



**ЕКОЛОГІЯ  
ПРАВО ЛЮДИНА**

Верховенство права для захисту довкілля

# HOMELESS ANIMALS: SHELTER IMPOSSIBLE TO KILL?

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## POLICY BRIEF ABOUT THE REGULATION OF THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS ANIMALS

While walking down the city streets, each of us repeatedly met pack of dogs and cats - near the entrances and windows of basements and semi-basement floors. Some of these animals have collars or special clips in ears. But they are in public places without the owners or caretakers. All these animals are homeless<sup>1</sup>. Alone on the streets, they suffer from cold and hunger. Scouting about for food, these animals often face the cruelty from people, and their number is regulated by killing. Who are these animals, why did they appear on the streets and do they pose a risk for people?

### ***How did homeless animals appear on the streets?***

The first animal that a man could domesticate 15 thousand years ago was a wolf, domesticated subspecies of which is a dog<sup>2</sup>. The domestication of cats took place 5 thousand years later<sup>3</sup>.

Dogs helped people in hunting and guarding the house, and cats – in the fight against rodents. These animals were also kept for communication and receiving additional emotions<sup>4</sup>, and became full members of the family. Under the influence of domestication, they lost part of the features inherent with their wild relatives. Because of this, dogs and cats could no longer survive without a human, and people became responsible for their fate.

At the same time, despite full dependence on the men, part of the dogs and cats appeared on the streets. Some people surrender animals when moving to other cities or houses, leaving them alone. Others perceive animals as fun, and when cute kittens and puppies grow into adult animals that need to be walked regularly, fed and given time, they are also surrendered. Similarly, people get rid of unnecessary crop. As a result, homeless animals appeared on the streets precisely because of the refusal of their owners. Being unwanted, these animals form packs and multiply, therefore, their number starts to grow.

Thus, in recent years in Ukraine, animals mostly become homeless hereditarily<sup>5</sup>, and only part of them is abandoned or lost, or are stray<sup>6</sup> (see Figure 1).

This is due to the fact that in recent years, Ukraine has practically not taken measures that would prevent the increase in the number of homeless animals – instead of neutering, animals were euthanized. At the same time, the killing in itself did not stop the reproduction of those who remained on the streets. Similarly, no measures were taken to increase the consciousness of the population, in particular, the owners of the animals. Because of this, the number of homeless animals continued to grow.

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<sup>1</sup> By homeless animal is meant any pet animal that either has no shelter or is beyond the dwelling of its owner or guardian, and is not under control or direct supervision of any owner or guardian; P. 5 Art. 1 of the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals; Council of Europe; Convention, International document of 13.11.1987; ratification dated 18.09.2013, basis 578-18; [http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994\\_a15](http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994_a15); homeless are also considered dogs, regardless of breed, belonging and designation, including those that have collars with numbers and muzzles, but are without the owner on the streets, squares, markets, parks, gardens, boulevards, beaches, in public transport, yards and other public places, are considered homeless and are subject to trapping, P. 1 Art. 24 of the Law of Ukraine 'On the protection of animals from cruelty' No. 3447-IV y as in force in 04.08.2017, <http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3447-15>

<sup>2</sup> Important domesticated species, wild animals; article, Wikipedia, <https://bit.ly/2LjgsHX>

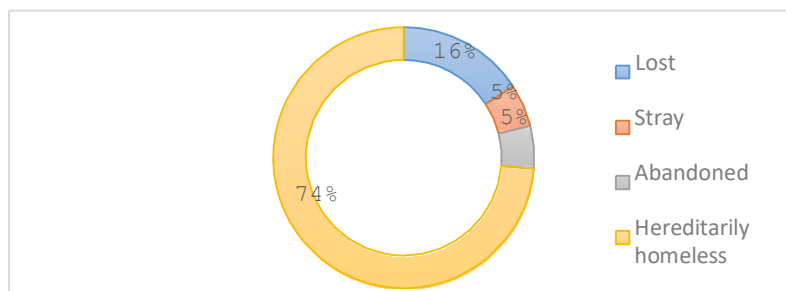
<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Companion animal – animals kept by a man for communication and additional emotions, particularly to avoid loneliness

<sup>5</sup> Crop of homeless animals

<sup>6</sup> Animals that have owners, but are in public places without owners or guards, self-walking animals etc.

