

EU Platform on Animal Welfare

Health & Welfare of Dogs & Cats

Voluntary Initiative Group

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Voluntary initiative group health & welfare of pets (dogs and cats)

As from May 2022:

- Explore options on EU AW legislation for dogs and cats (kept/traded for commercial purposes) and their pros and cons /expected impacts
- Review existing scientific and technical evidence
- Review possible existing relevant legal provisions (EU and member states)
- Discuss & technical opinions (recomm.) on possible elements for EU legislation

Main Topics:

- Transport
- Breeding & raising
- Marketing & sales



Members

Member States: BE, DK, FI, IE, DE, RO, ES, PT, HU, NL



NGOs

**EUROGROUP
FOR ANIMALS**



(12 meetings with EC; Remote)

Voluntary initiative group health & welfare of pets (dogs and cats)

Consultation of the EU Platform:

- via the Digital tool of the Platform on 2 May – 22 May
- Comments & questions from 2 countries, an independent expert and a business organisation
- Reviewed comments in the V.I. group and made some revisions in the docs
- Revised documents available on the digital tool
- Will be published on the Platform site

Recommendations on Transport

- Recommendations on fitness for transport
- Body condition scores before transport
- > 15 weeks of age for long-distance transport
- For intra-trade (and export)
 - Vaccinated against certain viruses
 - European pet passport + the corresponding microchip number should be checked



Water and feeding intervals, journey times and rest periods

- Continuous water (or every 4 hours); Feeding intervals:
 - Adult dogs and cats: twice daily
 - Puppies and kittens: three times a day (every 4 hours)
- Journey times^{x)}:
 - > 8 hours: 2 drivers, both sufficiently trained & qualified for the care of the animals
 - Max 18 hours
- Rest periods /breaks^{x)}:
 - Adult dogs and cats: break every 4 hrs
 - Puppies/kittens (<6 months): every 2-4 hrs
- Contingency plan for each journey
- Satellite navigation systems installed for all vehicles on long journeys (In addition to or instead of a journey log)

x) Part of the group considers that there is a need for more scientific underpinning before these provisions would be included into the Transport regulation

Recommendations on space allowance

- Animals able to:
 - stand up fully
 - hold head in natural position
 - comfortably sit, turn, lie down and rest
 - move around in the vehicle/container to access water and feed as appropriate
- Dimensions: Length, width, height
- Some preferred IATA container space requirements



Recommendations on temperature and humidity

- Adequate ventilation and temperature control
 - Containers should have ventilation apertures on at least 3 sides
- Temperature (in all areas of the cargo space):
 - Ideally maintained between 15 - 25°C
 - Never below 10°C or above 30°C
 - 20°C - 25°C for puppies ≤8 wks & kittens ≤6 wks
- Humidity (throughout journey & monitored with humidity gauge):
 - Within 30%-70%
 - Ideally 50%
- Vehicle equipped with sensors with display in drivers' cabin and/or alarm



(Part of the group considers that there is a need for more scientific underpinning for legislation)

Recommendations on breeding & raising

- Breeders
- Training and competence
- Official controls
- Extreme selective breeding
- Cosmetic and convenience surgeries (unnecessary mutilations)
- Varia (a.o. on electronic shock collars)



Recommendations on Breeders of dogs/cats

- Commercial breeders should be approved:
 - ≥ 3 breeding bitches/queens, and/or
 - intend to breed ≥ 3 litters /year
- Fit for breeding:
 - Minimum breeding age: dogs 18 months, cats 12 months
 - Breeding age > 7 years requires veterinary check
 - Minimum interval between litters
 - No breeding with bitches/queens that have had caesarean section
 - No breeding with animals that are closely related, have inherited disorders, exaggerated features that compromise welfare or unfit temperament



Recommendations on breeders of dogs/cats (cont.)

- Good feeding, housing, health
- Provisions to support appropriate behaviour:
 - Environment
 - Interactions
 - Rearing with littermates & mother until at least 8 weeks of age
- Duty of care & for proper socialization and habituation
 - one carer for every 3 bitches with litters



Recommendations on knowledge & skills, training & competence



- Operators in establishments which breed or raise dogs and/or cats should demonstrate to have professional competence and knowledge
 - from attending and completing appropriate courses.
 - Commercial breeders: proof of professional competence prerequisite for approval.
 - Minimum training requirements on an EU level should be developed including a certifying system on member state level to provide a certificate of competence.

Recommendations on Extreme selective breeding

- Breeders should not breed from animals with exaggerated features or known genetic defects that compromise welfare
- EC may (via I.A.'s) provide requirements to regulate (the breeding of dogs or cats with detrimental exaggerated features or known genetic defects)
- Animals with certain detrimental exaggerated features should not be allowed to be imported or sold in the EU
- Dogs & cats having undergone surgery to rectify breeding defects should be prohibited to take part in exhibitions and competitions



Recommendations on Marketing & sales

- Registration of sellers/suppliers: if ≥ 10 animals in a calendar year
- Minimum standards for advertisers:
 - Minimum information about the animals;
 - Minimum information about the seller/suppliers;
 - Minimum requirements for online Platforms
- Requirements for sellers/suppliers:
 - Good Feeding, Housing, Health, appropriate behaviour, duty of care
- Ban on sales in Pet shops



Minimum standards for advertisers

- Minimum information about the animal
 - photo
 - date of birth, country of origin, sex, breed etc.
 - location where the animal is kept
 - microchip identification code and database where registered
- Minimum information about the seller/supplier/breeder who advertises:
 - Registration number of the seller/supplier/breeder who advertises
 - Contact details (phone number, real name and surname, email etc.)
 - Breeder registration number (if applicable)
 - Verification of the owner and dog/cat microchip



Minimum standards for advertisers (cont.)

- Requirements for online Platforms:
 - provide copy with responsibilities and/or national Codes of practice
 - policy with rules regarding advertisement and sale of pet animals
 - 'report animal welfare' button
 - minimum age for supply of the animal, requirement on microchip & registration
 - Information verification: advertisers' identity, owner, microchip of dog/cat, status (hobby, commercial)
 - keep records of reported ads
 - monitor, ban, remove and report ads of banned animals & animals for whom there is a reasonable concern for their health/welfare;
 - suspension and banning of sellers/suppliers not complying etc...

Many thanks for all contributions of V.I.
group members, platform members and
to the EC for asking us for this task !
