

EN

E-001104/2025

Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(10.6.2025)

1. In line with international standards¹ and for reasons of subsidiarity, the management of stray dog and cat populations remains under the responsibility of the Member States, including on policies for reproduction control, record keeping and protection.

The proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability of 2023² includes provisions on the management of dogs and cats kept in shelters, which are considered ‘former’ strays³, and they are registered in a national database in the name of the person responsible of the shelter. The proposal also requires the display of a warning regarding responsible ownership, when advertisements are placed on online platforms. This measure could contribute to decreasing the abandonment of owned dogs and cats, that is a common source of stray animals.

2. Even though the welfare of stray dogs is not governed at EU level as mentioned in the Commission’s reply to PQ E-001939/2021⁴, some concrete actions have been taken. In particular, the Commission remains the main financial donor of Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)⁵. This Platform is a key regional mechanism to facilitate the implementation of the WOAH standards on animal welfare, including on dogs’ population management⁶ by the 53 countries of the Regional Commission for Europe. The Commission also prepares the EU position on the WOAH international standard for dog population management.

¹ World Organisation for Animal Health, Terrestrial Code, Chapter 7.7. Dog Population Management: ‘Considering that sources and drivers of free-roaming dogs and management goals differ across communities, dog population management should be individually tailored to local and national contexts’ or ‘these recommendations for dog population management measures are described in detail in Articles 7.7.14. to 7.7.24. and should be implemented in accordance with the national context and local circumstances’.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023PC0769>.

³ There is a typing error in the proposal which reads ‘formal’ instead of ‘former’ stray.

⁴ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-001939-ASW_EN.html.

⁵ <https://rr-europe.woah.org/en/Projects/animal-welfare-platform-europe/about-the-platform/>.

⁶ https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Health_standards/tahc/current/chapitre_aw_stray_dog.pdf.