

ILLEGAL PET TRADE: GAME OVER

21 APRIL 2020

ONLINE WORKSHOP





The Illegal Pet Trade - Game Over Workshop with the Croatian Presidency



Welcome to our expert workshop, which will consider the current shortcomings of the control systems of online pet trade in place, before looking at best practices in how to better protect animals, consumers and ultimately taxpayers, and how this could be shared across Europe as a whole.

During the event, we will ask attendees to participate actively in discussions and in real-time polls that will be launched throughout the workshop. It is important to keep in mind that this event is exactly one year before the Animal Health Law comes into force, and that currently the coronavirus COVID-19 is shedding yet a different light at the problem of the illegal trade of pets.

We expect around 70 people to attend, including animal welfare organisations, representatives of ministries, EU institutions, academics, technical experts and consumers.



*Tatjana Karačić, Chief Veterinary Officer, Croatia
Iwona Mertin, Eurogroup for Animals*

Welcome



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The large majority of pets from illegal sources are sold online, and their lucrative trade across the EU is often disguised as non-commercial movement of pets.

These cats and dogs often do not comply with the health requirements established in the Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 - too young to have been vaccinated, accompanied by fraudulent passports which provide false information on their origin. Such illegal EU wide trade facilitated by digital tools threatens not just the welfare of the animals involved, but also animal health, public health and consumers. There is therefore the urgency to improve the control mechanisms.

The internet represents a convenient and widely accessible avenue for selling pets, particularly due to the limited control mechanisms currently in place. The main actors of the pet trade are therefore often online traders and, as such, uncontrolled third parties. In fact, online sellers are mostly not currently required to certify their identity or provide licensing details as part of their advertisement. Because of this, it is difficult to distinguish these different types of trade and accurately define the scale of the issue.

The European Commission's [EU Coordinated Control Plan](#) on online sales of dogs and cats (2019) identified the following areas of concern:

- Lack of identification of animals and traders;
- Technical difficulties to control the online market.

There are three pieces of EU legislation that, if efficiently applied to the selling of pets, would improve protection of pets and their owners' rights as consumers, especially when the information provided on the animals are misleading. Specifically:

- Animal Health Law - Delegated Act on Identification & Registration that is still pending and is to be addressed by the European Commission;
- [Directive Modernizing Consumer Law](#) as a part of the [New Deal for Consumers](#);
- [Directive on Electronic Commerce](#) that, if revised under the Digital Services Act, would allow to address the issue of liability and information duties of online intermediaries which has not been addressed yet by the European Commission and it is not included in the New Deal for Consumers.

Therefore, the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union decided to organise an event to explore the solutions to illegal pet trade with a focus on EU legislation and national practice.

Intended Outcomes

The conclusions from the Workshop will feed into the further work on illegal pet trade. The report will be released at the end of May.

Background

The Illegal Pet Trade - Game Over

Workshop with the Croatian Presidency

Tuesday 21st April, 10:00-12:30 CET via
[Zoom \(meeting ID: 913-9736-7122\)](#).

Open to all registered participants.

10:00-10:05 Introduction by Iwona Mertin,
Companion Animals Programme Leader

10:05-10:07 Movie intro

10:07-10:17 Introduction & welcome by Croatian
Chief Veterinary Officer Tatjana
Karačić MSc on behalf of the Croatian
Presidency of the Council of the
European Union

10:17-10:30 "Pet trade - legal or not", by Dr Jennifer
Maher, Centre for Criminology,
University of South Wales

10:30-11:30 Group work led by facilitators

Pets and Identification & registration
Petras Austrevicius (European Parliament)
Martin Hojsik (European Parliament)
Georgia Diamantopoulou (Four Paws)

Pedro Rosado-Martin (DG SANTE)
Marlene Wartenberg (German Network I&R)

Pets & consumers

Leon Arnts (Dutch Ministry of Agriculture)
Marie-Paule Benassi (DG JUST)
David Damen (Sentiance)
Petra De Sutter (European Parliament)
Elly von Jessen (Dierenbescherming)
Belinda Vigors (Scotland's Rural College)

Pets & online platforms

Deborah Behar (DG CNECT)
Enrico Di Minin (Helsinki University)
Moira Gerlach (Deutscher Tierschutzbund)
Sam Worthy (Tailwise)

Organised crime & tax evasion

David Bowles (RSPCA)
Graeme Mutter (HMRC)
Tanya Wyatt (Northumbria University)
Paolo Zucca (Biocrime)

11:30-12:10 Debrief by facilitators per each group work, presenting the
main recommendations

12:10-12:25 "Views from the US: Online trade of Pets" by Candace
Croney, PhD, Director, Center for Animal Welfare /
Science Professor, Purdue University College of Veterinary
Medicine

12:25-12:35 Conclusions and closing by Reineke Hameleers, CEO,
Eurogroup for Animals

Agenda

Speakers



Tatjana Karačić MSc
Croatian Chief Veterinary Officer

Tatjana Karačić was a research assistant at the University of Zagreb, where she focused on inspection in food safety and consumer health. Since 2005, she has worked with the competent veterinary authority of Croatia and has contributed to the establishment of a national system of Codex Alimentarius. Since 2019, she has carried out CVO duties.



