

# EU Platform on Animal Welfare

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

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### Voluntary Initiative Group

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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)

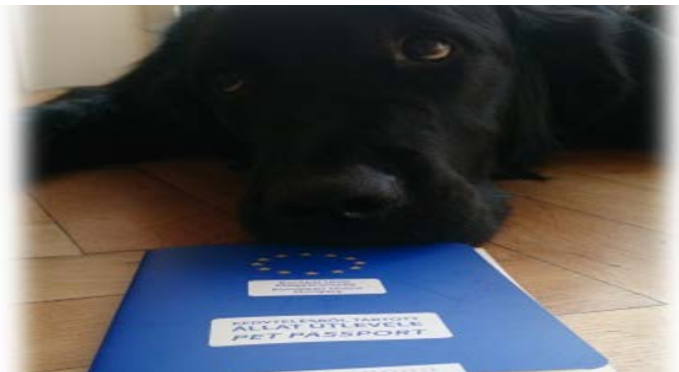
# Objectives (extract)

- Exchange of good practices on enforcement, Identification and Registration,
- Improving communication & cooperation between Member States with regard to pet trade,
- Greater exchangeability of data from I&R systems,
- Development of guides/guidelines,
- Improving the use of the TRACES system.

# Mapping survey

Our group mapped all national legislation in respect to:

- Identification and registration;
- 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 (info not received yet)
20. [Poland](#)
21. [Portugal](#)
22. [Romania](#)
23. [Slovakia](#)
24. [Slovenia](#)
25. [Spain](#)
26. [Sweden](#)
27. [The Netherlands](#)
28. [United Kingdom](#)

~~24~~  
27 countries mapped so far

### **PART 1: Identification and Registration of dogs (I&R)**

Currently identification and registration of dogs is not mandatory in Finland. In practice, dogs and cats are identified with microchips, even though breeding associations still approve also tattooing as an identification method.

#### **Law**

##### *Identification*

The government decided in August 2018 that identification and registration of all dogs will become mandatory from 2023. Mandatory identification and registration of cats is included in the Government programme 2019-2023, but the date of implementation is not yet set. It is expected in practice that the cat registry will be made at some point after 2023. The Act on the Animal Identification System (238/2010) will be amended accordingly based on the proposal by Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. There aren't legal requirements for the identification methods, identification number or the structure of the code for these animals.

##### **Structure of the code**

There aren't legal requirements for the structure of the code for these animals. Microchips which are used in Finland comply with the ISO 11784-standard and have no country code.

##### **Competent authority**

The competent authority is not defined. For other animal registers, the competent authority is the Finnish Food Safety Authority, EVIRA.

### **PART 1 (2): Additional questions regarding the identification code control**

##### *Transponder implants*

Veterinarians and other persons who are trained can implant microchips.

### **PART 2: Registration of breeders and sellers of pets**

##### *Breeders categories*

Regarding to breeding and selling of dogs and cats, Animal Welfare Decree defines the professional and extensive pet animal keeping followingly:

1. Regular selling and dealing of pet animals
2. Keeping at least six breeding females which have given birth at least to one litter

##### *Registration*

The registration is mandatory for breeders which have at least six breeding females which have given birth to at least one litter, which are considered professional or extensive pet animal keepers.

##### *Pet shops*

Currently, it is not forbidden to sell pets in shops. However, it is not practiced and would likely be strongly condemned by the public. In the new Animal Welfare Act which is aimed to come into force in early 2020's, selling dogs and cats in pet shops will be forbidden.