**Figure 1. Sources of origin of homeless dogs and cats in Ukraine**

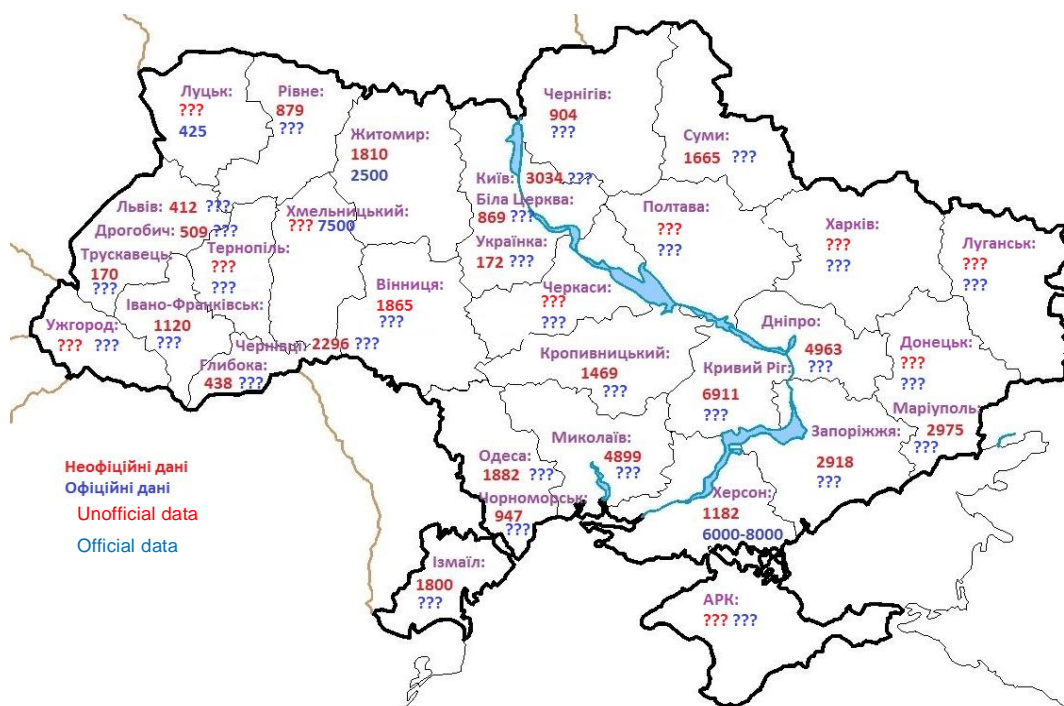


Source: prepared by the authors based on the research data *Stray Animal Control Practices (Europe)*, WSPA and RSPCA International<sup>7</sup>.

### **How many animals in Ukraine are homeless?**

In Ukraine, there is no national official record of homeless animals, which makes their exact number unknown. At the same time, some cities make such a count in order to plan future expenditures from the budget and make decisions on the regulation of the number of homeless animals. Thus, according to official data<sup>8</sup>, in six region cities, there are from 24 to more than 26 thousand homeless animals (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Data on the number of homeless animals in the cities of Ukraine, 2016-2017**



In addition, the number of homeless animals is calculated by volunteers within the framework of grant projects<sup>10</sup>. For example, according to studies conducted by Animal-id<sup>11</sup> during 2016-2017, in 24 settlements of Ukraine, there are more than 46 thousand homeless animals (see Figure 5). According to some data, there are about half a million homeless dogs<sup>12</sup> in Ukraine. The approximate number of homeless cats is unknown, but there are about 7.5 million<sup>13</sup> home cats in Ukraine. Each of these domesticated animals is in natural conditions – beyond the human care.

Such a number of homeless animals cannot be invisible and affects not only the welfare of animals, but also the comfort of people's living in settlements. On the one hand, homeless animals have become part of the ecosystem of cities and reduce the number of rodents, and homeless dogs are also used to guard some yards, territories or premises. They stick to a certain territory, get names and are fed by indifferent people, and sometimes, can even be taken from the street. On the other hand, there are cases when homeless animals attack people and owned animals<sup>14</sup>, transmit such dangerous diseases as rabies. They make a fuss by the garbage bins in search of food, dirty the streets and parks, public gardens, make noise by barking, and form packs and become aggressive during breeding periods.

