

# EU Platform on Animal Welfare

## Health & Welfare of Pets (dogs) in trade

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### Voluntary Initiative Group

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Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Netherlands

Voluntary initiative on improving health & welfare of pets (dogs) in trade

## Members

- **9 seats for Member States**

(13 involved: Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Portugal, Hungary, Netherlands)

- **3 NGOs** (RSPCA, Vier Pforten, Eurogroup for Animals)
- **1 Business Organisation** (FVE)
- **1 Independent expert** (University of Milano)

**Last meeting 22 April Remote**

# We ask your endorsement today for:

- Infographs:
  - Buyer's checklist: explains potential buyer of dog online what to look for
  - Guidelines for online platforms
- Accompanying leaflets for the buyer's and platform Infographs
  - Provide more explanation
  - Include links to important resources
  - Can be adapted according to national legislation

# Timeline Online trade documents

Activity	Who	Deadline
Produce first drafts leaflets	Chair, secretariat	S1 2019
Consultation within online subgroup	Online subgroup	July 2019
Consultation plenary (sub)group	Plenary (sub)group	August-Sept 2019
Consultation stakeholders	Selected stakeholders (i.e. EUPAAG, EU dog and cat alliance, EPO, Dogs Trust, 4Paws, RSPCA, etc.)	August-Sept 2019
First final draft	Plenary (sub)group	End Sept 2019
Presentation drafts to EU Platform	Léon Arnts	Oct 2019
1 <sup>st</sup> Consultation Platform	Platform members	Nov 2019 - 15 Jan 2020
Revision leaflets	Subgroup trade	January 2020
2 <sup>st</sup> Consultation Platform	Platform members	May 2020
Endorsement leaflets?	Platform members	<b>TODAY</b>
Translation & Promotion leaflets	All	2020

# Feedback last consultation:

Please find below the comments received on the documents:

Sossidou EVANGELIA, Independent Expert, posted on the Digital Tool as comment:

Dear All,

The infographics and leaflets developed by the voluntary initiative on the health and welfare of dogs in trade consist a valuable 'tool' for selling platforms or individual buyers.

My very warm compliments to voluntary group members for their efforts and excellent deliverable.

PORTUGAL, sent by email to :

Dear colleagues

We would like to inform that we agree with the infographics and leaflets to inform buyers and selling platforms.

Best regards

Maria Jorge Correia

Chefe de Divisão de Bem Estar Animal

# Points covered – Leaflet for buyers

## CONTENT

- Is a dog right for me?
- What kind of dog will be most suitable for me?
- Where to get a dog?
- Animal-related factors to check
- Breeder related factors to check

## WHAT TO CHECK BEFORE BUYING A DOG, ESPECIALLY ONLINE?



Before buying, **think twice** and consult your veterinarian on healthy dogs and suitable breeds. Owning a dog is a huge long-term responsibility.

Have you considered **adoption**? There are many dogs in local shelters waiting for a family.

Look for a **reputable animal shelter or breeder**.

### BEFORE YOU BUY A DOG

- **Meet the dog personally.**
- Puppies <8 weeks of age should not be separated from their mother. Dogs <15 weeks of age cannot travel abroad to most countries.
- **Witness the puppy and the mother interacting** at the breeder's establishment (never meet on a parking lot, or similar).
- **General health; check for vaccination & anti-parasitic treatment.**
- **Birth date & country, microchip number, passport, pedigree certificate, etc.**

- **Beware of red flags** (i.e. wrong picture, poor description of the animal, offer of home delivery, use of pseudonyms, many different breeds for sale by the same seller, etc.)
- **Ensure you have the name & contact details** of the seller.
- **Talk with the seller on the phone. Ask questions** and expect to be asked questions.
- **Never buy in a rush, under pressure, out of mercy, from free auction sites or social media.**
- Ask about **references, testimonials, contract and your rights** as a buyer.
- If you **suspect fraud, report it to the police, local authorities, or other animal welfare enforcement agency.**

# THE BUYERS' CHECKLIST

← Infograph

Leaflet →

## WHAT TO CHECK BEFORE BUYING A DOG, ESPECIALLY ONLINE?



### What to check before buying a puppy/dog?

Well kept and healthy dogs are generally amazing companion animals and give a lot of joy! However, before buying them, think twice. Typically, dogs live for around 12 years, but some live much longer. So, if everything goes well and you buy a healthy and well-socialized dog, you have a nice companion for many years.

