



**EU DOG & CAT
ALLIANCE®**

EU Dog & Cat Alliance NEWSLETTER May '17



Welcome

Simona Lipstaite, EU Dog & Cat Alliance

Welcome to the second issue of the **EU Dog & Cat Alliance newsletter**! In the past six months the Alliance has taken forward its campaign for an action plan to tackle the illegal trade in dogs and cats to the next level. Working with several dozen Members of the European Parliament, we have approached the President of the European Commission, asking for this topic to be addressed at EU level. As the campaign takes off in Brussels, we want to ensure that it remains just as relevant and alive in the different Member States as well, as it is only through citizen participation, media focus and guidance from you – the NGOs – that we can expect politicians to react and take action.

Alliance members are vital for the success of our campaign. We would like to encourage you to be active, highlighting the issue on the ground with policymakers and the media, sending information that could be useful for lobbying to the Alliance Secretariat, and letting us know if you would like to get involved with members from neighbouring countries for cross-border media or other activities. Let us make the next six months all about members being active in their countries! Visits to your shelter by politicians, engagement with MEPs, social media campaigns – we are here to support your activities in all these areas, and look forward to hearing your ideas.

With best wishes, Simona

Brussels '17



News!

Alliance meeting, March

On 8 March we hosted the fifth meeting of the EU Dog & Cat Alliance in Brussels, which was well attended by representatives of 14 Alliance member organisations.

It was fantastic to have so many Alliance members in one room and to meet some new colleagues for the first time!

The meeting was an excellent opportunity to update members on the Alliance's key achievements and activities over the past 5 months, as well as provide a general update on EU news, including Brexit and the new EU platform on animal welfare.

Also during the meeting, members split into groups to brainstorm different ways to take the Alliance's campaign for an EU action plan forward. We have shared the meeting minutes, in which you can read about the group's discussions in more detail, with all members. If you would like to receive the minutes again please contact Simona or Claire.

Our time in Brussels was also a fantastic opportunity for Alliance members to meet with their Members of the European Parliament. In three days we had 18 individual meetings with MEPs or their staff.

New Facebook page

In February we launched the EU Dog & Cat Alliance Facebook page. Just like our Twitter page, the new Facebook page is aimed mostly at European and national politicians, as well as the general public, and is used to post information about Alliance events, initiatives, legislation, meetings with policymakers and other relevant information. With the addition of the Facebook page we are aiming to engage with politicians who may not perhaps be as active on Twitter.



The page can be found here www.facebook.com/EUdogsandcats and we would like to warmly invite any organisations who have not already 'liked' the page to do so, as this will help to attract followers and raise the profile of the EU Dog & Cat Alliance. Our Twitter page already has over 1,100 followers, and we look forward to expanding the Alliance's reach through Facebook as well.



Updated national legislation report + members map

We're pleased to have launched an interactive members map on the EU Dog & Cat Alliance website, which you can find [here](#).

By clicking on the orange pins on the map you can find out more about the members of our ever-expanding Alliance.

If you haven't done so already we hope that you enjoy exploring the map and learning a bit more about the work that each member is doing to improve dog and cat welfare!

Following recent changes, we have also updated our report on the national legislation relating to dogs and cats involved in commercial practices across the EU's 28 Member States. It was a big step forward for our four-legged friends when identification and registration of dogs became compulsory in Latvia at the beginning of 2017. You can find out more about this and the national legislation in every other Member State on the Alliance [website](#).



Legislation and Campaigns

EU Action Plan

The Alliance's campaign against the illegal trade in companion animals has been gaining speed. In December, we drafted a letter to the European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, asking the Commission to draw up an action plan to tackle the illegal trade in dogs and cats in the EU. The letter was signed by almost 40 MEPs from all the biggest political groups. After receiving the reply from the Commission, which placed the onus on the Member States to find a solution, the Alliance is continuing its calls for Brussels to take action at EU level and involve the European Parliament, Member States, veterinary, customs and border authorities. We have been building up a core group of MEP supporters who are keen to take this issue forward, and are planning a number of activities both in Brussels and national capitals for the coming months. The Alliance is keen for members to get involved on a national level as well, so if you would like to contribute to the campaign, please get in touch!

