



INTERGROUP ON THE WELFARE & CONSERVATION OF ANIMALS

Prime Minister of Lithuania
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Brussels 18th September 2020

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Established in 1983

Urgent request to bring necessary legislative proposals and end illegal puppy farming

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of the EP Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals I am contacting you to express the European community's astonishment over the recent discovery of numerous illegal puppy farms in Lithuania.

The fight against unscrupulous dog breeding and illegal pet trade across Europe has been going on for long, nevertheless, the scale of the recent events in Lithuania is even more appalling.

The poor breeding conditions depicted in the recent cases affect not only the health and welfare of the animals concerned, but they also have a negative impact on reputable breeders, public health, consumer safety and national tax revenues. Moreover, Lithuanian bred dogs travel cross-border to satisfy demands in other European countries.

Unfortunately, since 2016, there have been no initiatives to regulate pet breeding, sale or ownership, and the current situation is the result of the following shortcomings:

1. All dogs should be subject to mandatory identification and registration in a database interconnected with other European databases. That should happen regardless of the origin of the animal.
2. The legal provision should specify the code used by the microchip that must correspond with ISO 11784 and operate in HDX or FDX-B technology to ensure uniqueness of the code.
3. With the upcoming EU delegated act on the breeding establishments the obligations will be extended to all breeders. Any national proposals should reflect that.
4. There should be greater scrutiny of pet shops to inform on the sourcing of animals and their living conditions.
5. With the upcoming EU Digital Services Act minimum requirements to sell and advertise pets online should be set. At the moment there is neither a control system, nor minimum requirements.
6. Sanctions for non-compliance should be extended to all owners, breeders and keepers. All that under strengthened competent authority to control and enforce the rules.

In order to strengthen the European cooperation and expertise on the topic, we would be delighted if the Lithuanian competent authorities benefitted from the resources developed by the EU Platform on Animal Welfare - voluntary initiative group on health and welfare of pets (dogs) in trade.

Additionally, we would like to invite the Lithuanian competent authorities to join one of the meetings of our working group on companion animals.

We trust that you will consider a new plan to tackle the illegal dog breeding and we are looking forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

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