#### Is a dog right for me?

Things to consider:

- Will you be able to take daily care of it? Dogs will take up a lot of time and energy because they are dependent on your care. All dogs, even small ones, need regular exercise and plenty of opportunities to walk, run and play outside. The amount of exercise each dog needs is largely dependent upon their age and health but you should be prepared to take them for regular walks every day, as often as three times a day for some dogs.
- Will a dog fit into your family life?
- Who will care after the dog when you/the family go/goes on holiday?
- Do you have sufficient home space to keep a dog?
- Are you prepared to cover the costs? It is estimated that the average costs of keeping a dog is around 1000€ or more each year (food, toys, furniture, health and care costs, etc.).

#### What kind of dog will be most suitable for me?

The next step is to consider what kind of dog will fit best with your lifestyle. Every dog has different qualities in terms of behaviour, need for exercise, amount of investment in time and need for veterinary care.

It is a good idea to consult a veterinarian and with their help conduct extensive reliable research online (see references below) before you get a dog. Veterinarians are able to give you advice on how to choose a dog that fits with your family's expectations and lifestyle. They can give you more information on the health and welfare needs of certain breeds. They may be able to recommend one or more of the breeders in the neighbourhood.

For further information, several organizations give advice that might be useful for choosing the right dog for you (see references below).

# Points covered – leaflet for online platforms

## CONTENT

- Minimum info about the animal
- Minimum info about vendors/advertisers
- What more can platforms do?



## GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE PLATFORMS SELLING DOGS



### HOW TO DO IT RESPONSIBLY?

#### MINIMUM INFO ABOUT THE DOG

- Recent pictures of the animal
- The breed, date and country of birth, sex, etc.
- Microchip number and the database where it is registered\*
- Vaccination and anti-parasitic treatment records, and other health info such as neutering
- Price and buyers rights (e.g. warranty)
- Appropriate and relevant animal care information
- Detailed description: character, parents, etc.



#### MINIMUM INFO ABOUT THE BREEDER/SELLER

- Contact details of the seller (phone, name, email, region, address, etc.)
- Status of the seller: hobby or commercial breeder, trader, shelter, charity, etc.
- Breeder's or seller's registration number\*

\*If applicable in your country/region



## GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE PLATFORMS

← Infograph

Leaflet →

## GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE PLATFORMS SELLING DOGS



### HOW TO DO IT RESPONSIBLY?

It is becoming more and more common to offer pets for sale via advertisements on online platforms. It is therefore important that trade is done in a regulated and responsible way, considering that animals are sentient beings and not inanimate goods.

Online platforms can and should regulate trade in order to guarantee that the animals offered via their channels are sold in a responsible way. This is essential to prevent animal suffering and to protect consumers from buying an unsocialized, sick or even dying dog from an unscrupulous breeder using online platforms.

Online platforms should as far as possible validate the information a seller provides to advertise online, especially in regard to the identity of the seller and the identity of the animal. Both can be checked through ID verification and back-end checks against the pet registration database, provided that the latter holds reliable data. Online platforms should differentiate between private and commercial sellers. Currently, in a lot of EU countries, commercial breeders need to have a breeder registration number, according to EU or national legislation (by 2021 this will be obligatory for all commercial breeders in all EU countries). You should validate this breeder registration number against the national registry (if available). If a commercial breeder/seller is not registered, they shouldn't be allowed to sell online.