Alliance presents at European Parliament's Animal Welfare Intergroup

In April, the EU Dog & Cat Alliance gave a presentation on "the need for an action plan to tackle the illegal trade in dogs and cats in the EU" at the European Parliament in Strasbourg. MEPs from the European Parliament's Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals gathered to discuss better regulation of the sale of companion animals in the EU and concrete next steps on how to take this forward in Brussels and in the Member States.

Simona Lipstaite, European Policy Advisor for the EU Dog & Cat Alliance, presented the Alliance's call for an action plan to tackle the illegal trade in dogs and cats in the EU, saying that each year hundreds of thousands of companion animals are illegally traded across the Member States. This trade has negative implications for animal health and welfare, public health, consumer protection and the smooth functioning of the EU internal market. The Alliance believes that the problem could be addressed through a comprehensive, coordinated approach involving the European Parliament, Commission and Member States, including border and veterinary authorities as well as the civil society, and is therefore calling for an EU action plan to tackle the illegal trade in dogs and cats. Simona also presented on possible initiatives MEPs could support to this end, including calling for compulsory identification and registration of pets across the EU.

The Alliance's calls received a good level of support from the MEPs, and we are planning the next steps of the campaign.



Estonian Presidency

Estonia will take over the Presidency of the Council of the EU in July for six months, and will shape a lot of the EU's agenda during that time. In preparation for the Presidency, Simona and one of the Alliance's Estonian members Varjupaikade MTÜ held meetings in Tallinn in February with Estonian MPs from different parties, as well as representatives from the Ministry for Agriculture and Tunne Kelam MEP. The Alliance and Varjupaikade MTÜ circulated a letter to be sent from MPs to the Government asking for the Estonian Presidency to take on board the call for an action plan to tackle the illegal trade in dogs and cats, and compulsory identification and registration of pets both in Estonia and more widely in the EU. The letter was signed by 8 MPs and one MEP and personally handed over to Prime Minister Jüri Ratas by Marianne Mikko MP. Following this initiative, Members of the Estonian Parliament have formed a group called "Protect Companion Animals" to take these issues forward, and are still waiting for an official response from the Government.



The Alliance is also preparing a manifesto for the Estonian Presidency on behalf of all its members, which it plans to forward to the country's Permanent Representation in Brussels in May.

EU Pet Advertising Advisory Group (EUPAAG)

The Alliance's working group EU PAAG, led by Blue Cross, has had a busy few months preparing for the launch of the report looking at the online sale of pets later this year. Thank you to all members who completed the initial survey on the situation in their countries, which will form a large part of the report. The report highlights a number of key findings which show online sales of pets is an issue across Europe, including:



- 🐾 57% of pet sales across Europe happen online.
- 🐾 95% of animal welfare organisations surveyed stated that online sales were a problem in their country.
- 🐾 Very little regulation across the EU Member States on the issue of online sale of pets.

As well as working on the report we have been developing a toolkit for EU Dog & Cat Alliance members to help them launch PAAG groups in their own countries. It includes a step-by-step guide, draft press releases, draft letters to websites and lots of other useful information.

For more information about EUPAAG or for help getting a group up and running in your country please email becky.thwaites@bluecross.org.uk.

A very warm welcome to the Alliance's newest members!
Since our last newsletter, our membership has increased to 74! In this section you can find out a little bit about our newest members.

Wiener Tierschutzverein



Wiener Tierschutzverein is the Alliance's first ever Austrian organisation, meaning we now have members in 24 out of the 28 EU Member States!

