



Belgium

Identification and registration

Dogs

Permanent identification of **dogs** is compulsory. Identification must be by microchip and before the age of 8 weeks. Once microchipped, the dog must be registered in the DogID database by a veterinarian.

Cats

Permanent identification of **cats** is compulsory. Identification must be by microchip and before the age of 12 weeks. Once microchipped, the cat must be registered in the CatID database by a veterinarian.

There is one **national database** for dogs (DogID) and one for cats (CatID), both of which are managed by a private company. Both databases are members of the **EU-wide database** EuroPetNet.

Microchipping of dogs and cats is regulated insofar as only veterinarians can perform the insertion.

Regulation of breeding

Dog breeders

In Wallonia, all **dog breeders** are required to be registered and authorised, whereas in Flanders and Brussels only those breeding 3 or more litters per year must register. Requirements for authorisation depend on the region and the authorisation can be withdrawn if the facility no longer meets the requirements.

Cat breeders

All **cat breeders** are required to be registered and authorised. Requirements for authorisation depend on the region and the authorisation can be withdrawn if the facility no longer meets the requirements.

A list of licenced establishments is published online and includes the registration number, the name of the establishment and the address. The inspection services keep the list up to date in a central **database**.

Inspections are the responsibility of the Ministry of the Region and are legally required to take place prior to authorisation and then according to a general programme of inspections or in response to a complaint.

There is a legislative basis for prohibiting breeding of dogs and cats with **genetic conditions** such as inherited diseases or exaggerated conformations, but these lists have not yet been published. There is some regulation of **breeding and keeping** fold-eared and hybrid cat breeds, however legislation differs depending on the region.

There is no compulsory **code of practice** for dog or cat breeders in Belgium.

Sales and advertising

Dog and cat traders

Depending on the region, the minimum age at which a **puppy** can be sold is between 7 and 8 weeks, and for a **kitten** between 7 and 13 weeks.

Sales in **pet shops, markets** and **on the street** are forbidden.

All dog and cat **traders** must be **registered** and authorised. Any sale of a dog or cat must include a warranty which gives the purchaser right of reimbursement in case of mortality due to a number of contagious diseases within an incubation period or in case of some hereditary diseases.

Surgical operations to modify the appearance of dogs and cats or for other non-curative purposes (e.g. tail docking, ear cropping, devocalisation, declawing) are prohibited, with no exemptions.

Only the region of Wallonia has specific regulation of **online advertising** of dogs and cats, where dogs and cats can only be advertised on recognised websites.

Legislation: Identification and registration: Flanders, Brussels, Wallonia; Approval of breeding establishments: Flanders, Brussels, Wallonia; Trade: Flanders, Brussels, Wallonia; Sterilisation of cats.