EN
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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.8.2026)

1. The Regulation on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability[1] will establish an EU-wide traceability system for the identification and registration of dogs and cats. This system will consist of national databases that are interoperable across the Union. It will be developed in a stepwise manner and will become fully operational within five years from the entry into force of the Regulation.

From four years from the entry into force of the Regulation, operators of breeding and selling establishments, shelters and foster homes will be required to ensure that dogs and cats are identified by means of a microchip and registered in a national database. The same obligation will apply to pet owners from ten years from entry into force in the case of dogs, and from fifteen years from entry into force in the case of cats.
These measures are expected to discourage the abandonment of dogs and cats and strengthen accountability in relation to such acts.

2. The management of stray dog and cat populations, including considerations related to public safety, falls and will continue to fall within the exclusive competence of the Member States, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and in line with the relevant international standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health.

[1] https://oeil.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/en/procedure-file?reference=2023/0447(COD).