



**PET TRADE: THE EUROGROUP FOR ANIMALS LAUNCHES THE NEW CAMPAIGN "PROTECT OUR PETS" AGAINST THE ILLEGAL TRADE OF PET ANIMALS IN EUROPE. SIGN THE PETITION ON LINE ON [WWW.PROTECTOURPETS.EU](http://WWW.PROTECTOURPETS.EU). LAV: EUROPE SHOULD FOLLOW ITALY'S EXAMPLE, THE FIRST COUNTRY TO APPROVE A LAW IN 2010 TO STOP THIS PHENOMENON**

Eurogroup for Animals has launched the campaign "Protect our Pets" against the illegal trade of pet animals. "*Rendiamo l'invisibile visibile*" is the Italian version of the campaign motto *Making the invisible visible* which LAV, the coalition's Italian partner, strongly supports, urging all Italian citizens to sign the petition, on line on [www.protectourpets.eu](http://www.protectourpets.eu), to call on our MPs to take action by approving an identification and registration system of pet animals common to all Member States.

Unfortunately, Italy is a destination country for this illegal trade, with animals coming mainly from Eastern Europe. LAV had first raised the alarm in 2001, followed in 2008 by the campaign "*Rompriamo le scatole ai trafficanti di cuccioli*" (*let's vex pet traffickers*), which led to the approval in 2010 of law 201/2010, the first piece of legislation in Europe to ever criminalise illegal trafficking of pet animals.

This law has made it possible, over the years, to make several arrests and sequestrations. Unfortunately they are still only a drop in the ocean of a multi-million Euros business. A true organised crime organisation on a vast scale that must be eradicated. This can only be achieved through an identification and registration system common to all the Member States of the European Union.

Hundreds of thousands of pet animals (roughly 300,000 according to the official estimates) are marketed illegally every year across Europe with very serious damages to the health and well-being of the animals involved and huge risks for the population.

These baby animals are born in inhumane conditions and are hardly, if at all, socialized. They are crammed into vans and trunks and transported for extremely long distances; all too often they are exposed to the risk of contracting communicable diseases, when they are not already carriers, with serious concerns for the public health.

Oblivious individuals buy these animals, often on line, other times in conniving stores or breeding kennels, at very "competitive" prices compared to market prices. The result? The baby animals die after a few days, or weeks, or get seriously ill and need costly veterinary care. Very frequently, due to the scarce or total lack of socialization, they develop behavioural disorders as they grow which are sometimes even serious and hardly curable.

The petition, addressed to the members of the European Parliament urges to:

- 1) make the introduction or harmonised national systems for the identification and registration of pet animals mandatory in all member states, based on the same system already implemented for horses.
- 2) harmonize requirements for the identification and registration of pet animals across the EU.

**LAV Onlus**  
Viale Regina Margherita 177  
00198 Roma

Tel +39 064461325

Fax +39 064461326

Email [info@lav.it](mailto:info@lav.it)  
Sito [www.lav.it](http://www.lav.it)

La LAV è riconosciuta  
Organizzazione Non Lucrativa  
di Utilità Sociale ed Ente Morale



In addition to asking citizens to sign the petition on [www.protectourpets.eu](http://www.protectourpets.eu), we would like to remind you that nearly two hundred thousand dogs live in dog shelters in Italy and that the number of cats without a family is much higher. We therefore invite all those who truly love animals to adopt not buy their best friend.

**LAV Onlus**

Viale Regina Margherita 177  
00198 Roma

Tel +39 064461325

Fax +39 064461326

Email [info@lav.it](mailto:info@lav.it)

Sito [www.lav.it](http://www.lav.it)

*La LAV è riconosciuta  
Organizzazione Non Lucrativa  
di Utilità Sociale ed Ente Morale*