In additions, these animals are often the cause of car accidents. According to zoologists, on the highways of Ukraine, in densely populated areas, 3-5 dogs die per day per 100 km of roads<sup>15</sup>. Despite the fact that it was a man who caused the appearance of homeless animals, the attitude of people to them varies in Ukraine.

### ***The attitude of people to homeless animals***

In cities, some people are trying to help homeless animals. They feed and rehome them, raise finances to neuter these animals in order to adjust their number humanely. In addition, individual activists and zoo advocates are putting pressure on or cooperating with the authorities to address the problem of animal treatment on the spot. In villages, less attention is paid to this problem, but homeless animals are often rehomed to guard the yards.

However, both in villages and in cities, there are those who do not like homeless animals. Some of them limit themselves to conflicts with activists who feed animals around the front doors of the buildings, provide cats with the access to basements, etc. Others are more radical though, and try to reduce the number of homeless animals using any methods. Thereby, in some villages, it is normal to kill animals that steal food, chickens or cause other minor harm. In addition, quite often, dogs that have bitten people are killed regardless of the fact if they have rabies.

In addition, there are dog hunters in Ukraine – people who hunt homeless dogs in order to reduce their number. Such people are aggressively disposed towards homeless dogs, because they consider them a threat to people's lives and safety, as well as a source of poor sanitation. Dog hunters kill mostly the leaders of the pack of the homeless as well as female dogs so that the packs break apart, and the number of animals does not increase<sup>16</sup>. Dog hunters do not kill homeless cats, because they perform deratization function. For example, homeless animals were massively poisoned and killed in preparation for Euro-2012 in Lviv, Kyiv, Kharkiv<sup>17</sup>. The authorities are usually indifferent to such killings, since they benefit from this – dog hunters partially solved the problem of a large number of homeless animals. At the same time, animal protection organizations and activists run marches and campaigns against killings of homeless animals in Ukraine. On March 31, 2012, an

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<sup>10</sup> Animal-id.info is an international online platform that combines data about identified animals, their owners and organizations working with animals; <https://animal-id.info/site/about-project>

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid* .

<sup>12</sup> Homeless animals: how do shelters operate in the West; city development platform, <http://urbanua.org/dosvid/zakordonni-prykłady/247>

<sup>13</sup> Countries With The Most Pet Cats Globally, World Facts, <https://bit.ly/2GbIB14>

<sup>14</sup> You can add an image with data about attacks as an argument, why this problem should be solved!!

<sup>15</sup> Zahorodniuk I. The death of animals on roads: An assessment of the Influence of Motor Vehicles on the Population of Wild and Domestic Animals // Fauna in the Anthropogenic Landscape / edited by I. Zahorodniuk. — Luhansk, 2006. — P. 120–125. — (Works of the Theriological School, Ed. 8);

<sup>16</sup> Dog hunters; article, Wikipedia, <https://bit.ly/2LfW5yS>

<sup>17</sup> Cities that hosted Euro-2012

international march was held supported by activists in Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, the Netherlands, Croatia, Greece, Czech Republic, France, Spain, Switzerland, Poland, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan<sup>18</sup>.

In addition to dog hunters, there are people who kill homeless animals with particular cruelty. Dog's foreface is wrapped with a scotch or adhesive tape, leaving the animal to suffer in pain from hunger and dehydration. There are cases when they cut animals' legs or throw firecrackers. Quite often, animals are poisoned with substances that cause particular strong sufferings. Only some animals of the mentioned cases could be saved, others die in pain.

By killing homeless animals using any means, people forget that they became the root cause of the appearance of the dogs and cats on the streets. In addition, animals are living creatures. While even the most serious crimes in most countries of the world, including Ukraine, involve no death penalty for people, we have the homeless animals killed just for their existence. Such actions are inhumane. Physical cruelty to animals is a form of antisocial behavior and is part of the clinical picture of manifestations of behavioral disorders listed in the International Classification of Diseases<sup>19</sup>.

### ***How an animal can survive without human care***

Being on the streets, animals do not have a permanent and safe place for living. On the one hand, volunteers are feeding, trying to rehome and protecting them from death by hypothermia. On the other hand, these animals are constantly being chased after, quite often with throwing stones or other things at them, and sometimes, by beating. They are deprived of care and love. Because of this, most of them are terrified and run from those, near whom they would have to live – run from people. Others, in order to protect themselves, become aggressive. Some of them, especially those that have been a victim of people, can no longer be rehomed or need a lengthy treatment process from zoopsychologists in order to learn again how to live by people.