Jennifer Maher
Senior lecturer, Centre for Criminology, University of South Wales, UK

Jennifer Maher's areas of expertise include animal abuse, green criminology, human-animal studies and interpersonal violence. She has recently concluded funded research on status dog ownership for the RSPCA, the illegal puppy trade for the Scottish Government and on wildlife trafficking for the European Commission.



Petras Auštrevičius
MEP, Renew Europe

Petras Auštrevičius is a Lithuanian politician, diplomat, civil society activist and MEP since 2014. He serves on the EP Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) and acts as a coordinator for the Renew Europe group in the EP Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) and is a substitute member for the EP Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN). He is a vice-president of the Animal Welfare Intergroup.



Martin Hojsik
MEP, Renew Europe

Martin Hojsik is a founder and Member of the Board of Progressive Slovakia and sits with Renew Europe in the EP. He is a Member of the ENVI committee and focuses on climate policies and fights against hazardous chemicals. He was a member of the board of FOUR PAWS International and worked for Greenpeace.



Georgia Diamantopoulou
EU Companion Animal Policy Coordinator, Four Paws

Georgia Diamantopoulou's focus at Four Paws is Identification & Registration and the illegal puppy trade. She also represents FOUR PAWS at the Voluntary Initiative Subgroup on the Health and Welfare of Pets in Trade, operating under the EU Platform on Animal Welfare. She previously worked at the European Parliament and in the EU media sector after graduating from KU Leuven.



Pedro Rosado-Martin
DG SANTE, European Commission

Pedro Rosado Martín is a veterinarian who graduated in the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. He joined the Spanish civil service in 2002 in the Animal Health Unit of the Ministerio de Agricultura. He joined the EU Commission in 2014 and is currently posted in DG SANTE's Unit G2 - Animal health and welfare.

Speakers *continued*



Marlene Wartenberg

Co-founder, German Network I&R

Marlene Wartenberg worked in the German Parliament and then in authors' rights and lobbying. In 2002 she became CEO of VIER PFOTEN Germany, establishing a policy offices in Berlin and Brussels. She founded the platforms CAROdog/CAROcat and www.lawyersforanimalprotection.eu, and since 2015 she has been EU I&R expert in the German registry TASSO.



Leon Arnts

Senior Policy Officer, Animal Welfare International, Dutch Ministry of Agriculture

Léon Arnts graduated in 1986 from the HAS University of Applied Sciences and studied business administration at Nyenrode University. He has works on animal welfare, especially with regard to international standards, at the Animal Supply Chain and Animal Welfare department of his ministry since 2011.



Marie-Paule Benassi

Head of the Consumer Enforcement and Redress unit, DG JUST, European Commission

Marie-Paule Benassi has managed the network of consumer protection authorities, and modernised their enforcement cooperation framework to tackle practices of large players harming consumers' interests at EU level. She has also been active in developing the network of European Consumer Centres and the legislation on alternative and online dispute resolution.



David Damen

CTO, Sentiance

At Sentiance, an intelligence-driven data science and behavior change company, David Damen manages a geographically distributed team of software, data science and infrastructure specialists. David has an MSc. in Computer Science and is proficient in novel state-of-the-art systems design and agile project management.



Petra De Sutter, MD, PhD

MEP, Greens/EFA

A gynaecologist and fertility expert, Petra De Sutter represents the Flemish Greens in the European Parliament and is the first green chairwoman of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Affairs. Being a big animal lover and convinced vegetarian, she is also an animal rights defender.



Elly von Jessen

Policy Officer, companion animals and animal rescue, Dierenbescherming

Elly von Jessen's main focus is on strategy, ethics and welfare quality in the commercial pet trade. She runs a Dutch programme looking specifically at smaller mammals and birds in pet shops, breeders and traders, through which it is possible to see the consumer as a possible major influencer of more animal-friendly supply and demand.

Speakers *continued*



Belinda Vigors

Social Science Researcher, Farm Animal Behaviour and Welfare Team, Scotland's Rural College

Belinda Vigors works on the development of 'Positive Animal Welfare', where she engages with farmers and consumers to better understand what they consider is a 'Good Life' for animals, and the factors influencing their perspectives and behaviours in relation to this.



Deborah Behar

Legal Officer, DG CNECT, European Commission

Deborah Behar is a legal officer in the E-Commerce and Platforms unit of the Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology. She is working in the team responsible for the Digital Services Act. Prior to the European Commission, Deborah was working in an international law firm on corporate and information technology law.



Enrico Di Minin

Associate Professor, Helsinki University

Enrico Di Minin is an interdisciplinary conservation scientist whose research background and expertise investigated the interactions between biosphere, society and economy which affect sustainability. He has specific interests in land use planning, spatio-temporal modelling, environmental economics and machine learning.



Moira Gerlach

Scientific Officer, Companion Animals, Deutscher Tierschutzbund

Moira Gerlach studied Veterinary Medicine at LMU Munich and then worked as an assistant veterinarian at the Clinic for Small Animal Medicine, Centre for Clinical Veterinary Medicine, LMU Munich, followed by the small animal clinic of Dr. Lentrodt in Neufahrn bei Freising. She has been the Scientific Officer Companion Animals at Deutscher Tierschutzbund since 2017.



