



**EU DOG & CAT
ALLIANCE®**

Welcome

**EU Dog & Cat Alliance
NEWSLETTER
January '19**



Welcome to the fifth EU Dog & Cat Alliance newsletter! It's been a busy few months for the EU Dog & Cat Alliance so we hope you enjoy reading all about what we've been up to in this issue.

We have an interesting year ahead as, in May, European Parliament elections will take place for the first time since the EU Dog & Cat Alliance formed in 2014. In the Autumn, a new European Commission should also be formed. These changes represent both potential opportunities and challenges for the EU Dog & Cat Alliance. We plan to engage with new Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) as well as a new European Commissioner. Although this is likely to involve the need to build new relationships, many of our friendly MEPs may retain their seats. There is also potential for the Commission's agenda to change, in terms of how they prioritise companion animal welfare.

We will of course keep you updated along the way but, in the meantime, we remind you that we are currently recruiting a European Policy Advisor, and so if you have any questions, please do get in touch with Claire Calder or Claire Wilson-Leary.

Wishing you all the very best for 2019,
Suzie, Claire and Claire

News

KRAKOW, October 2018

EUPAAG workshop

On 8th October, ahead of the International Companion Animal Welfare Conference (ICAWC), our member Blue Cross hosted an interactive workshop designed to help attendees set up a Pet Advertising Advisory Group (PAAG) in their own country to help tackle the increasing problem of inappropriate dog and cat adverts appearing on classified websites.



Research by the Alliance and Blue Cross found, by looking at the main classified websites in 21 EU countries, that there are around 400,000 dogs and 100,000 cats for sale on any given day. This is happening in unregulated online markets which can lead to poor breeding and sale practices with negative consequences for the animals' health and welfare and the new owners who lack information about pet-ownership and often incur subsequent large veterinary costs.

This is why Blue Cross hosted an EU PAAG workshop at ICAWC to support the creation of national Pet Advertising Advisory Groups. The aim of these groups is to bring animal welfare organisations, trade associations and veterinary bodies together to promote self-regulation among classified websites in Europe. Thank you to Fredrik Malmgren of SWEPAAG and Andrew Kelly of IPAAG for providing practical advice and guidance from their experience of working with PAAGs in Sweden and Ireland.

If you wish to establish a PAAG in your country or want more information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Carry on reading to find out more about a joint event we recently hosted with the European Commission and Blue Cross...



www.dogandcatwelfare.eu

Annual General Meeting



We were delighted to hold our Annual General Meeting on 9th October at ICAWC. It was a brilliant opportunity to mark the 4th anniversary of the Alliance and catch up with some of our oldest members, as well as meet some new faces.

During the meeting, we presented the annual EU Dog & Cat Alliance awards which recognise the contributions members have made to the work of the Alliance and to improving dog and cat welfare more widely. There are two awards which each have a monetary prize that must be spent on companion animal welfare initiatives.



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

A big congratulations to Marleen Elsen from Chaine Bleue Mondiale for winning the Member of the Year award. Marleen has done incredible work setting up a Belgian Pet Advertising Advisory Group (BelgPAAG).



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.

Huge congratulations to Transylvania Animal Care for winning the Award of Merit, they have achieved so much for dogs and cats in Romania this year!



Other news from ICAWC....

A huge congratulations must also go to Danuta Mikusz-Oslislo of our Polish member organisation, Towarzystwo Opieki nad Zwierzętami w Polsce, for winning the Clarissa Baldwin Award for Excellence in Animal Welfare at ICAWC. The award is presented annually to an individual or organisation, in recognition of their outstanding contribution to animal welfare outside of the UK.

Well done Danuta!



European Parliament Reception

In November we held two events where we highlighted the issues with online pet advertising and put forward the case for self-regulation in the absence of EU-wide legislation.

A huge thank you to those that attended the first of these, our annual reception in the European Parliament. This year our event was hosted by Pavel Poc MEP and was well-attended by about 60 delegates, including Members of the European Parliament and EU Member State Permanent Representations.

Speeches were given by Pavel Poc MEP, Eric van der Sommen (Netherlands permanent representation to the EU), Marco Valletta (representative of the European Commission) and Suzie Carley (Executive Director of Dogs Trust Ireland and Chair of the EU Dog & Cat Alliance).



Eric van der Sommen presenting at our European Parliament reception

Joint event with the European Commission and Blue Cross The online market place; a case for self-regulation

The second of our events focussing on online pet advertising was a multi-stakeholder event which looked at different perspectives to the problem of online pet advertising and explored the merits of self-regulatory systems to improve the standards of online pet adverts. It was a fantastic platform to promote the EUPAAG project which received praise from Commissioner Andriukaitis during his presentation.