Homeless animals suffer from parasites and because they stay outside without supervision, they often get sick. Such animals practically do not get any veterinary care. Animals die because of hunger, constant danger and hypothermia. This is especially true for the newborn homeless animals, some of which do not reach the mature age. Sometimes, the lives of homeless animals are measured by one spring-summer season, when they can count on feeding and warm weather.

### ***How homeless animals are treated in the world***

That fact that a large number of homeless animals is in the streets is disastrous for both animals and people. In addition, this also affects the image of settlements, the comfort of living there, the local budget spendings, etc. There are about 600 million homeless animals in world altogether<sup>20</sup>. For example, in the UK, according to some data, there are over 9 million homeless cats<sup>21</sup> and, as of 2017 – over 66 thousand homeless dogs<sup>22</sup>. In the USA, about 70 thousand homeless animals are born every day, and their total number is about 70 million<sup>23</sup>. However, the number of homeless animals that became such hereditarily, is usually smaller than in Ukraine (see Figure 3). This is due to the fact that in order to regulate their number, they use such humane measures as neutering, rehoming of homeless animals, etc. Let's consider each of the methods of problem solving with homeless animals in the world.

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<sup>18</sup> The story from TSN news about the international march against the killings of homeless animals, <https://bit.ly/2zJEniK>

<sup>19</sup> World Health Organization ICD-10: F91 Conduct Disorders. — Geneva: World Health Organization, 1992.; Samokhvalov Viktor Pavlovych, Korobov Oleksandr Oleksandrovych, Melnykov Volodymyr Oleksiiovych Psychiatry. Manual for medical graduates. — 576 p. — ISBN 5-222-02133-5.

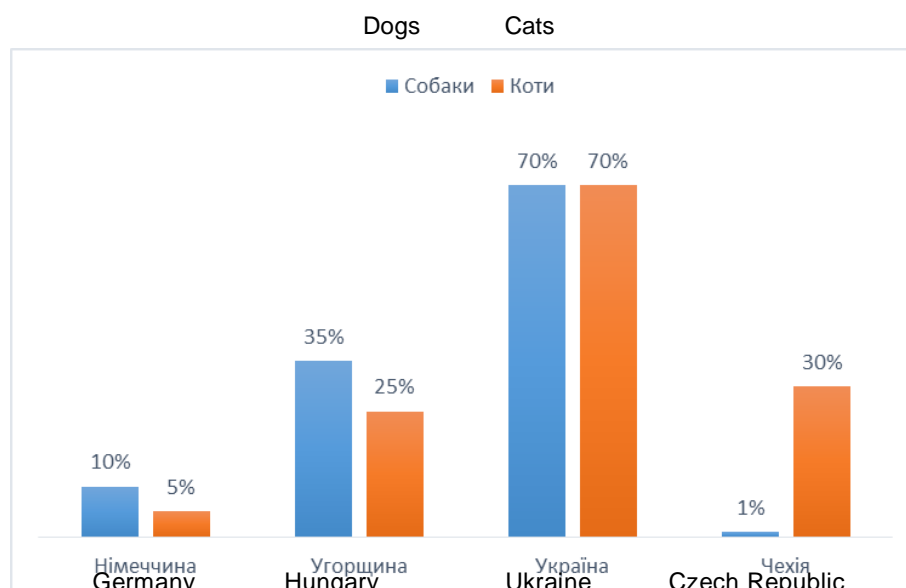
<sup>20</sup> Animal Foundation Platform, <http://www.stray-afp.org/ourprojects>

<sup>21</sup> Catcuddles Cat Sanctuary London, Stray Cats (abandoned or feral cats), <https://www.catcuddles.org.uk/stray-cats/>

<sup>22</sup> Stray dogs survey report 2017, page 6, Dogs Trust, [https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/news-events/news/stray%20dogs%20report\\_v4.pdf](https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/news-events/news/stray%20dogs%20report_v4.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> United States facts & figures, Stray animal foundation platform, <http://www.stray-afp.org/blog/latest-news/united-states-facts-figures>

**Figure 3. Hereditarily homeless dogs and cats, the total number of homeless dogs and cats**



Source: prepared by the authors based on the data of research conducted in 2006-2007. *Stray Animal Control Practices (Europe)*, WSPA and RSPCA International<sup>24</sup>.

