

# EU Platform on Animal Welfare

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

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### Voluntary Initiative Group

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# 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 20th October Remote)

# We ask your endorsement today for:

- Responsible breeding guidelines:

- Dogs

- Cats

Intended to support enforcement of responsible breeding and good animal welfare practices

(Shorter, user-friendly documents targeted at relevant audiences will be developed)

- Guidelines on commercial movement/transport of cats and dogs by land

# Dog /Cat breeding

## CONTENT

- Principles of responsible breeding
- Selection of parents
- Competent human carers
- Requirements for good animal welfare: Good feeding, housing & health and appropriate behaviour
- End of breeding life
- Record keeping
- Protecting future welfare of puppies/kittens and their new owners
- Registration, licensing and enforcement



# Received comments on Breeding Guidelines (most substantial/important)

- Estimated breeding value for estimating dogs' risk of developing inheritable conditions
- Age of dog (bitch): to be 18 months old in order to breed
- Euthanasia

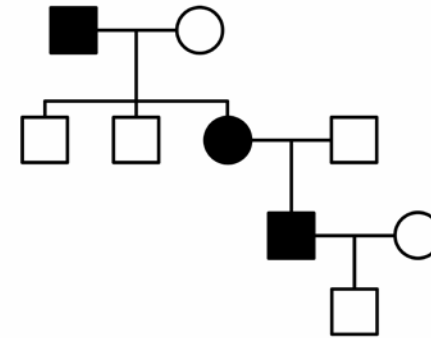
# Amendments in response to comments

Principles of responsible breeding

Inserted that a responsible dog breeder:

- Seeks information on the breed at population level and guidance on how to maintain genetic variance of a population
- Demonstrates an understanding of the detrimental effects to the health of future puppies (and population) through inbreeding and avoids the over-use of popular sires and their relatives.

# Amendments - continued



Selection of Parents, par. 3.3 Inherited disorders,

Added:

- ***Avoid inbreeding:*** *Breeding from closely related dogs such as brother and sister, mother and son or father and daughter, grandfather and granddaughter, uncle and niece, predisposes puppies to genetic or birth defects. The degree of inbreeding within a breed should be carefully monitored.*

# Amendments – ctnd.

And added:

- ***Use an Estimated Breeding Value:*** Many inherited disorders and behavioural traits are influenced by multiple genes and environmental factors and cannot be adequately controlled through genetic screening for a single gene test. An Estimated Breeding Value can be used to estimate a dog's risk of developing complex inherited conditions and the degree to which they may be affected in the future. The estimated breeding value should be considered when deciding the suitability of an individual for breeding. The results of the Estimated Breeding Value should be provided to prospective new owners of puppies.



# Amendments – ctnd.

- Bitches and stud dogs must not be used for breeding until they are fully grown (have reached sexual and skeletal maturity) – this age is breed-specific; some larger breeds mature much later. **Bitches younger than 18 months of age should not be bred.**

# Amendments – ctnd.

Good Health (5.3), veterinary care:

Puppies must be examined by a veterinarian before sale or homing or earlier if the bitch or puppies are showing signs of illness. The **health and welfare** status of each animal should be certified in writing by a veterinarian before homing, **identifying the animal by microchip number.**



# Amendments - ctnd.

## Good Health (5.3), Euthanasia:

- o ~~Dogs and Puppies~~ should ~~not~~ be euthanised **only** because they do not meet a prescribed breed standard, or because they have a conformational defect that will not affect their welfare, or where the defect can be corrected without compromising welfare as advised by a veterinarian.
- o It is unacceptable to euthanise dogs and puppies because they cannot be sold. **The owner/breeder should always try to rehome retired breeding dogs and unsold puppies to competent owners.**
- o Retired breeding dogs should not be euthanised **only because they cannot fulfil their function as breeding dogs anymore.** ~~unless on welfare grounds (their suffering cannot be alleviated by veterinary or other intervention).~~

# Amendments i.r.t. Cats

Good Housing (5.2), Temperature:

- Cats and kittens with different coats types will have different thermal-tolerances (e.g. long-haired cats and kittens will require lower temperatures in the kitting box than hairless cats and kittens).
- ~~The temperature in the kitting box should be maintained between 29 - 30°C for the first 10 days, and then gradually reduced to 27°C until the kittens are 21 days old, as they become more active and able to regulate their own body temperatures more effectively.~~



# Amendments i.r.t. Cats - ctnd.

Good Health (5.3), veterinary care:

- Kittens must be examined a veterinarian before sale or homing or earlier if the queen or kittens are showing signs of illness. The health and welfare status of each animal should be certified in writing by a veterinarian before homing, identifying the animal by microchip number.
- ~~a) 2 – 3 weeks after birth - kittens should be sexed by the vet at this time,~~
- ~~b) before sale or homing. The health status of the animal should be certified in writing by a veterinarian before homing.~~

# Guidelines on commercial movement/transport of cats and dogs by land

## Content:

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

# Guidelines on commercial movement/transport of cats and dogs by land – ctnd.

Content – more in detail:

## S 1 General Transport conditions:

- Fitness for transport
- Means of transport and containers (Technical requirements, Ventilation & temperature control, additional provisions for transport in containers)
- Transport practices (loading, unloading and handling, competence of personnel, equipment & materials, separation, space allowances)
- Water and feeding intervals, journey times, resting periods



# Guidelines on commercial movement/transport of cats and dogs by land – ctnd.

## S 2 Animal health and disease control checks

- Cleaning
- Barrier controls
- Pre, during and post-vet checks

## S3 Vehicle and Transporter Requirements

- Authorisation of transporters
- Approval of transport vehicles
- Transport documentation



# Guidelines on commercial movement/transport of cats and dogs by land – ctnd.

## S 4 Contingency planning

- Emergencies
- Transport of prohibited/restricted types of dogs
- Transport of animals in extreme weather conditions
- Care of sick or injured animals

# Ongoing & future work

- Shorter, user-friendly documents targeted at relevant audiences
- checklist /decision tree document on movement/transport  
(to be adapted from document of Biocrime project)
- Translation and distribution of online trade leaflets continues
- Recommendations document (regarding the outcomes of the Mapping) on I&R of dogs and registration of breeders in all MS.
- Development of guidelines /guides:
  - Socialization: dogs, cats




# Please utilize the documents at home

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All translations welcome!



*Todas las traducciones  
son bienvenidas!*



*Всички преводи са  
добре дошли!*



*Alle oversettelser er  
velkomne!*

# Health & Welfare of Pets (dogs) in trade

## VOLUNTARY INITIATIVE GROUP