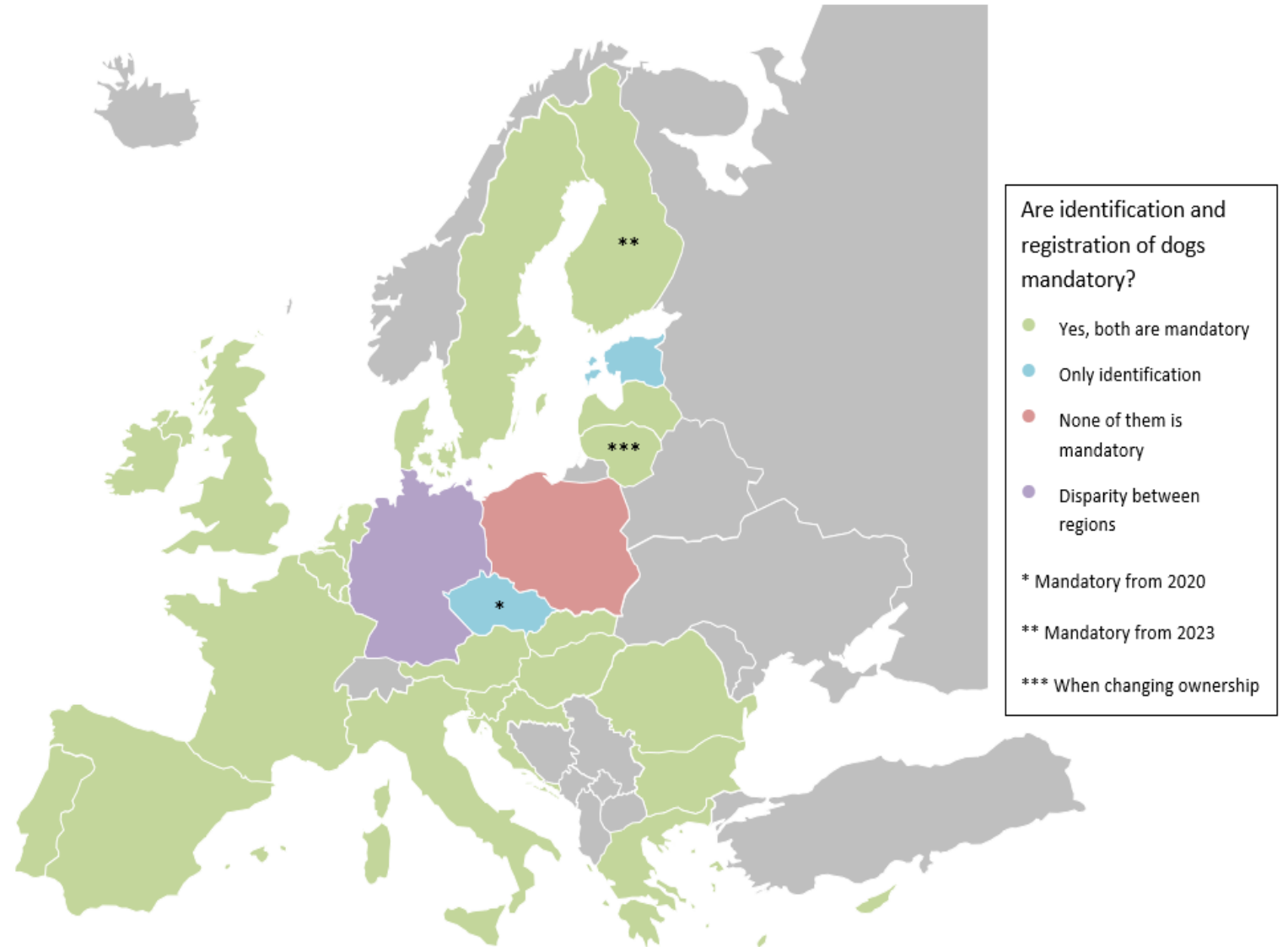
##### *Minimum requirements to online pet sell*

At the moment there are neither control system nor minimum requirements to sell pets online. The requirements are going to be included in the Animal Welfare Act aimed to come into force in early 2020's.