- *Animal breeding license*

In order for the newborn animals not to be on the streets, and for the animal owners to treat a crop and its subsequent destiny more responsibly, animal breeding is allowed only after obtaining a special license. For example, in the UK, such a requirement is set for the animal owners who are planning to breed dogs for sale and who has more than 5 crops per year. The license is issued by local councils for a term of one year. In addition, such owners have to provide access to the premises, where the animals are kept for veterinary inspectors to check whether animals are kept under proper conditions and receive enough food and water etc.<sup>25</sup>

- *Introduction of a pet tax*

Animal owners must pay taxes on a monthly basis. The funds received from the payment of taxes are directed to maintain shelters, to build and maintain pet relief areas, etc. However, pumping up of budget is not the only tax target. Those who adopted an animal from the shelter are exempt from paying such a tax, which in turn leads to a reduction of the number of homeless animals. For example, in Germany, this tax runs to 140 Euro per year, and total tax amount paid by dog owners in 2016 amounted to more than 11 million Euro<sup>26</sup>.

- *Registration and identification of animals*

Quite often, it happens that lost animals or unwanted animals appear on the street. In order to prevent cases of animal abandoning, as well as to easily establish the owner and animal origin, the latter are registered predominantly at veterinary clinics and shelters by veterinary physicians, veterinary surgeons and other specially trained persons who have undergone appropriate courses<sup>27</sup>. During registration, data on the age, sex, breed, animal name, owner, neutering and injection data etc., as well as identification

<sup>24</sup> *Stray Animal Control Practices (Europe)*, WSPA and RSPCA International, page 13-14 and 17-18, <https://bit.ly/2LjEWo4>

<sup>25</sup> Dog breeding licence (England, Scotland and Wales), GOV.UK, <https://www.gov.uk/dog-breeding-licence-england-scotland-wales>

<sup>26</sup> Why did Berlin dog owners pay over €11 million in 'dog tax' last year? The Local, news, <https://bit.ly/2JrFHq9>

<sup>27</sup> Get your dog microchipped, GOV.UK data base, <https://www.gov.uk/get-your-dog-microchipped>, <https://bit.ly/2NTbnrN>



number are entered into electronic database. The animal is identified by a token, microchip<sup>28</sup>, clip etc. with the identification number.

In addition, animal registration allows establishing an exact number of owned and homeless animals. Also, animal registration serves as proof of ownership or guardianship over an animal by a particular person. It allows both bringing an owner to responsibility for damage caused by his animal and compensate for the harm caused to the owned animal.

For example, in the UK, compulsory dog registration was introduced in 1992, based on which dogs were identified by tokens attached to collars<sup>29</sup>. From April 2016, in England<sup>30</sup>, Scotland<sup>31</sup> and Wales<sup>32</sup>, compulsory chipping of dogs was introduced, including puppies aged 8 weeks and up. It significantly affected the reduction of the number of homeless animals. Particularly, during 2017, in the UK, about 7 thousand homeless dogs (more than 10% of the total number) were returned to their owners due to the fact that the latter were registered and identified by chips<sup>33</sup>. In Germany, like any other EU country<sup>34</sup>, unregistered domestic animals are prohibited to be brought in. The dogs shall be chipped and their registration number<sup>35</sup> shall be indicated in their passports.

- *Putting to shelters and rehoming of homeless animals*

The caught animals are put into shelters. In shelters, animals receive veterinary aid and are up for grabs. In addition, caught animals are registered and neutered. If owners cannot be found, new ones are being searched for. For example, approximately 6.5 million cats and dogs arrive each year to the shelters in USA, for 3 millions of which new homes could be found, and over 700 thousands of which return to their owners<sup>36</sup>.

In addition, when animals are rehomed, shelters verify whether animals are being transferred to proper conditions and whether potential owners are responsible. Thus, despite the fact that more than 300,000 animals in Germany need to be rehomed each year, animals are not transferred to the ownership without being verified that the size of the house and garden of the potential owner allows the animal to be kept in, and that family members or cohabitants will be kind about the animal, and that the animal will get the appropriate amount of attention and will not stay alone for a long time, and also that the animal will not be abandoned in case if the owner moves out, etc.<sup>37</sup>

- *Neutering of animals*

The neutering of animals is a surgical deprivation of the ability to reproduce. According to individual studies, one unneutered female dog and its crop may give birth to 67 thousand dogs, and a cat with her kittens – 420 thousand cats in seven years<sup>38</sup>. Neutering method is considered to be more humane method comparing to euthanasia of adult and newborn animals and allows preventing the increase of animals through reproduction. Neutering is used as a method of preventing uncontrolled reproduction of animals in Germany<sup>39</sup>.

