



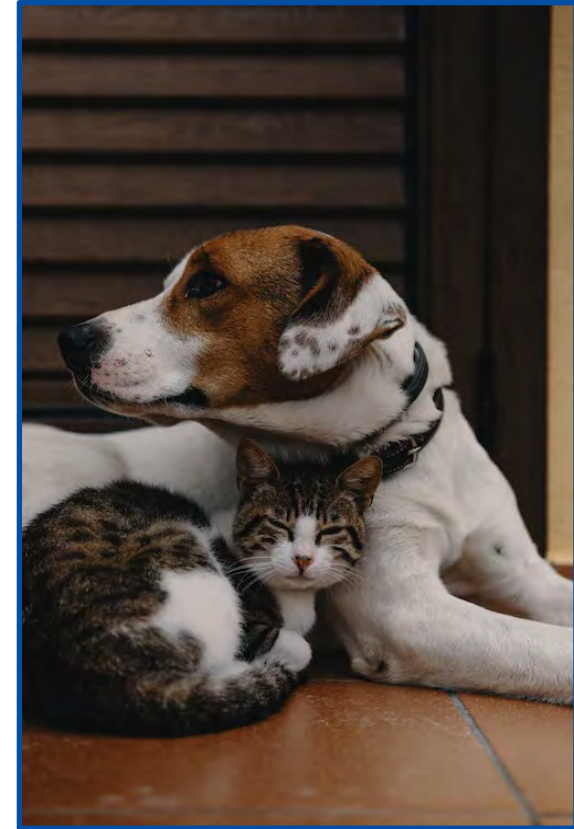
Evidence supporting the proposal on the welfare and traceability of dogs and cats

Legislative Officer, Unit 'Animal Welfare',
15th meeting of EU Platform, 17-18 June 2024



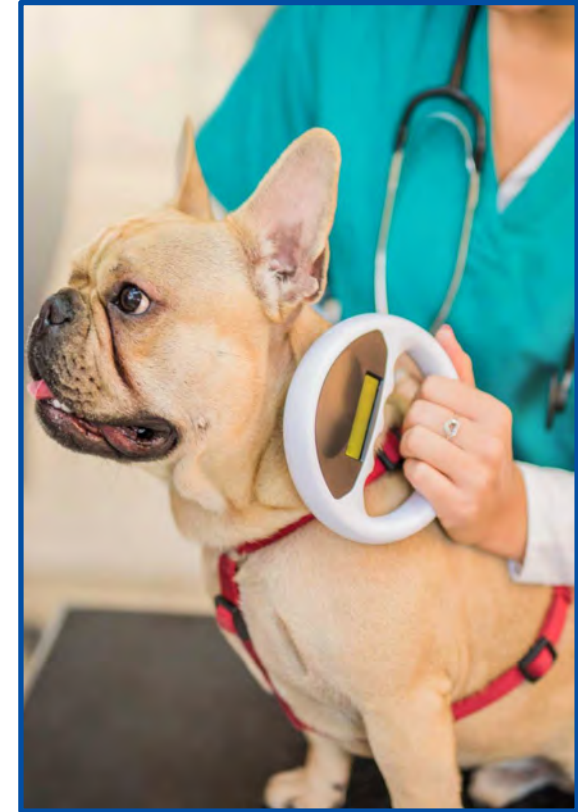
Outline of the presentation

- ✓ Context
- ✓ State of play
- ✓ Objectives
- ✓ Measures
- ✓ Analysis
- ✓ Impacts



Context

- ✓ 66 million dogs and 78 million cats in EU households (2022).
- ✓ Annual value of trade with dogs and cats estimated to EUR 1.3 billion (direct employment of 300 000 people).
- ✓ Evidence of sub-standard breeding and illegal trade, causing health and welfare problems.
- ✓ 74% of EU citizens want better protection of companion animals (Eurobarometer 2023).