Classified ad sites should be encouraged to limit the number of user accounts to one per person.

Ideally, online animal sales should only be allowed in specialized and reputable journals or websites (e.g. in some countries sites recognized by the local/national veterinary authority). A specialized magazine or a specialized website is one whose announcements relate exclusively to the marketing of animals or related goods and services and has special provisions for the offering of pets.

When trade is done via an online selling platform, at least some minimum requirements should be respected to ensure it is done in a regulated and responsible way.

Several organisations provide a complete set of guidelines for online platforms to help them promote a safe and regulated online pet trade.

#### **Minimum information vendors/advertisers should include about the animal:**

- A recent dated photograph of the advertised animal.
- The date of birth and country of origin (where the animal was born), sex, breed etc.
- The price for the animal and the rights of the buyer/consumer e.g. warranty.
- The animal microchip identification code and database wherein the animal is registered. If available also the parent's microchip number and registration database.
- The vaccination and anti-parasitic records, and other health-related information (sterilisation status etc.)

# 1st outcome

Recommendations on dogs

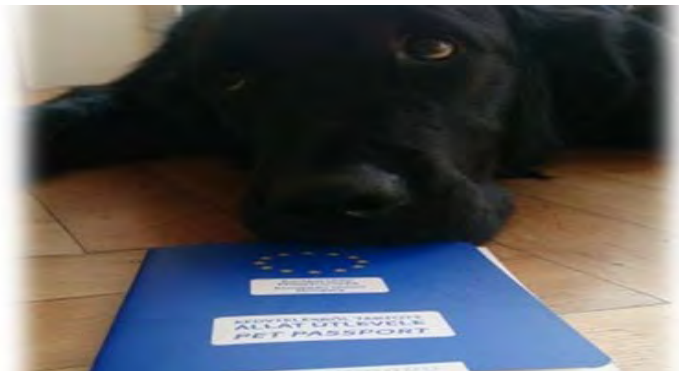
In TRACES



# 2nd outcome

Our group mapped all national legislation in respect to:

- I&R, Categories and requirements for breeders, Selling of dogs; etc.



## MAPPING SURVEY ON IDENTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION OF DOGS & REGISTRATION OF BREEDERS AND SELLERS

1. [Austria](#)
2. [Belgium](#)
3. [Bulgaria](#)
4. [Croatia](#)
5. [Cyprus](#)
6. [Czech Republic](#)
7. [Denmark](#)
8. [Estonia](#)
9. [Finland](#)
10. [France](#)
11. [Germany](#)
12. [Greece](#)
13. [Hungary](#)
14. [Ireland](#)
15. [Italy](#)
16. [Latvia](#)
17. [Lithuania](#)
18. [Luxembourg](#)
19. [Malta](#)
20. [Norway](#)
21. [Poland](#)
22. [Portugal](#)
23. [Romania](#)
24. [Slovakia](#)
25. [Slovenia](#)
26. [Spain](#)
27. [Sweden](#)
28. [Switzerland](#)
29. [The Netherlands](#)
30. [United Kingdom](#)

 30 countries mapped

# Ongoing work

- Recommendations document regarding the outcomes of the Mapping on I&R of dogs and registration of breeders in all MS.
- Development of guidelines /guides:
  - Commercial transport: road transport of dogs and cats
  - Breeding: dogs, cats
  - Socialization: dogs, cats

## Commercial transport guidelines

- **General transport conditions**
- **Animal health & disease control checks**
- **Vehicle and Transporter Requirements**
- **Contingency planning**

**Extra: checklists for comp. auth.**

Consultation in autumn

## Breeding & socialisation guidelines

- **Dog & cat Responsible breeding guidelines**
- **Additional work on socialisation is needed**

Breeding guidelines consultation in autumn

Socialisation guidel. at later stage



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## VOLUNTARY INITIATIVE GROUP