It is interesting that in order to prevent the increase in the number of homeless animals, as well as to encourage the adoption<sup>40</sup> of animals from shelters, compulsory neutering is also carried out to the owned animals.

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<sup>28</sup> The chip is injected under the skin of an animal by a painless injection into areas that prevent the movement of a chip in the animal body, for example, between the shoulder bones. With the help of special devices (scanner etc.) that are put to an area where the chip is injected, data on the animal or its owner may be obtained

<sup>29</sup> Control of Dogs Order 1992, UK, <https://bit.ly/2uqAl9V>

<sup>30</sup> The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015, <https://bit.ly/2Nlxu8X>

<sup>31</sup> The Microchipping of Dogs (Scotland) Regulations 2016, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2016/58/made>

<sup>32</sup> The Microchipping of Dogs (Wales) Regulations 2015, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2015/1990/contents/made>

<sup>33</sup> Stray dogs survey report 2017, page 12, Dogs Trust, <https://bit.ly/2ziNwdw>

<sup>34</sup> Microchipping, article, Europetnet, <https://www.europetnet.com/microchipping.html>

<sup>35</sup> Germany Pet Passport & Import Regulations, <https://www.pettravel.com/immigration/Germany.cfm>

<sup>36</sup> Pet Statistics, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, <https://bit.ly/1X1AFjW>

<sup>37</sup> Everything you need to know about having a pet in Germany, <https://bit.ly/2urOJP5>

<sup>38</sup> 12 Alarming Facts About Pet Homelessness, One Green Planet, <https://bit.ly/1t3b8p>

<sup>39</sup> Article 6, paragraph 5, Animal Welfare Act (Germany), <https://bit.ly/2uCF1sB>

<sup>40</sup> Taking animals under guardianship, rehoming of animals.

For example, in some US states<sup>41</sup>, all animals transferred to the ownership from shelters, should be neutered. In case if neutering is impossible because of age, the potential owner signs an obligation to neuter the animal within a month after reaching puberty.

- *Euthanasia of homeless animals*

Euthanasia is not a means to reduce the number of homeless animals, but a means to stop the suffering of animals that, due to certain injuries, infections, traumas, incurable diseases, live in torture or have very little chance of survival<sup>42</sup>. In addition, euthanasia should be as painless as possible, and when it is used, it is necessary to minimize the sensation of fear and despair in animals. Only in such circumstances, the use of euthanasia is humane.

That is why the number of healthy and newborn animals subjected to euthanasia in developed countries is decreasing each year, and in order to prevent the increase of homeless animals, neutering is used.

### ***Treatment of homeless animals in Ukraine***

Almost all of the described methods for regulating the number of homeless animals are used in Ukraine. However, only some of them are compulsory, while others are used chaotically or are inhumane, because of which the problem of a large number of homeless animals and their protection from abuse remains unresolved.

- *Animal registration is not carried out at the national level*

For example, although in Ukraine the obligation of owners to register dogs and cats<sup>43</sup> is fixed, there are no requirements regarding the conditions and procedure for registration at the national level, as well as the registration base has not been established. At the same time, veterinary clinics provide animal registration services entering data to the international database, and some cities in Ukraine register animals at the local level. For example, in Lviv on March 1, 2016, compulsory registration of dogs was carried out<sup>44</sup>. Similarly, registration of the caught and neutered homeless animals is carried out in the cities. Failure to register animals is a manifestation of irresponsibility of their owners. Until the animals will not be registered throughout Ukraine, an increase in the number of homeless animals will continue due to the impossibility of establishing owners of the lost, stray animals etc.

- *Neutering is not a compulsory method to regulate the number of animals*

In addition to registration, the neutering of homeless animals is not a compulsory method of regulating the number of animals. At the same time, today, more and more cities are carrying out neutering instead of euthanasia of the caught animals. For example, during 2012-2014, Ukraine implemented 'SOS – the safety of co-habitation of people and homeless animals at the Polish-Ukrainian border: Lviv, Lublin, Lutsk and Ivano-Frankivsk' project<sup>45</sup> that provided for animal neutering according to the scheme 'catching-neutering-returning to the place of catching'<sup>46</sup>.

