

E-7899/10EN

Answer given by Mr Dalli
on behalf of the Commission
(29.10.2010)

1. The Commission is not aware of the situation in Italy mentioned by the Honourable Members of the European Parliament.
2. There is no EU harmonised legislation on the welfare of pet animals. This matter falls under the sole responsibility of the Member States.

The European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals¹, prepared under the aegis of the Council of Europe, forbids in particular the cropping of ears, devocalisation and declawing and defanging (Article 10 (1)). According to the Council of Europe website, Italy has signed the Convention in 1987 but did not ratify it. In any case this Convention is not part of EU law and the Commission has therefore no role in implementing the provisions attached to it.

This year, the Belgian Presidency decided to debate with the Member States on the welfare of pet animals. This would be the first time that a Council expert group would envisage a possible harmonisation in this field. The issue of non-curative surgical interventions has been raised in this context at the first expert group meeting of 22 September 2010.

The Commission will continue to listen to the opinions expressed by the Member States and will take them into account in the preparation of its second EU strategy for animal welfare foreseen for December 2011.

¹ The Convention can be consulted at: http://www.coe.int/T/E/Legal_affairs/Legal_co-operation/Biological_safety_use_of_animals/Pet/