Speakers included representatives of classifieds websites, veterinarians, the advertising sector, consumers and animal welfare associations who presented their perspectives on the issues associated with the online sale of pets. The consensus amongst speakers were as follows:

1. There are real, demonstrable, issues associated with unregulated sale of pets in and across Europe
2. Currently legislation is not necessarily the best way to address these issues, especially because of a lack of enforcement
3. Self-regulation can be an effective solution if all stakeholders agree to work together

Special thanks go to our member Fredrik Malmgren of Djurens Vanner for presenting on SWEPAAG and Anca Georgescu of Transylvania Animal Care for presenting on their Romanian success story of improving online adverts for pets. If you were unable to join us on the day, you can watch all the presentations through the webcast video which is available here <https://webcast.ec.europa.eu/conference-on-online-advertising-of-cats-and-dogs>.



Anca Georgescu presenting at the European Commission



Members Danuta & Michael at our European Parliament reception



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

The Alliance now has 83 members across 25 EU Member States

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



[Zavod Muri](#)

We're delighted to welcome on board Zavod Muri, a fantastic organisation in Slovenia whose main purpose is to promote responsible dog ownership and work to improve the problem of abandoned pets.



[Twitchy Noses](#)

A very warm welcome also to Twitchy Noses, an organisation working to improve the lives of stray, abandoned and injured dogs in the Maglzh region (central southern Bulgaria). Over the last few years Twitchy Noses have re-homed over 250 dogs and helped place many more with new families.



[Fundacja Ostatnia Szansa](#)

Welcome to our new Polish member, The Last Chance Foundation, a shelter for homeless animals in Boguszyce Małe. They focus on rehoming and also participate in a castration program in Poland to reduce the number of homeless dogs and cats.



[Fundacja Mrunio](#)

Also on board from Poland is The Foundation for Animal Rights Protection Foundation, founded in 2005. Their activities involve protection of animal rights (including court cases for maltreatment), care for homeless or abandoned animals and rehoming, as well as legislative work in Poland and the European Parliament.



[2nd Chance Dogs](#)

We're very excited to welcome our first organisation from Cyprus, 2nd Chance Dogs, who provide a safe haven, shelter, necessary medical care, food, socialization and rehabilitation for the dogs in their care before finding them a new home.



Fredrik Malmgren, Djurens Vänner Sweden

Tell us about your organisation...

Djurens Vänner was established in Sweden in 1952 and is one of the oldest animal welfare organizations in the country. Today the organization has 14 local compounds across Sweden. Nine of these have their own shelters which mainly focus on rehoming cats, but also dogs, birds and different kinds of rodents.

Pets are a big part of our work but our organization is taking a stand for all animals. We work on animal welfare for all animals, tame and wild.



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

The Swedish Pet Advertising Advisory Group (SwePAAG) is of course one of the initiatives that we are working with. And me being the chair for PAAG in Sweden means I'm the one making sure the different organizations get along and work well together.

We are also looking into proposals for new hunting laws and trying to make sure that they are as humane as possible.

Nationwide campaigns for nurturing cats are also done frequently.

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

I would like to see compulsory microchipping of all dogs and cats across Europe. We have a huge problem with puppies being smuggled into Sweden. Microchipping would at least make it easier to keep track of dogs across the borders.

Working with PAAG I have also seen the big problem when it comes to adverts for pets on Facebook. These are almost impossible to stop and new fake accounts can be started in just a few minutes. It's very hard to get Facebook to do anything about this, but if the EU countries stand together on issues like this I think we stand a much better chance of getting them to listen.

Members' Stories!

TwitchyNoses purchase a new neutering clinic in Bulgaria

In August 2018 we took the plunge and purchased a building in our local municipality town to turn into a neutering clinic and hopefully longer term, a training centre for vets in Bulgaria to learn the latest neutering techniques. Since then there have been months of sorting paperwork to change residential to business use, plans to put to the Bulgarian Food Agency for the clinic to get their approval and renovations have started. We have had all new concrete floors put in, new wiring throughout, new PVC windows are ordered, new plumbing has gone in.....lots more to do but we have made a start! We will need to fund raise as so far the 20,000 Euros for the purchase of the building and renovations has been paid privately by us. We will be contacting various organisations to see if we can get funding. We will also soon be putting out feelers for a forward thinking vet we can employ and send on training programmes, and who will work as a liaison officer for us in the villages for education on neutering and basic animal welfare.



News from Save the Dogs, Romania & Italy

Save the Dogs has made a **new commitment to Italian dogs and cats, starting with 2019**. The project is named "Too many puppies" and aims to spay and neuter pets and strays in Southern Italy, in collaboration with a network of local rescue groups and volunteers selected by our charity. This will kick-start in March in the suburbia of Naples.

Romania will remain the main project for Save the Dogs but our mission switched from an "Italian organization rescuing animals in Romania" to "A charity working for a world without strays", with a focus on responsible ownership as one of the key aspects to properly control the dog and cat population.