- *Lack of shelters*

At the same time, Ukraine has almost no municipal and private shelters. Because of this, after neutering, animals are returned to the place of catching. Some of the existing shelters are overcrowded, and animals are locked there in a small space, imprisoned etc., they lack contact with people, which often leads to mental disturbance of animals. Existing shelters also often have financing problems. Volunteers and activists are trying to rehome homeless animals. In 2017, the first centre for the adaptation of animals<sup>47</sup> was opened in Lviv, through which a new home is searched for homeless animals.

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<sup>41</sup> Mandatory Spay/Neuter Laws, Staff research, AVMA State Advocacy Division, <https://bit.ly/2yGaniv>

<sup>42</sup> Why We Euthanize, PETA, <https://www.peta.org/blog/euthanize/>

<sup>43</sup> Rules for keeping dogs, cats and wild animals in settlements of the Ukrainian SSR \* State Committee for Housing and Communal Services of Ukraine, the Ministry of Agrarian Policy of Ukraine, the Ministry of Health of Ukraine; Rules of 17.06.1980, <http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/n0001303-80>

<sup>44</sup> Compulsory registration of pet animals starts in Lviv, Lviv City Council, <https://bit.ly/2Lc3Ci6>

<sup>45</sup> Zaxid.net news about the implementation of the project "S.O.S.". [https://zaxid.net/lviv\\_rozpochav\\_realizatsiyu\\_proektu\\_zoz\\_n1266771](https://zaxid.net/lviv_rozpochav_realizatsiyu_proektu_zoz_n1266771)

<sup>46</sup> Animals were returned to the place of catching only after temporary post-operation foster care necessary for healing of wounds.

<sup>47</sup> In Lviv, the centre for the adoption of animals was opened, Your City, <https://bit.ly/2NiWDBm>



- *Euthanasia of healthy animals*

In addition, even though some cities depart from such a practice, euthanasia of healthy animals remains legal in Ukraine. In accordance with the provisions of Art. 17 of the Law of Ukraine 'On the protection of animals from cruelty'<sup>48</sup>, destruction of animals is permitted particularly when it is necessary to kill newborn animals, to control the population of wild animals and animals not kept by man but existing in conditions wholly or partly caused by human activity. However, killing of healthy animals is not euthanasia, since it provides for ending of sufferings caused by incurable diseases or severe bodily injuries etc. Therefore, the euthanasia allowed in Ukraine contradicts to the principles of humane treatment of the animals and protection of animals from cruelty. Euthanasia of animals only to reduce their number may be compared to death penalty. It was cancelled for people in Ukraine.

- *Uncontrolled reproduction of the owned animals*

Legislation of Ukraine has no rules for regulation of the procedure of breeding and crop control of dogs and cats. Therefore, owners are not limited to breeding of animals and are not obliged to control the crop. Due to this, there are frequent cases when newborn animals are killed, or left on the streets, or dumped off to the zoo protection organizations, utility companies etc. Such a situation leads to an increase in the number of homeless animals.



Source: photo from open source<sup>49</sup>

### ***Shelter impossible to kill?***

Several draft laws have been registered in Ukraine providing for the compulsory neutering of owned and homeless animals, the introduction of compulsory registration of animals and the prohibition of

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<sup>48</sup> Article 17 of the Law of Ukraine 'On the protection of animals from cruelty', The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine; Law of 21.02.2006 No.3447-IV as revised on 04.08.2017, <http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3447-15>

<sup>49</sup> Photo from open source. Source: [https://pethelp.com.ua/yak\\_podolati\\_bezpritulnist\\_tvarin/](https://pethelp.com.ua/yak_podolati_bezpritulnist_tvarin/)

euthanasia of healthy animals<sup>50</sup>. Some of them contain identical norms<sup>51</sup>. At the same time, all of them are slowly moving forward for parliamentary consideration, and some reach consideration only because of the public pressure. It is clear that such draft laws, especially under conditions of war and unstable economy, are not the most important and have no priority for the parliament and government. However, a large number of homeless animals affect the comfort living for people in the cities. Another aspect, but equally important, is that homeless animals attack people and owned animals, as well as transmit rabies, which also affects the lives and health of the population.

