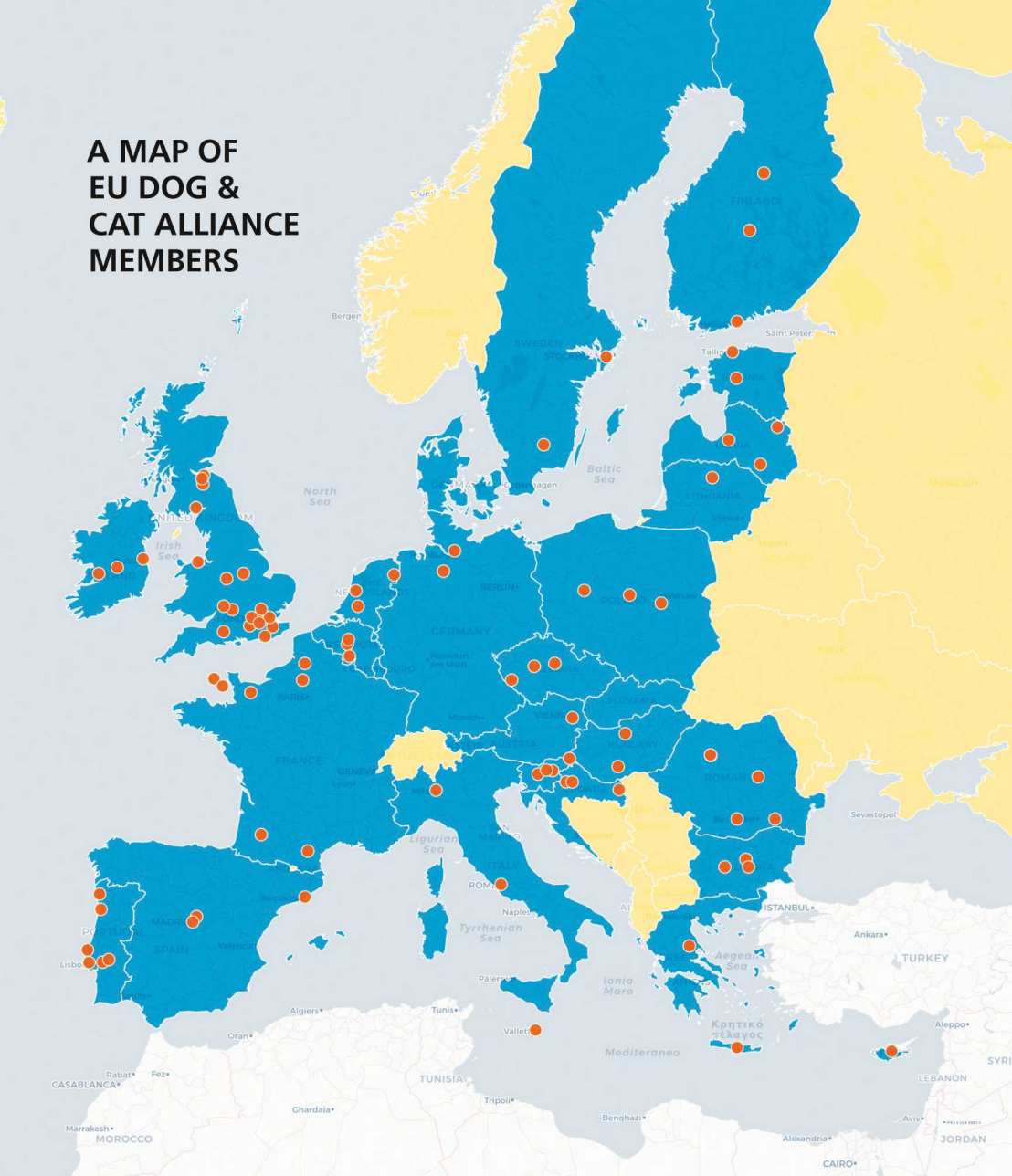


**EU DOG & CAT  
ALLIANCE®**

**CALLING FOR EU  
ACTION TO BUILD A  
BETTER EUROPE FOR  
DOGS AND CATS**



## A MAP OF EU DOG & CAT ALLIANCE MEMBERS



## THE EU DOG & CAT ALLIANCE

The EU Dog & Cat Alliance was launched in 2014. The Alliance currently represents nearly 90 organisations across the EU. Together we are working to improve companion animal welfare and build a better Europe for dogs and cats. Our membership encompasses veterinary organisations, rescue and rehoming organisations, and other organisations working to protect companion animal welfare. This gives the Alliance a unique set of expertise to coordinate and facilitate dialogue between the EU institutions (European Commission, Parliament and Council), civil societies, experts and other stakeholders.

### We aim to:

- Lobby the European Union institutions to introduce and improve EU legislation in relation to dogs and cats
- Collaborate with other key stakeholders such as NGOs and other organizations working in the field of dog & cat health and welfare within the EU
- Provide a constructive platform for the sharing of information on dog and cat welfare issues between our members
- Gather robust evidence on the dog and cat issues we work on and produce reports and briefings to support our position





## WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE EU REGARDING DOGS AND CATS?

There are approximately 66 million owned dogs and 75 million owned cats<sup>1</sup> in the EU. Cross border activities involving dogs and cats can therefore have a huge impact on human and animal health, welfare, consumer protection and the functioning of internal market. Despite this, there is currently very little EU legislation to protect dog and cat welfare and consequently, standards in national Member States vary greatly which can lead to significant welfare issues arising as a result.

*There's currently little EU legislation to protect dogs and cats.*

## WHAT ARE THE CURRENT ISSUES IN THE EU REGARDING DOGS AND CATS?

### Illegal trade in dogs and cats in the EU

Although figures are difficult to estimate, it is likely that hundreds of thousands of dogs and cats are bred and transported in poor conditions to be illegally sold across different EU countries every year, exploiting discrepancies in pet legislation, welfare standards and prices amongst Member States.

