



**EU DOG & CAT
ALLIANCE®**

EU Dog & Cat Alliance NEWSLETTER November '17



Welcome

Simona Lipstaite, EU Dog & Cat Alliance

It has been an eventful few months for companion animal welfare in Brussels. Our Alliance members have been more active than ever, with the launch of the new Belgian Pet Advertising Advisory Group (BelgPAAG), a new report on the Online Sale of Pets in the EU, a number of MEP visits to shelters and a big European Parliament reception in September, all of us have been keeping the EU agenda busy with dog and cat welfare issues. And members' hard work has been paying off – in the beginning of November five Member States (Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and Germany) called for the illegal trade in dogs to be tackled on the EU level, and announced their strong support for the creation of a subgroup on this topic under the new EU Platform on Animal Welfare.

Similarly, Members of the European Parliament are more aware than ever of issues associated with the illegal trade and risks to pet welfare brought about by the unregulated online sale of pets. We will continue to work hard to capitalise on this momentum and finally see concrete action from EU and national policymakers on the call which has been the Alliance's leading moto since the beginning – calling for EU action to build a better Europe for dogs and cats. And, may I add, for the owners who love them!

With best wishes, Simona

Annual General Meeting

On 3 October, at the sunny International Companion Animal Welfare Conference (ICAWC) in Cyprus, members gathered to mark the third anniversary of the EU Dog & Cat Alliance in its Annual General Meeting. It was particularly great to see a mix of members who have been with the Alliance since the beginning alongside some of our newer faces in discussions on how to not only improve companion animal welfare through EU action, but also sharing best practices on how to run campaigns in their home countries.

News!

Highlights from the meeting included a detailed presentation by Marleen Elsen from Chaine Bleue Mondiale (Belgium) on steps taken to successfully launch BelgPAAG just months after the creation of the EUPAAG working group. During the meeting, the second annual Alliance awards were also presented to two of the most active members in 2017 (read more in the section below). Winners of last year's award – Danuta Mikusz-Oslislo from TOZ Poland and Sara Turetta from Save the Dogs (Italy/Romania) – were present at the meeting and shared some thoughts on how the prize has helped them in strengthening their relationship-building work with policymakers in their own countries.

Nicosia, Cyprus



EU Dog & Cat Alliance Awards

The first award is the Alliance Member of the Year award which recognises the most active member who has regularly contributed to Alliance initiatives through regularly attending meetings and adding to new research, briefings and campaigns whilst remaining prolific on social media. The award has a monetary prize of 1,000 EUR.

This year the award was presented to Lithuania Animal Rights Protection Organisation, led by Brigita Kymantaite. Congratulations Brigita!



The second award is the Award of Merit and is awarded to an organisation which has displayed the same active spirit whilst acting in the confines of their more limited resources to contribute to the work of the Alliance. The award has a monetary value of 500 EUR.

The winner of the award is Chats du Quercy, active in France and led by Lynn Stone. Congratulations Lynn and the team at Chats du Quercy!



These are both fantastic organisations which are doing great work, and the awards are a token of our appreciation for their dedication to improving EU pet welfare over the past year. The monetary prizes must be spent on companion animal welfare initiatives, and we look forward to hearing how they choose to spend these.

EUPAAG & September Reception



In our April newsletter we told you a little bit about the Alliance's working group, the EU Pet Advertising Advisory Group (EUPAAG), led by our member Blue Cross and set up to support Alliance members who wish to create a Pet Advertising Advisory Group in their own individual Member States.

Pet Advertising Advisory Groups aim to bring together animal welfare charities, online advertisers and trade associations to agree on best practices and to promote responsible online pet advertising across the EU.

Since the launch of EUPAAG, Belgian member Chaîne Bleue Mondiale has led the way in Europe by establishing a new animal welfare group, BelgPAAG (Belgian Pet Advertising Advisory Group), designed to tackle the increasing and high risk sale of pets online. The newly established BelgPAAG met for the first time in June to discuss how to tackle unscrupulous dealers who trade pets online. Read about the meeting [here](#).





In September the EU Dog & Cat Alliance and Blue Cross held a reception in the European Parliament to unveil their new report into the damaging consequences of the online sale of animals in Europe.

A huge thank you to all the members that attended the event and made it such a success! It was wonderful to see so many of you there and to meet some members for the first time.

Throughout the day before attending the event, members met with their Members of the European Parliament or their staff - a fantastic way of building relationships with MEPs, raising awareness of the work of the EU Dog & Cat Alliance and an excellent opportunity to tell them about your important work on the ground.