Sam Worthy

Founder and CEO, Tailwise

After completing his masters degree, Sam worked with Jones Lang LaSalle real estate investment in London. He then moved into sales at tech startups Aframe and Homeshift. Sam nearly bought a dog the wrong way from a puppy farmer, which was the catalyst for Tailwise to become a reality. He began working on Tailwise full time at the end of 2017.



David Bowles

Assistant Director of Public Affairs, RSPCA

David Bowles coordinates the RSPCA's political, local government and campaign work. He is a Board member of the two umbrella cat and dog organisations in the UK, the Association of Cat and Dog Homes and the Canine and Feline Sector Council, and a Board member of Eurogroup for Animals. He wrote the RSPCA report *Sold a pup*, one of the few reports to look at the British puppy market.

Speakers *continued*



Graeme Mutter

Taskforce Leader, Tax Evasion, HMRC, Europol

Graeme joined Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs in 1980, working with other government and law enforcement agencies and other external stakeholders across the UK and beyond, including the charity sector. His current role is as lead for several HMRC Taskforces looking at potential tax evasion across sectors including the puppy/kitten industry.



Tanya Wyatt

Professor of Criminology, Northumbria University

Tanya Wyatt's research explores the involvement of organised crime groups, and corporations and the role of corruption in non-human animal abuse and wildlife crime. Tanya led a study of puppy farming and smuggling in Scotland that expanded to cover England and Wales. She is currently helping with a study about the illicit market in veterinary medicines in the UK.



Paolo Zucca

Lead partner and Principal, Biocrime

Paolo Zucca is the lead partner and principal of Biocrime, which brings together public services in Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy and Carinthia, Austria to prevent the illegal trade in animals. He is a veterinarian and psychologist with an expertise in veterinary public health, medical intelligence and biological risk.



Candace Croney, PhD

Director, Center for Animal Welfare / Science Professor, Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine

Dr. Candace Croney's research focuses on developing and applying non-invasive metrics of welfare in companion and farmed animals, understanding the effects of rearing environments and enrichment on animal behavior, health and welfare, and public perceptions and ethical implications of animal agriculture and welfare. She created the Canine Care certified voluntary program, which sets rigorous standards for the care of dogs in breeding kennels.



Reineke Hameleers

CEO, Eurogroup for Animals

Reineke Hameleers holds a Master's degree in Arts and Science Studies from Maastricht University. She previously worked as Regional Director of the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals and is a member of the Netherlands Committee for the Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes.

Group work

We will have an online chat room for each of the groups.

The group work will kick off with a debate by the speakers, which will be followed by an exchange (via chat) with all the group work participants.

Joint work in an online document will reflect the discussion and feed into the post-event report.

The whole event will be interspersed by online real time polls and homework for the participants.

Notes:

- *The debates and chat rooms (10:30-11:30 CET) will be done via Zoom's breakout rooms.*
- *To develop documents online, we will use Google Docs.*
- *Each debate will be followed by Q&A.*
- *The event will be recorded.*

01

Pets and identification & registration

02

Pets and consumers

03

Pets and online platforms

04

Organised crime and tax evasion

01

Pets and identification & registration

Petras Austrevicius (European Parliament)

Martin Hojsik (European Parliament)

Georgia Diamantopoulou (Four Paws) - facilitator

Pedro Rosado-Martin (DG SANTE)

Marlene Wartenberg (German Network I&R)

Opening presentation: Georgia Diamantopoulou

This group work will debate the topic of traceability of cats and dogs in contemporary pet trade within the EU internal market, as well as its interplay with any potential zoonotic diseases.

02

Pets and consumers

Leon Arnts (Dutch Ministry of Agriculture)

Marie-Paule Benassi (DG JUST)

David Damen (Sentiance)

Petra De Sutter (European Parliament)

Elly von Jessen (Dierenbescherming) - facilitator

Belinda Vigors (Scotland's Rural College)

Opening presentation: Belinda Vigors

This group work will discuss in detail a variety of consumer behaviours in the context of the illegal pet trade, as well legislative and non-legislative tools available to protect European consumers.

03

Pets and online platforms

Deborah Behar (DG CNECT)

Enrico Di Minin (Helsinki University)

Moira Gerlach (Deutscher Tierschutzbund) - facilitator

Sam Worthy (Tailwise)

Opening presentation: Deborah Behar

In this debate, speakers and participants will discuss the role of platforms in the illegal pet trade, as well as ongoing developments in the framework of the Digital Services Act.

04

Organised crime and tax evasion

David Bowles (RSPCA) - facilitator

Graeme Mutter (HMRC)

Tanya Wyatt (Northumbria University)

Paolo Zucca (Biocrime)

Opening presentation: David Bowles

Experts will discuss the illegal pet trade and its impact on tax collection and the spread of criminal networks, all with policy recommendations in mind.



Hrvatsko predsjedanje
Croatian Presidency of the
Vijećem Europske unije
Council of the European Union