# Updated mapping

Results overview:

- Mandatory I&R of dogs



# Ongoing work

- Recommendations document regarding the outcomes of the Mapping on I&R of dogs and breeders in all Member States.
- Development of guidelines /guides:
  - Online dog sale: advertisement of dogs (see next slides) (BE, ES, FI, IRE, DE, DK)
  - Transport: road transport of dogs and cats (ES, BE)
  - Breeders: dogs, cats; including chapter on dog socialization (IT, DK, BE)

## WHAT TO CHECK BEFORE BUYING A DOG ONLINE?





Before buying, think twice and consult your veterinarian on healthy 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.



### Do not buy a dog before checking:

- Meet the dog personally before buying. 
- Puppies <8 weeks of age should not be taken from the 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 vendor, 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 or from 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

## WHAT TO CHECK BEFORE BUYING A DOG ONLINE?



Dogs are 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?
- What will you do when going on holiday?
- Do you have sufficient home space to keep a dog?
- Are you prepared for the costs? It is estimated that the average costs of keeping a dog is around 1000€ or more each year (food, materials, health and care costs, etc).

### What kind of dog will fit best with me?

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

It is a good idea to consult a veterinarian or shelter staff and to conduct extensive research online before you get a dog. Veterinarians are able to give you advice on how to choose a dog that fits your family's expectations and lifestyle. They can give you more information on the health of certain breeds and their welfare needs. 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 for this).



## 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, gender, 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 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

## GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE PLATFORMS SELLING DOGS

### HOW TO DO IT RESPONSIBLY?



It is becoming more and more common to buy and sell pets via advertisements on online platforms. It is important that this is done in a controlled and responsible way, as animals are sentient beings that are different from inanimate goods.

Online platforms can and should regulate this in order to guarantee that the animals advertised or sold via their platform are sold in a responsible way. So that animals do not suffer and buyers do not end up with a sick and/or unsocialized dog from an unscrupulous breeder.

Online platforms should validate the information a seller provides online, such as the breeder's number with back-end checks, preferably against a pet registry, where the breeding establishment number should be noted.

In most EU countries, commercial breeders will need to have a breeder registration number, according to EU or national legislation. If a commercial breeder/seller is not registered, they shouldn't be allowed to sell online.

Ideally, online animal sales should only be allowed in a specialized and reputable journal or website (e.g. the sites recognized by the local/national veterinary authority). A specialized magazine or a specialized website is a magazine or website whose announcements relate exclusively to the marketing of animals or related goods and services.

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

Several organisations present a complete set of guidelines for online advertisers by providing a toolkit to help them set up and operate the advertisement of pets.

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

- A recent dated photograph of the animal that they are advertising.
- To display the date and country of birth, gender, etc.
- Display the price of the animal and if it is applicable in your country/region - the warranty.
- The animal microchip identification code and database in which the animal is registered as well as the parent's microchip number and database where it is registered (if available).
- Vaccination and anti-parasitic records, and other health information such as neutering.
- Appropriate breed-specific and general responsible animal care information, e.g. advice relating to feeding, housing, handling, husbandry, life expectancy, suitable accessories and veterinary provision.
- Detailed description of the animal including their breed characteristics and preferences (e.g. enjoys company, suitable for children, etc.)

# Timeline Online trade documents

Activity	Who	Deadline
Produce first drafts leaflets	Chair, secretariat	S1 2019
Consultation within online group	Online subgroup	July 2019
Consultation plenary subgroup	Plenary subgroup	August-Sept
Consultation stakeholders	Selected stakeholders (i.e. EUPAAG, EU dog and cat alliance, EPO, Dogs Trust, 4Paws, RSPCA, etc.)	August-Sept
First final draft	Plenary subgroup	End Sept
Presentation drafts to EU Platform and start consultation Platform	Léon Arnts	<b>TODAY</b>
Consultation Platform	Platform members	Oct-Nov
Finalisation leaflets	Subgroup trade	December
Promotion leaflets	All	Q1 and Q2 2020

# Health & Welfare of Pets (dogs) in trade VOLUNTARY INITIATIVE GROUP