Speakers at the reception included our host Pavel Poc MEP, Honorary President of the Animal Welfare Intergroup and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety; Hettel Varik, Counsellor for Economic Affairs, Permanent Representation of Estonia to the EU; Marco Valletta, Member of Cabinet of European Commissioner for Health & Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis; and Steve Goody of Blue Cross.

In the run up to the event we launched our #EUTopDog and #EUTopCat Twitter contest inviting people to tweet selfies with their dog or cat which proved a fun new way of engaging with politicians and raising awareness of the Alliance.

We had some fantastic entries, including from European Commissioner for Health & Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis, but in the end he was pipped to the post by Marlene Mizzi MEP (S&D, MT) who won the prize of two hampers to be dedicated to a dog or cat charity of her choice. Alex Mayer MEP (S&D, UK)... was the runner-up and also received a smaller prize.

Thank you again to everyone that got involved!

Alex Mayer MEP



**Vytenis Andriukaitis, Commissioner
for Health & Food Safety**

Marlene Mizzi MEP



A very warm welcome to the Alliance's newest members!

The Alliance now has 77 members across 24 EU Member States

- here's a little bit about our newest members!



The Swedish Animal Conservation Association (Svenska Djurskyddsföreningen)

We're delighted to welcome on board one of Sweden's oldest animal welfare associations, The Swedish Association for the Protection of Animals (Svenska Djurskyddsföreningen), who have been working to improve animal welfare for over 140 years. Located in Stockholm, Svenska Djurskyddsföreningen focus on promoting good treatment of both domestic and wild animals, promoting scientific research into better animal welfare, working for improved legislation for animals and raising awareness and interest in animal welfare.



**OVMPPH
CSAVS**
Odjel veterinara male prakse Hrvatske
Croatian Small Animal Veterinary Section

Croatian Small Animals Veterinary Section (CSAVS)

A very warm welcome also to Croatian Small Animal Veterinary Section, an NGO consisting of vets, and professional and scientific colleagues, whose activities are enrolled in the business of small animal veterinary medicine.

The CSAVS allows for the exchanging of views and experiences, spreading the news of organized forms of professional training in the field of small animal veterinary medicine, for the purpose of professional education of small animal practitioners, and mutual communication between CSAVS members.



**MEDICINĂ
VETERINARĂ
SOCIALĂ**

Transylvania Animal Care

We're excited to welcome another organisation based in Romania, Transylvania Animal Care, whose core focus is to provide medical services for animal charities and low income pet owners. They have also recently started advocacy work as well as educational work to help charities in the area. Find out more about this organisation, whose strategy is led by Anca Georgescu, in our 'In the Spotlight' section!



In The Spotlight!

We feature a different Alliance member in every issue of the newsletter, giving you the chance to get to know your colleagues!

Anca Georgescu,
Transylvania Animal Care

Tell us about your organisation...



Transylvania Animal Care was born out of misfortune. In 2014, we were all employees of a Swiss private foundation working for dogs in rural Romania. In 2015, the foundation was unexpectedly disbanded by its owners. After we picked up the pieces and out of passion for what we were doing, we decided to start over as the first medical NGO in Romania explicitly dedicated to low income pet owners and animal welfare charities. We were lucky enough to be donated a big part of the assets of the former foundation. At first, our vets operated in medical campaigns and we saved all the money to be able to open a small practice. That happened in June of 2016. We knew very well the ordeal of pets in Romania's countryside and the fact that for many pet owners veterinary medicine is still too expensive in our country. So now, instead of feeling sorry for what happened then, we focus on honouring our luck and privilege, working as vets for the patients that need this profession most.

What initiatives are you working on in Romania at the moment?

We have seven ongoing partnerships with local animal charities and we subsidize the neutering of pets brought in daily by our partners. As often as possible, we set up medical campaigns on location, together with small animal charities in or around Cluj, our county in Transylvania. We are also partners in "The Neighborhood Cat" a wonderful local project focused on stray and feral cats.

Last year in August, we started our humble yet daring #TACvocracy work, focused on convincing local authorities to choose constant neutering instead of random killing of dogs, as a public policy. That is #turdaintelege. Also, we're sending letters hoping that they will result in real change. That is #scrisorileTACpentru fapte, where we wrote to Romanian online ad platforms inviting them to better filter ads that sell dogs, founding our message on the exceptional Romanian legislation that almost no one enforces or abides by.