The Viennese Animal Protection Association (WTV) was founded in 1846, making it the second oldest animal protection organisation in Europe. The organisation now cares for around 12,000 animals every year including dog and cats. WTV's campaigns include ending discrimination against specific breeds of dogs and educating the public about responsible dog ownership.

Naturewatch Foundation



Naturewatch Foundation is a UK based charity which has been working for over 25 years to improve the lives of animals. Their mission is to end animal cruelty and advance animal welfare standards around the world. They co-ordinate humane education and public awareness campaigns in order to raise animal welfare standards in the UK and in Eastern Europe, and launched the World Animal Day initiative to unite the animal welfare movement around the globe.

FFP Animale & EFOAW



The French Federation of Animal Protection and the European Federation of Animal Welfare are groups of animal protection associations and veterinary professionals.

The Federations provide assistance to its members in accounting, legal assistance, administrative support and help with setting up events to raise funds.

The Federations also work with parliamentarians and other political actors to help change the political landscape to better protect animal welfare. They are committed to educating the public on animal welfare and to fighting all forms of maltreatment.

GTVMT (Gesellschaft für Tierverhaltensmedizin und -Therapie / German society of clinical animal ethology and therapy)



GTVMT (our first German member!) is the Society for Animal Behavioural Medicine and Therapy. GTVMT is an organisation of vets who are focussing on behavioural therapy for dogs, cats, birds and horses. GTVMT members work with pet owners to find the causes of behavioural problems or disorders in their pets, and creates individual therapy plans together with the pet owners to solve the problems or disorders.

ASTA



The Association for the Health and Protection of Animals is run by veterinarians and supporting members. ASTA is a non-profit organization that provides care to stray animals, giving them the necessary health checks and sterilization plans. Since 1994 the Association has sterilised 2,500 animals every year. After caring for the stray animals, the Association helps to reintegrate them into protected areas and, if possible, into selected families.

Rex Dog Shelter Foundation



The Rex Dog Shelter Foundation has been working for 25 years to ensure the harmonious coexistence of man and of the animals, a reduction in the number of stray animals and to prevent animal suffering. Every day the Foundation provides care to more than 250 abandoned or wounded animals in crisis. The Foundation is working actively to education people about responsible pet ownership and animal welfare to be taken seriously in Hungary.

SSPCA



Founded in 1839, the Scottish SPCA has been helping animals in Scotland for over 175 years. Scottish SPCA Inspectors are authorised by the Scottish Government to enforce the welfare provisions of the Animal Health and Welfare Scotland Act 2006. The SSPCA rescue animals in danger, find pets new homes, investigate abuse and prevent cruelty through their free Prevention through Education programme for Scottish schools. In 2016 they found homes for more than 6,189 rescued animals and spoke to more than 303,600 children in Scottish schools.

In The Spotlight!

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



Jackie Dias, Aanifeira, Portugal

Tell us about your organisation...

Founded in an old unused cattle auction installation in 1999, Aanifeira – Associação dos Amigos dos Animais da Feira began with around 50 dogs. However, with the ever-increasing stray dog population over the years, this number grew very quickly. Since 2010, national and international funding allowed us to make major improvements to the shelter, including a much-needed cattery.

Open to students and members of the public from around the world since 2010, Aanifeira runs an International Volunteer Program for those specializing in veterinary, veterinary nursing and animal care. The program operates all-year round with volunteers staying locally, where they have the opportunity of seeing and working alongside the staff in the day-to-day operation of the shelter.

In addition, Aanifeira provides animal welfare education programs with local kindergartens and schools, as well as a recent new awareness-raising program with CERCIFEIRA, providing inter-action of animals with people who have intellectual and motor deficiencies.

Today Aanifeira has close to 3500 members and houses around 200 dogs and 40 cats. It provides affordable services which include animal protection and adoption, advocacy, humane education and veterinary care.

