

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**



(6 meetings with EC; last meeting 15th November 2022 Remote)

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)
 - Dogs: vaccinated for Canine Parvovirus, Distemper, Canine Adenovirus
 - Cats: vaccinated for Feline Parvo, Calicivirus and Herpesvirus
 - 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

Pros & cons

<i>Pros</i>	<i>Cons</i>
Improved health and welfare of dogs and cats.	Increased burden for transporter due to increased stops.
Reduced risk of dehydration and heat stress, and of other potential negative implications on overall health.	Difficulty in assessing compliance.
Smaller transports of animals leading to easier checks and controls.	Increased administrative burden from inspections and penalties.
Lower risk of emergency veterinary visits by the transporters.	Increased number of attendants required to ensure that all dogs are exercised sufficiently.

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: tip of nose → base of tail +5-12 cm
 - Width: animal's width x 2.5
 - Height: tip of ears / head + 12 cm
- Some preferred IATA container space requirements



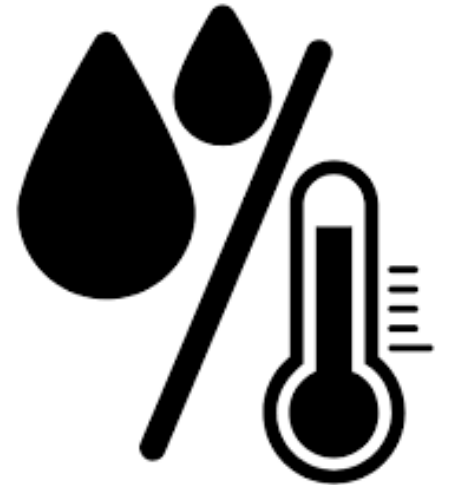
Recommendations on training

- Each attendant must have the necessary knowledge, training and/or experience to ensure the welfare of animals in his/her care;
- All handlers and drivers of dogs/cats must undertake a minimum training curriculum.



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



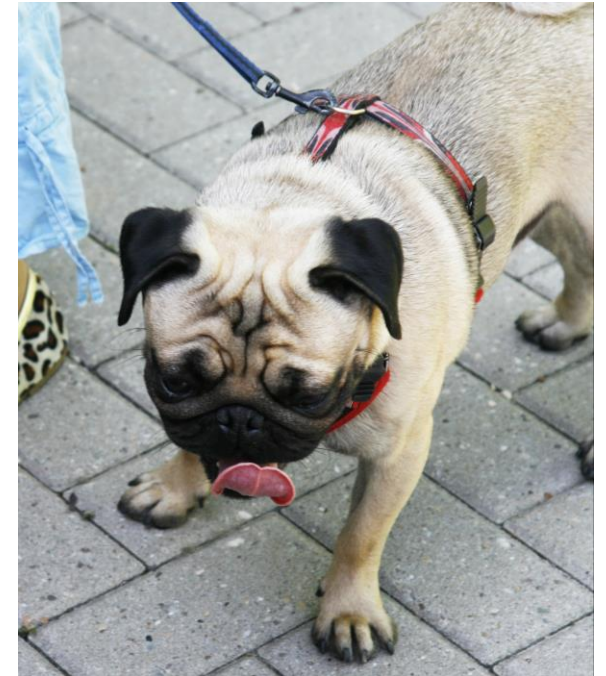
On problem/animals	On stakeholders/society	On Competent Authority
<p>Rec 1 Medium (++) This will ensure that the same categorisation will be used across the EU making sure animals get a similar type of protection</p> <p>Reduction of illegal puppy trade because of less market distortion</p> <p>Reduced danger from zoonotic diseases such as rabies because of less illegal puppy trade</p>	<p>Rec 1 Low (+) In some countries this will make no difference for breeders, but in some countries breeders which are now categorized as non-commercial, will then fall under commercial breeders</p>	<p>Rec 1 Medium (++) Some MS will need to adapt their categorisation but it will ensure consistency among countries.</p>
<p>Rec 2-8 High (+++) These requirements of good housing, good feeding, good health, etc will ensure the health and welfare of breeding dogs/cats and their offspring</p>	<p>Rec 2-8 Medium (++) The majority of commercial breeders will follow these guidelines already, but it will ensure consistency and more following them.</p> <p>Less dog biting accidents because of better <u>socialisation</u> and habituation</p>	<p>Rec 2-8 Medium (++) These are requirements for breeders to follow, CA to check if they are followed.</p>

Recommendations on knowledge & skills, training & competence (& official controls)

- 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.
- All establishments which breed and raise dogs/cats should:
 - Be registered or approved with prior registration.
 - Be inspected by the Competent Authorities according to the risk .
 - accurate and complete records for all breeding animals including aspects such as breeding records and health data.

Recommendations on Extreme selective breeding

- Breeders should not breed from animals with detrimental exaggerated features or known genetic defects
- EC may (via I.A.'s) provide requirements to regulate (the breeding of dogs or cats with detrimental exaggerated features)
- 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



But also:

- cosmetic and/or convenience surgery for dogs and cats, such as tail and ear docking, dewclaw removal, declawing and devocalisation, shall be prohibited;
- a ban on the import and sales of dogs and cats who have undergone cosmetic and/or convenience surgery;
- Dogs and cats having undergone cosmetic and/or convenience surgery or undergone tail/ear cropping for therapeutical reasons should be prohibited to take part in exhibitions and competitions;
- Selling, import, advertisement, manufacturing and use of equipment on dogs and cats that can deliver electrical shocks, such as electronic shock collars for training or containment (invisible fencing), and pinch or prong collars should be prohibited.