What developments would you like to see in EU legislation on pets?

My ideal is a highly humane, one animal welfare legislation for all the EU member states. Until then, I think that besides enriching the already existent legislation, EU's decision makers should focus more on compelling the member states to properly and consistently enforce the good laws that exist already. Politically, we seem to strive too much for fine words on paper and very little if at all for concrete action.

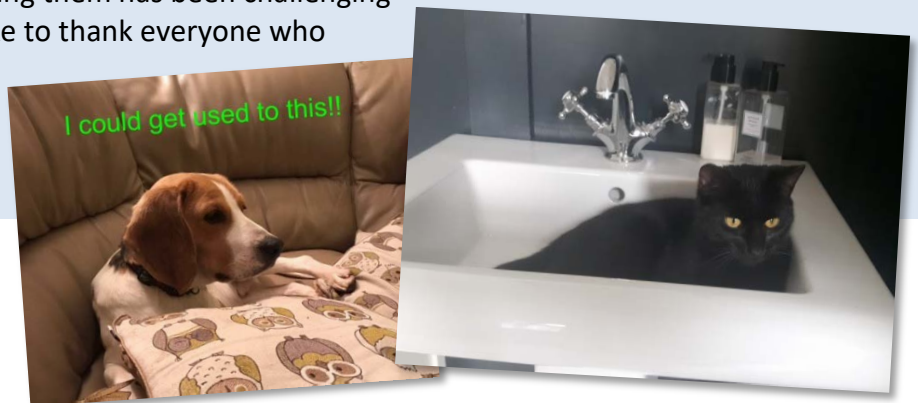


Members' Stories!

The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Ireland

In 2016, the ISPCA agreed to rehome over 350 beagles and 250 cats from a research facility in Ireland that was due to close. Following a successful pilot project to see how the animals would react to a dramatic change in their environment over 300 beagles and 170 cats have been rescued and rehomed. The remaining dogs and cats will be removed from the facility before the end of the year. The majority of the dogs were aged 3 to 6 years and rehoming them has been challenging but very rewarding. The ISPCA would like to thank everyone who has assisted in this large scale rescue.

[Read more and watch video here.](#)



Wiener Tierschutzverein, Austria

In Austria, there was an amendment to the Animal Welfare Act in early summer. In addition to many other provisions, the most controversial topic at the moment is the placement of animals on the Internet which may have an impact on the ability of small private animal welfare associations and private foster homes in Austria to advertise online. For more information about this change see Wiener Tierschutzverein's press release [here](#).

Save the Dogs, Romania

At last, after 15 years spent in the old building that hosted our clinic, a new and cutting edge veterinary hospital will improve the quality and the efficiency of our work in Romania, saving the lives of about 2,000 animals each year. The official opening of the building, dedicated to dogs and cats, took place on the 27th of October, with partners, donors and staff that worked tirelessly for this enormous project.



Varjupaikade MTÜ, Estonia

In September, Varjupaikade MTÜ had Members of the Estonian Parliament, Marianne Mikko and Barbi Pilvre, visit their shelter in Tallinn where they discussed compulsory microchipping and the need for a 24/7 emergency number of people to call for pets in trouble.



Animal Friends Croatia

On World Animal Day (4th October) after 10 years, the new Animal Protection Act has been passed. The new Animal Protection Act introduces many prohibitions on abusive behavior against animals and counties will have to build shelters for abandoned animals in which spaying/neutering of found dogs and cats will be required. The implementation of the Act will also be accompanied by a provision stipulating a deadline for the control of microchipping dogs, as well as the establishment of a single information centre for the recording of lost and abandoned animals. To find out more about the changes check out the news section on our member Animal Friends Croatia's [website](#)!

Dogs Trust Ireland

Dogs Trust was delighted to welcome Marian Harkin MEP to their rehoming centre in Finglas in September to help launch their new Volunteer Programme. Volunteers already help in many aspects of our vital and lifesaving work, whether it's raising money at our events or in our shop, giving a dog waiting for its new home some extra love and attention, or ensuring our centre looks welcoming and attractive to visitors and potential adopters. Every role is so important to us.

The new programme sets out to greatly improve the offering to volunteers by providing training and support in specific roles throughout the charity. As a lifelong believer in the transformative power of volunteering, Marian Harkin MEP has consistently sought to promote the work of volunteers and represent their interests at both Irish and European level. [Find out more.](#)

