

Questionnaire

Country: Bulgaria
The Country is: EU Member State
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Note: (updated 2011)

Question	Article	Note
I. DATA AND DOCUMENTS		
What is the number of companion animals and/or stray animals in your country? Do you have any other data (e. g. rate of companion animals per inhabitant)?	–	According to http://bulgariadogs.webs.com there are actually around 10,000 stray dogs in Sofia alone. According the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences there were in 2007 11,124 stray dogs in Sofia.
Does the country have a specific animal welfare legislation?	–	YES, there is the Animal Welfare Act (Закон за защита на животните) since the 31 st January 2008.
Which other laws and ordinances refer to animal welfare?		Biodiversity Act (EN) / Закон за биологичното разнообразие (BG) Veterinary Activities Act (EN) / Закон за ветеринарно-медицинската дейност (BG) Law for Hunting and Protection of Game (EN) / Закон за лова и опазване на дивеча (BG)
Are there any specific regulations concerning dogs/cats within the law?	–	YES about abandoned dogs and the breeding and care conditions.
Is there a list of banned or dangerous animals?	–	No.
II. GOVERNANCE		
<i>BASIC ETHICAL CONCEPT IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM</i>		
What is the basic ethical concept in your political system concerning animal welfare?	Art 1 Animal Welfare Act	“Animal protection shall comprise protection of animals’ life, health, and good condition; protection from inhumane, cruel, and extremely cruel treatment; ensuring proper care and living conditions, adapted to their physiological and behavioural specifics”.

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Is the animal welfare act based on animal welfare as the principle value of the legislation?	Art. 1 Animal Welfare Act	The law talks about “protection of animals” and not of “animal welfare” but define it as protection of animals’ life, health, and good condition; protection from inhumane, cruel, and extremely cruel treatment; ensuring proper care and living conditions, adapted to their physiological and behavioural specifics”.
Do animals have a right to life?	–	No
Which reasonable causes have to be met for an official permission to kill a healthy animal?	–	No reasons listed.
CONSTITUTION		
Is animal welfare part of the constitution?	–	No.
ANIMAL WELFARE IN PARLIAMENT		
Is there an animal welfare committee in the parliament?	–	No.
ANIMAL WELFARE IN GOVERNMENT		
Are there any official animal welfare bodies in the government? (e. g. Ombudsman, Commissioner)	–	Yes, there is an Ombudsman. But not for animal welfare.
Which ministry/ministries is/are responsible for animal welfare?	–	Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
ANIMAL WELFARE IN AUTHORITIES		
How is the status of competent authorities for animal welfare legislation and are they linked to (and which) ministry?	–	They are affiliated to the Ministry of Agriculture and sometimes to the Ministry of Health.
ANIMAL WELFARE STRATEGY, BIRTH CONTROL AND SCHOOL PROGRAMMES		
Does the country have a national animal welfare strategy?	–	There are birth control strategies.

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Is there an obligation for the government to do and publish an annual or biannual animal welfare report?	Article 40 of the Welfare Act	YES for stray animals. (2) Municipal mayors shall organise the implementation of all programmes under Paragraph 1 and shall submit a report thereof before the Director General of the National Veterinary Service on an annual basis. (3) The Minister of Agriculture and Food Supply shall annually submit a report on the implementation of all programmes under Paragraph 1, which shall be adopted by the Council of Ministers.
Are there legal or administrative measures which provide birth control of animals?	Article 40 of the Welfare Act	YES Article 40. (1) Municipal councils shall adopt programmes to contain stray dog population and shall allocate funds for implementation thereof.
Are there (mandatory) school programmes on animal welfare?	–	No, not mandatory.

III. DOGS/CATS IN LEGISLATION

DEFINITIONS

Does the law or another enactment include a definition of animals as “sentient beings”?	–	No.
Are animals defined as goods (object/chattel)?	–	Additional Provisions of the Annex of the Animal Protection Law: NO. Animals are not defined. There is a special Act for protection of animals, but all the legislation related to goods can be applied to animals. In contrast, Companion animals are defined.
Does the law include definitions of companion animals, abandoned animals and/or stray animals?	–	Yes. (see above)

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION OF DOGS IN THE LEGISLATION

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Can an animal be treated like an asset (e. g. in insolvency, confiscation, divorce, separation)? May an animal be used as an evidence in a court procedure?	–	Yes.
Is winning of a bet or any other gain from an action which causes pain and/or suffering of an animal punishable?	–	YES if it's has for result a cruel act against animal.
May an animal be obtained as a prize?	–	It's not prohibited by any legislation.
IDENTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION		
Is identification and registration of animals mandatory and where are they registered and what is registered? What about costs?	Art. 37	Yes.
BREEDING		
Are there any clauses on breeders and is there a national register of breeders?	Chapter 4 of the Animal Protection Law	Yes.
Does the law proscribe the minimum care obligations for animals at breeders?	–	YES. There are prescriptions related to space, registration, water & feed, prevent from suffering.
Is breeding of defects punishable?	–	Yes if it's has for result a cruel act against animal.
Does the law provide for limitations on animals mutilations? (e. g. tail docking, ear cropping, devocalization, declawing, obligation to use anaesthesia.)	Art. 7.	Yes.