State of play

Drivers:

- ✓ Differing national welfare standards
- ✓ "Grey" market
- ✓ Absence of welfare rules for import
- ✓ Lack of systems to verify digital sales
- ✓ Increased consumer demand

Problems:

- ✓ Unharmonised single market
- ✓ Suboptimal level of welfare
- ✓ Suboptimal traceability of dogs and cats

Consequences:

- ✓ Uneven level playing field
- ✓ Animal suffering
- ✓ Misled consumers

Objectives of the proposal

General objectives:

- ✓ Ensure a **level playing field** within the internal market.
- ✓ **Improve the welfare** of dogs and cats bred and kept in the EU.
- ✓ Provide further control tools to **tackle fraud and illegal trade**.

Specific objectives:

- ✓ Ensure common minimum welfare standards.
- ✓ Promote competence of animal caretakers.
- ✓ Establish harmonised tools and databases that strengthen traceability.
- ✓ Ensure that equivalent welfare standards apply to imports.

Main measures in the Commission proposal

1) Measures concerning breeding establishments, pet shops and shelters:

- ✓ "Five domains" (specific rules for shelters).
- ✓ Approval of breeding establishments.
- ✓ Competence requirements for animal caretakers.
- ✓ Annual advisory animal welfare visit by a veterinarian.
- ✓ Equivalent welfare requirements for establishments exporting to the EU.

Several discarded measures, for instance:

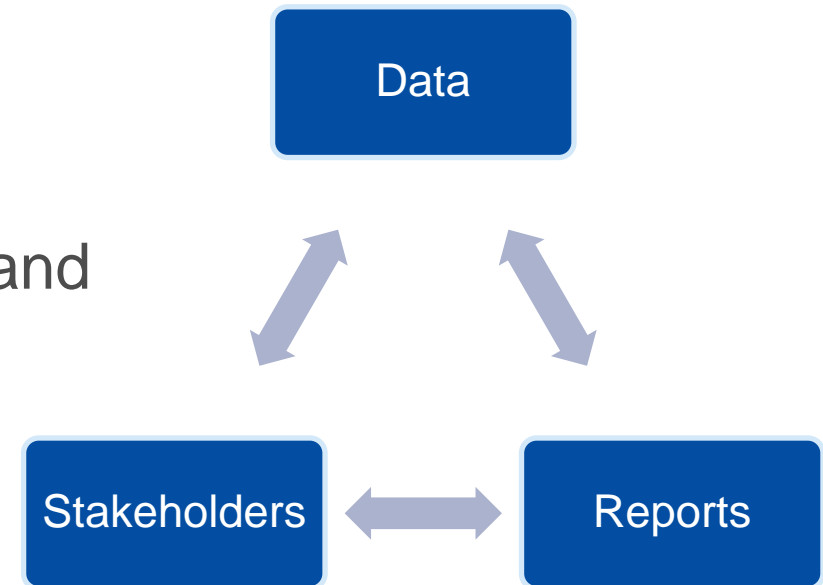
- Ban on certain breeds
- Ban on pet shops
- Logo for breeders' websites
- Minimum age for dogs and cats to be sold

2) Measures concerning any placing on the market of dogs and cats (whether by establishments or other persons or entities):

- ✓ Identification by microchip + registration in inter-operational national databases (within 48 hours for imported dogs and cats).
- ✓ EU system for verification of the authenticity of identification and registration + obligations for online marketplaces.

Analysis

- ✓ Stakeholder consultations (business operators, Member States, third countries and NGO's).
- ✓ Voluntary Initiative on the Health and Welfare of Pets (dogs and cats) in Trade.
- ✓ Report from the European Food Safety Authority.
- ✓ EU Enforcement Action report: Illegal trade of dogs and cats.
- ✓ (...)
(+ *public feedback on the proposal*)



Impacts

- Overall positive impacts:
 - Improved animal welfare
 - Improved consumer protection
 - Improved level-playing field on the single market
 - Positive reputation for EU exports
 - Contributes to combatting illegal trade
 - Complements the rules of AHL
- Costs, varying depending on the situation in the Member States (existing requirements and standard, differences in prices etc.)
- Economic impact on operators **proportionate** to the size and nature of activities (cf. derogations for hobby breeders and shelters).

Thank you!