Dogs Trust has, in its recent investigative report on Puppy Smuggling,<sup>2</sup> outlined several examples of the poor conditions of animals involved in illegal transport in the EU. Puppies can be transported on journeys of over 1,600km without toilet breaks and little food and water.

Recent trends include the illegal importation of sedated puppies, undeclared and hidden in vehicles, and the illegal importation of underage puppies from Third Countries into the EU.

This illegal trade threatens not only companion animal health and welfare, but also public health, consumer protection and the smooth functioning of the EU internal market. A key finding of the 2015 European Commission study on the welfare of cats and dogs involved in commercial practices<sup>3</sup> was that the EU should take action to protect companion animal welfare. This illegal trade can only be addressed through a comprehensive approach involving the European Commission, European Parliament and Member States, including agencies and border and veterinary authorities.

*We are calling on the European Commission to take the lead and draw up an Action Plan to tackle the illegal trade in dogs and cats in the EU.*



**The need for specific requirements for dogs and cats to be added under Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport.**

Whilst the EU Dog & Cat Alliance welcomes the requirements under the new Delegated Regulation regarding animal health requirements for movements within the Union of terrestrial animals (under the Animal Health Law), we remain extremely concerned that the welfare of dogs and cats is not adequately protected by the current EU legislation on the welfare of animals during transport.

*We call for a separate review by the Commission of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, to specifically include requirements to protect the welfare of dogs and cats.*



**The European Commission Animal Welfare Strategy**

The EU Dog & Cat Alliance welcomes the Commission's commitment to review the EU Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals for 2012-2015. We have concerns that several recommendations within the strategy have not been sufficiently taken forward and acted upon.