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

We recently presented a proposal to work with the Santa Maria da Feira Municipal Council and the Association of Municipal Councils in unison with five districts in a pilot project that will ensure that all dogs passing through the major dog pound will be spayed/neutered at the Aanifeira Veterinary Clinic before going out for adoption.

Unfortunately there is no official cat rescue shelter within the five district radius, and the Association of Municipal Councils have plans to build one in the very near future which will be incorporated into the dog pound. In doing so, the Aanifeira spay/neuter proposal will also cover the cat population as well. The clinic will also help to provide any follow-up treatments to the animals should the need arise.

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

As, regrettably, small-time backyard breeders are rife in Portugal, we'd like to see legislation to ban illegal breeders throughout the EU together with regulation of breeding establishments. We would also support better regulation of the sale of cats and dogs at pet shops/department stores, local fairs, etc. and a single EU microchip database for cats and dogs to facilitate easy identification in the case of loss or stolen animals.

Members' Stories!



FurBall 2017

Our Estonian member, Varjupaikade MTÜ, held their charity event 'FurBall' for the second year in a row. The event is fine dining with performances by well-known artists, as well as a charity auction. With the help of 200 guests they raised more than 3000 euros which will go towards building a new cat room at their shelter in Läänemaa. Given its success, Varjupaikade MTÜ hope to make the event an annual tradition! You can find out more about the event and see pictures [here](#).



Emma McClarkin MEP visits Dogs Trust Loughborough Rehoming Centre

In December, Emma McClarkin MEP had a behind-the-scenes tour of Dogs Trust Loughborough to find out about the plight of smuggled puppies. During the tour Emma met Maggie, a puppy who had been smuggled from Latvia but rescued and rehomed by Dogs Trust.

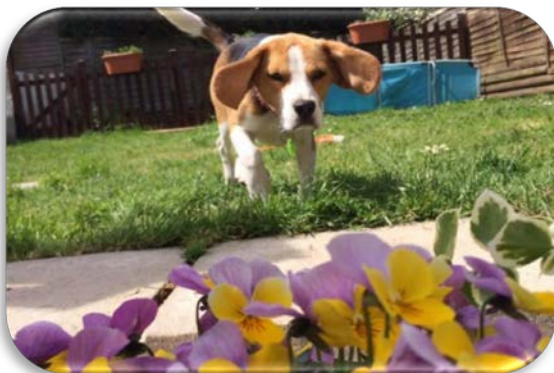
You can read the full press release on her website [here](#).

We encourage members to reach out to their national MEPs and invite them to visit their shelters, rehoming centres, veterinary hospitals, etc. This is an effective way of building up constructive relationships with politicians, inspiring the public to visit and attracting media attention through press releases and social media. Get in touch with Simona for help in identifying politicians and sending invitations!

A new vet clinic for Save the Dogs in Romania

Save the Dogs are currently building a new vet clinic at their shelter in Cernavoda, Romania. The clinic will be 800 square meters completely dedicated to emergency intervention and the sterilizations of dogs and cats.

The clinic is now starting to take shape, with the walls currently being installed and work on the floors about to begin. Save the Dogs are working as fast as possible to ensure the clinic is finished by the end of the summer so they can start moving in September. For a virtual tour of the clinic [click here](#).



GSPCA

Following research which found that over 30 plants are toxic to pets, some causing death, the Guernsey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (GSPCA) are creating an educational area called the Poison Garden to help pet owners understand how dangerous some plants can be.

With around 10,000 dogs and 10,000 cats in Guernsey, this garden display is a fantastic initiative to teach pet owners which plants they need to avoid and which are perfectly safe.

To find out more about this innovative project [click here](#).

In Brief: Members' National Campaigns

Battersea Dogs & Cats Home has been working on a campaign to increase the maximum sentence for animal cruelty in England and Wales from six months to five years in prison. You can read their report called 'Sentencing for animal cruelty in England and Wales' [here](#).

OneKind is calling on the Scottish Government to maintain a ban on tail docking. You can read more [here](#).