



Netherlands

Identification and registration

Dogs

Permanent identification of **dogs** is compulsory. This must be done by microchip before 7 weeks of age, or before transfer of ownership, whichever is earliest. The dog must then be **registered** on a database (by 8 weeks of age or within 2 weeks of change of ownership) and issued with a European Pet Passport.

Cats

Permanent identification of **cats** is not compulsory. Some regional municipalities have piloted microchipping and registration of cats, but so far no laws have been introduced. Owners can choose to register their cat on a database.

There are several **approved databases** which all need to transfer their data to **central database** of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Three databases, Stichting Chip, Stichting Nederlandse Databank Gezelschapsdieren, and PetBase, are members of the **EU-wide database** Europetnet.

Microchipping of dogs and cats is regulated insofar as only veterinarians or professional microchippers can perform microchip insertion.

Regulation of breeding

Dog breeders

All **dog breeders** must register, but while both one-time and commercial breeders require a “business number” and must report new litters, only commercial breeders must register their facilities, designate a manager with proof of competence, and show compliance with housing, care and breeding rules.

Cat breeders

All **cat breeders** must register, but while both one-time and commercial breeders require a “business number” and must report new litters, only commercial breeders must register their facilities, designate a manager with proof of competence, and show compliance with housing, care and breeding rules.

There is a **national database** of dog and cat breeders run by the RVO. Any modifications of data must be made within 4 weeks of the change.

Inspections by the Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA), or by the inspection service of the “Dierenbescherming”, mainly target breeders and traders who have sold or are keeping more than 20 dogs and/or cats in a 12-month period. Breeders are not inspected before starting their activities.

Legislation prohibits the breeding of dogs and cats which have **genetic conditions**, including serious hereditary defects and diseases, external characteristics that are harmful to the young, and serious behavioural abnormalities.

There is a compulsory **code of practice** for breeders. This covers the maximum number of litters, only allowing natural reproduction or not harming the parent animal or the young with fertilisation techniques, complying with the rules for housing and care of dogs and cats, including socialisation, daily inspections and record-keeping.

Sales and advertising

Dog and cat traders

The legal minimum age at which a **puppy** or a **kitten** can be sold is 7 weeks.

Dog or cat **traders** must be registered and must hold a certificate of competence.

Dogs and cats can be sold in **pet shops, markets** and **on the street**.

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.

There is no specific regulation of **online advertising** of dogs and cats for sale.