*We encourage the European Commission to urgently set objectives and plans for a new animal welfare strategy including issues specifically related to the welfare of cats and dogs.*





### Better regulation needed for the online advertising of pets

With the huge increase in internet use over the past few years, many citizens now choose to purchase their pets via online adverts. The online sale of pets in the EU is completely unregulated. This leads to animal welfare standards suffering as a result of sellers not listing key information regarding their welfare, and buyers purchasing animals without understanding their specific welfare needs and requirements.

The EU Dog & Cat Alliance, through our EU Pet Advertising Advisory Group (EUPAAG) project, supported by Blue Cross, is helping animal welfare organisations in creating individual Pet Advertising Advisory Groups (PAAGs)<sup>4</sup> in different Member States to improve the situation through self-regulation. Through EUPAAG we are working to ensure that as many websites as possible across the EU sign up to voluntary standards and advertise the sale of pets in a responsible way. For more information about EUPAAG see page 10.



WE ARE  
AIMING TO  
SET UP  
**10**  
PAAGS BY  
THE END  
OF 2020

In 2019 the European Commission published the results of their Coordinated Control Plan (CCP). The aim of the CCP was to gain insights into misleading and fraudulent practices, and into the volume of dogs and cats being sold via the internet across the EU. The results from the study showed that there were a range of issues with the online advertising of pets for sale across Europe including underage animals, unvaccinated animals, animals in poor health, false identification documents and illegal transport. Member States suggested that more should be done to educate potential pet buyers, publish standards for classified advertising websites and create partnerships between stakeholders to tackle the problem. The EU Dog & Cat Alliance is thus reinforced in our commitment to EUPAAG<sup>5</sup> and working with the European Commission and Member States to tackle some of these issues through setting up Pet Advertising Advisory Groups and sharing best practice.

*We call on the EU institutions to support the work of EUPAAG as a way of addressing the increasing problem of inappropriate dog and cat adverts appearing on classified advertising websites and social media.*





### *About EUPAAG*

The EU Dog & Cat Alliance is a founding member of the EU Pet Advertising Advisory Group (EUPAAG), which is helping animal welfare organisations, websites and other stakeholders in EU Member States to address the increasing problem of inappropriate dog and cat adverts appearing on classified websites and social media.

EUPAAG is working to ensure that as many websites as possible across the EU sign up to voluntary standards and advertise pets in a responsible way. In order to achieve this goal we support the creation of national Pet Advertising Advisory Groups by sharing best practice, advice and through a toolkit made available to our members and ongoing advice and support.

**Current PAAGs:** PAAG (UK), IPAAG (Ireland), BelgPAAG (Belgium), SwePAAG (Sweden), RoPAAG (Romania), CzechPAAG (Czech Republic), ItPAAG (Italy), PolPAAG (Poland), CyPAAG (Cyprus)



### **Compulsory identification & registration (I&R) of dogs and cats across the EU**

Dogs and cats may be moved between Member States or imported from third countries for trade purposes as well as for reasons such as rehoming, participation in shows or exhibitions, holidays with their owners or relocation with their owner to another country. Although a great majority of EU countries have compulsory I&R for dogs, without a system for the identification and registration which is accessible across the EU, there is currently little traceability when animals are moved over borders. This can pose a risk to both human and animal health and welfare. Compulsory identification and registration would provide traceability in the event of disease outbreak and would also help to tackle the illegal trade in dogs and cats in the EU.

***We are calling for EU legislation requiring the compulsory permanent identification and registration of owned dogs and cats on a national database, which is linked to an EU database. The new EU Animal Health Law provides framework legislation under which this could be introduced.***

For further information please visit our website or contact us using the details below:

Website | **[www.dogandcatwelfare.eu](http://www.dogandcatwelfare.eu)**

Email | **[info@dogandcatwelfare.eu](mailto:info@dogandcatwelfare.eu)**

Facebook | **[@EUdogsandcats](https://www.facebook.com/EUdogsandcats)**

Twitter | **[@EUdogsandcats](https://twitter.com/EUdogsandcats)**

