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[Press release](#) | 28.04.2026

Cats and dogs

EU Parliament will approve stronger protection

Today, the European Parliament will approve the trilogue negotiations on the regulation on the protection of cats and dogs, thereby adopting uniform standards for the breeding, trade and traceability of dogs and cats. For the first time, comprehensive EU-wide rules will be introduced to curb illegal trade and significantly improve animal welfare.

MEP Tilly Metz from Luxembourg, Greens/EFA lead negotiator, comments:

“There is no place in Europe for the illegal and inhumane trade in pets. With today’s vote, we are establishing clear European standards to protect millions of dogs and cats.

“We have succeeded in ensuring that smaller breeders are also covered and that large parts of the trade are no longer left unregulated. This is crucial for effectively combating illegal practices and improving animal welfare across Europe.

“A key achievement is the mandatory identification and registration of dogs and cats. The microchip requirement is the most effective tool for ensuring traceability, uncovering illegal networks and protecting consumers. The fact that this system is now being extended across the EU and will eventually apply to cats as well is a major step forward – even if the transition periods are long.

“We are also banning harmful breeding practices such as inbreeding, cruel breeding methods or the breeding of wild animal hybrids. In doing so, we are ensuring that animal welfare must no longer be subordinated to profit.

“Even though we were not able to fully achieve all our objectives – particularly regarding stricter authorisation procedures for breeding establishments – the overall result is a strong and balanced set of rules. It improves conditions for animals, ensures fairer competition among breeders and strengthens consumer confidence.”

More:

The trade in dogs and cats in the EU has an estimated annual value of €1.3 billion, with around 60% of

animals sold online. A lack of traceability encourages illegal practices, poor welfare conditions and risks to animal and public health. The regulation is primarily aimed at commercial operators. For private pet owners, the main requirement is simply to identify their animals.

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Responsible MEPs



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