In addition, the animals themselves suffer from being on the streets out of human control and care. As long as these problems remain unsolved, homeless animals will be at risk of being poisoned or killed by dog hunters, on pain of starvation death, etc. Such inhumane treatment of homeless animals can not be tolerated by the country, which has chosen the course towards the establishment of the European values.

In view of the experience of leading world countries that regulate the number of homeless animals and solve the problems associated with their presence on the streets by humane methods, it would be appropriate to introduce the following steps in Ukraine.

### *Registration of animals*

In order for Ukraine to have its official information present about the number of domestic and homeless dogs and cats, it is first necessary to introduce compulsory registration of animals. The obtained data will be starting point for further decision-making in the field of animal treatment. In addition, in the event of the loss or abandonment of registered animals, it will be much easier to return them to the owners.

The information about registered animals can be entered into the national database. At the same time, it is more appropriate to enter data into the International online database of identified animals<sup>52</sup>, which will save money on the creation of the national database and eliminate the necessity for the transfer of data of already registered dogs and cats.

### *Neutering and breeding of animals*

In order to reduce the number of animals on the streets, it is also necessary to introduce compulsory neutering of homeless animals as a humane method of regulating their number. In addition, such neutering with some exceptions should also apply to owned animals, and those who have received a special license may carry out animal breeding. This will prevent an increase in the number of homeless animals due to the abandonment of newborn, unwanted, unadopted animals on the streets, the killing of newborn crop, etc.

### *Establishing animal shelters*

At the same time, only neutering and registration of animals will not lead to the disappearance of animals from the streets. Because of that, another necessary step is the establishment of municipal animal shelters and adoption centres, which will deal with animal rehoming. In case if animal breeding will be carried out by special breeding nurseries or licensed individuals, animal adoption from shelters will become more popular and more affordable in comparison with the purchase of pedigree animals.

### *Prohibition of euthanasia of healthy animals*

These measures shall be introduced in an integrated manner, because application of only one solution will not lead to a complete resolution of the problem of a large number of homeless animals. However, in addition to regulating their number, animals should be treated properly, regardless of whether they have a home and owner. In particular, one of the conditions of observance of the principle of

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<sup>50</sup> Analysis of draft laws in the field of the treatment of homeless animals, EPL, <https://bit.ly/2uBR7C4>

<sup>51</sup> Analysis of draft laws in the field of the treatment of homeless animals, EPL, <https://bit.ly/2uya6gl>

<sup>52</sup> International online database of the identified animals, <https://animal-id.info/>

protection of animals from cruelty is the prohibition of killing of completely healthy animals, including newborn animals. In addition, it should be understood that the purpose of euthanasia is to stop the suffering of animals that are incurably diseased, crippled, and whose killing is more humane than life in torment. Therefore, euthanasia cannot be applied to animals that are healthy, even if they could be in a potential danger because of being on the street. However, such animals can still be rehomed, depriving them of their lives is cruelty to animals.

In addition, at the legislative level, it is necessary to clearly identify the list of measures allowed to apply to kill animals. In particular, only those that lead to a painless death should be allowed.

Euthanasia of animals through poisoning, shooting, injections causing apnoea, internal bleedings, should be prohibited.

#### *Formation of a responsible and humane attitude towards animals*

Not all problems present in the field of treatment of animals, can be settled through legislation. Thus, the formation of a humane attitude towards animals and the prevention of cruel treatment of homeless animals take time. Animals are not evil and aggressive from birth, they are changed by the world around, they are adapting to survival in it. And it is a man who decides if they will face cruelty, hunger, diseases, free ranging or become part of the family.

Of course, one can wait until the government will take educational measures to raise people's awareness. However, the humane attitude towards animals depends not only on the government actions, but also on the responsibility of each of us. At the same time, this responsibility applies not only to owners who must control the crop, register, neuter their animals. Everyone can contribute to solving the problems related to homeless animals through volunteering, donations to shelters and animal neutering etc.

In many countries, homeless animals are next to none on the streets, and their number is small. This is due to the fact that these countries apply measures that prevent the emergence of new homeless animals and allow them to be reduced by humane methods. Ukraine also has an extensive experience in solving the problems related to the large number of homeless animals on the streets. In addition, today, more and more cities are beginning to introduce registration and neutering of animals themselves or through individual organizations. However, the measures we take are not sufficient and the evidence is that the number of homeless animals that are on the streets remains high. Leaving this problem unresolved, Ukraine accepts cruelty and chooses to kill, not to shelter.