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Which reasonable causes have to be met for an official permission to kill a healthy animal by a breeder?	–	The killing has to be done by a veterinarian.
<i>TRANSPORT, TRAVEL, SELL OF DOGS (TRADE)</i>		
Is withholding of food and/or water from the animal(s) during a long transport punishable?	Art. 32	Yes.
Must a companion animal be quarantined upon arriving in your country?	–	Not for Member States' cats, dogs and ferrets since the Bulgaria is in the EU.
Is it allowed to sell dogs/cats at a pet shop?	Article 29 and 30	Yes but it is framed under specific conditions (qualification of the salers...).
Is there a ban on markets, shows, exhibitions or other events where one can buy an animal?	Art. 28	NO general ban but it is regulated.
Is there an age-limit for children to buy an animal?	Art. 11	Prohibited under 18.
<i>KEEPING AND LIMITS OF KEEPING</i>		
Does the law proscribe the minimum care obligations for animals at keepers?	–	YES. There are prescriptions related to space, registration, water & feed, prevent from suffering.
Is there a special regulation which rules keeping of companion animals?	Chapter 3, 4	Yes.
Is there a list of banned or dangerous animals?	–	No.
May a landlord forbid a renter to keep an animal?		Yes, property law is very strong in Bulgaria.
May neighbours file complain against an owner, e. g. if he/she does not inhibit his/her animal from (ceaseless) noises?	–	YES if they argued that these barks trouble their property right.
Which reasonable causes have to be met for an official permission to kill a healthy animal by a private person?	–	No criteria in the law.

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Is a private owner obliged to pay tax for his/her companion animal?	Art. 35	YES but not for owners of castrated dogs (Article 36).
KILLING		
Which reasonable causes have to be met for an official permission to kill a healthy animal (also to get products of animal origin, e. g. for animal testing purposes or food supply)?	–	No criteria in the law.
Can animals be kept in shelters indefinitely? If not, is there specific time frame (for a vet) to kill an animal kept in a shelter?	Art. 47	NO but no specific time frame to euthanize.
ABUSE OF ANIMALS		
Does the law address cruelty to animals? If so, does it provide for sanctions?	Art. 6-10	The law distinguish inhumane treatment to animals, cruelty to animals and extreme cruelty.
Does the law ban organized fights of animals?	Art. 325a Penal Code	Penalty of five years' imprisonment will be imposed on the organization or participation in animal fighting. This was decided by the Parliament, which passed on second reading amendments to the Penal Code. This punishment shall be imposed for breeding, training or the provision of animals for fighting. The punishment is imprisonment from one to five years and a fine of five to fifty thousand levs if the act is repeated, is made by a veterinarian or technician by a person carrying out business or profession associated with rearing or caring for them. The same punishment is when the fighting attend a minor when the fighting are captured for distribution, as well as those who organize or participate in betting on animal fighting.
Is sexual abuse of animals punishable?	Art. 7	Yes.

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Is maltreatment and/or suffering of animals perceived as a criminal offense? If so, what sanctions are foreseen?	new Art. 325b of the Penal Code Article 62 of Animal Protection Act Article 63§2 Article 65 Article 668	Since July 27 2011, Maltreatment is described as cruelty against animals and is punished by imprisonment of up to 2 years or probation and a fine of 500€ to 3,000€ or up to 3 years imprisonment and 1,000 to 5,000€ fine if facts are committed in a “particularly painful way”.
<i>UN-OWEND ANIMALS, SHELTERS, ABANDONED ANIMALS</i>		
Are there regulations on lost/found animals?	Chapter 5	Yes.
Who is owner of an abandoned animal?	Art. 47, Art. 78 Ownership	There is not really an owner of an abandoned dog but a supervisor of the abandoned dog. The condominium law provides a delay of 3 years for becoming owner of an abandoned good.
May a private person establish an animal shelter?	Art. 137, para 1 of the Law on Veterinary Activity	Yes.
Can animals be kept in shelters indefinitely? If not, is there specific time frame (for a vet) to kill an animal kept in a shelter?	Art. 47	NO but no specific time frame to kill.

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Is local community financing activities of collecting of abandoned and lost animals?	–	Yes.
Must a finder of a stray and/or abandoned animal report the finding to a competent authority?	–	No.
Are there possibilities to adopt an abandoned animal?	–	Yes.
Are there legal or administrative measures which provide birth control of stray animals?	–	Yes, the sterilization.
<i>VETERINARIANS</i>		
Is negligence (of a vet or a veterinary assistant) punishable?	–	No.
Does the law provide for limitations on animals mutilations? (e. g. tail docking, ear cropping, devocalization, declawing, obligation to use anaesthesia.)	Art. 7	Yes.
Which reasonable causes have to be met for an official permission to kill a healthy animal by a veterinarian?	–	No criteria in the law.
<i>POLICY OF BIRTH CONTROL FOR OWNED AND UN-OWNED ANIMALS</i>		
Are there legal or administrative measures which provide birth control of animals?	–	Yes, the sterilization.
IV. ENFORCEMENT		
List of case studies and / or relevant court decisions.	–	– (is not known)
V. PRACTICAL INFORMATION		
List of veterinary organisations in your country.	–	– (is not known)

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List of animal welfare organisations in your country.	–	Four Paws bg (“Chetiri Lapi”), Animal Rescue Sofia.
What about travelling with dogs?	–	Often prohibited in trains, more often accepted in buses.
What about dogs in hotels?	–	Almost always prohibited.