News from Animal Friends Croatia: Sterilisation of dogs & cats made mandatory in Zagreb

The City of Zagreb has joined a group of more than 130 good examples of cities and districts that have made sterilisation of dogs and cats mandatory, except for registered breeders, as a way of population control. This is welcome as, in just the first six months of 2018, Zagreb's animal shelter in Dumovec had taken care of more than 700 dogs and 200 cats, most of which were abandoned puppies and kittens.

Lynn Boylan MEP visits Dogs Trust Ireland

We were delighted to welcome Lynn Boylan MEP to Dogs Trust Ireland in October to meet all of our beautiful dogs and get a tour of our state-of-the-art rehoming centre in Dublin. Lynn met with Suzie Carley, Executive Director of Dogs Trust Ireland to get a view on our policies regarding animal welfare in Ireland, with a particular focus on Dog Breeding Establishments and our work with IPAAG on the Online Sale of Pets.



Microchipping of dogs to be compulsory in Czech Republic!

We've received fantastic news from our member Animal Eye who tells us that from 2020 it will be compulsory for dog owners to ensure their dog is microchipped – this is a result of an amendment made to the Veterinary Act in June 2018. Up until now, Local Authorities have been able to impose the obligation to identify and register dogs but it has not been compulsory. This is a great step forward for dog welfare in the Czech Republic!



'IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU (SAVE A PUPPY)' campaign by Spolek na ochranu opuštěných zvířat (Society for the Conservation of Abandoned Animals), Czech Republic

In August 2018, our Czech member, Society for the Conservation of Abandoned Animals, cooperated with actresses Patricie Soláříková and Jana Stryková to raise awareness of the risks of buying a purebred dog without knowing its origin. More than half a million people have seen their first video which was projected on large screens in the largest railway stations and shown by TV Mňau for 4 months. At the same time, 3,000 posters were placed all over the Czech Republic.

The 2nd part of the campaign was launched mid-December 2018 with a second video, already seen by more than 200,000 people. The Society for the Conservation of Abandoned Animals has also created buyer advice with a list of 10 steps to take in order to purchase a dog responsibly. Their videos are available in several languages and you can find more information here: <https://spolek-ochranazvirat.cz/sbirka-stop-mnozirnám/>



Message from the ISPCA on Ireland's new Dog Breeding Establishment Guidelines

Ireland's new Dog Breeding Establishment (DBE) Guidelines, issued by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) in July 2018, came into effect on the 1st of January 2019. The ISPCA was a member of the working group that developed the draft Guidelines that were sent out for public consultation in 2017, made a detailed and evidence-based submission to the consultation and commented on a number of drafts before the final document was published. We are confident that these new Guidelines will allow local authorities to be more consistent in terms of inspecting DBEs. The ISPCA gave a cautious welcome to the Guidelines when they were published – we were pleased to see that ambiguous language such as 'should' was removed and replaced with 'must' which puts an obligation on the breeder to act. We were also pleased to see the extensive additions to the guidelines around socialisation, exercise, husbandry and record keeping which we believe strengthen the document.

There are some issues that still need to be addressed and we were disappointed that the ratio of animal carers to animals was set at 1:25 which we feel is too high. The introduction of a cap on the number of breeding bitches had also been advocated but this was not possible under the Guidelines and would require a change in the Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010. DRCD has stated that they will consider these and other points when reviewing the legislation. We are meeting with DRCD in January to discuss a review of the Act itself and will also be asking for the definition of a Dog Breeding Establishment to be amended so that the number of breeding bitches is reduced from six to three along with the introduction of further offences under Act, including failing to comply with the conditions of the operator's license and failing to comply with an improvement notice issued by the local authority.

In 2018 and January 2019 the ISPCA has visited a number of licensed DBEs and note a trend in the reduction in the numbers of breeding bitches. In July and August 2018 we visited two unlicensed premises and seized a total of 127 dogs. Prosecutions against both of these premises have been initiated.

The ISPCA will continue to work on a number of fronts to improve the lives of breeding dogs in Ireland, whether it be direct action taken against illegal or sub-standard establishments, or working with the relevant authorities to achieve stronger legislation both nationally and EU-wide, and consistent and robust enforcement.

Update on the Sweden Pet Advertising Advisory Group

Fredrik and Johan from our two Swedish organisations, Djurens Vänner and Svenska Djurskyddsföreningen, recently met to plan the start-up of SwePAAG in 2019. There are a total of six organisations interested in cooperating as SwePAAG. The next step is to have a list of websites that sell animals in Sweden and a list of unethical/illegal methods of selling pets on those sites before summer, so that hopefully their active PAAG work can start in autumn 2019. Good luck Fredrik and Johan! We look forward to hearing more updates from you in the coming months.

