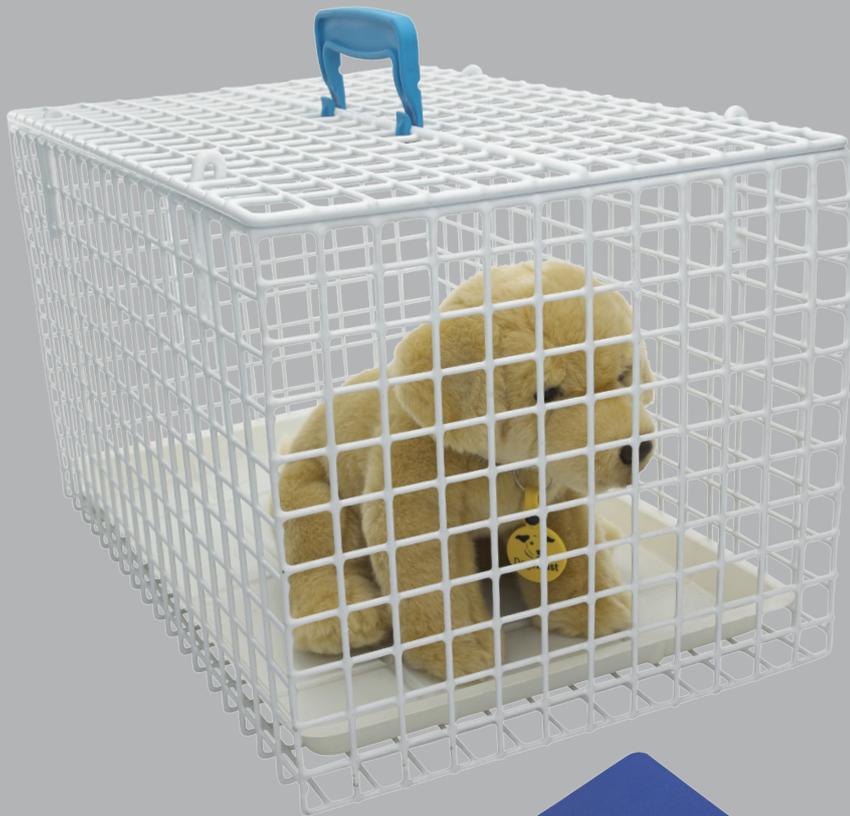


PUPPY SMUGGLING

THE SCANDAL CONTINUES

A follow up investigation into the illegal entry of dogs into Great Britain under the Pet Travel Scheme



FAKE PASSPORT



FAKE MICROCHIP



FAKE VACCINATIONS



FAKE PULSE



ENTRY INTO THE UK



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NAME: MITZI

Dogs Trust imported Mitzi the fake Labrador puppy into the UK multiple times with a fake passport and microchip to highlight how open to abuse the Pet Passport Scheme really is. The full details of Mitzi's travels can be seen on page 19.

FOREWORD

Dogs Trust published its in-depth investigative report, *The Puppy Smuggling Scandal*, in November 2014. The investigation focused on the puppies travelling into Great Britain illegally under the non-commercial Pet Travel Scheme [PETS]. The numbers of animals coming in under PETS from Eastern Europe had increased rapidly since 2012, when changes to the legislation made it possible for people to enter Great Britain with puppies. Previously the minimum age of entry was 10 months.

The Puppy Smuggling Scandal investigation uncovered evidence that underage puppies from Eastern Europe were being trafficked illegally to the UK. Our report revealed that:

- PETS is being used as a cover by commercial dealers from Hungary and Lithuania on a regular basis to illegally import puppies into the UK
- Unscrupulous vets in Eastern Europe are falsifying data on pet passports for PETS, and breeders are supplying young puppies under the legal age they can be imported under PETS on a regular basis to Great Britain
- Ineffective controls at British border ports and little to no sharing of information between key agencies allow this illegal, commercial trade of puppies to enter the country almost unhindered

We presented our report to the Department for the Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), urging them to implement our recommendations without delay. DEFRA officials responded with assurances that they take evidence of the illegal importation of pets very seriously. Despite their assertions, we do not believe enough has been done to implement any of the recommendations outlined in our previous report.

DEFRA presented changes to PETS implemented on 29th December 2014 as a panacea for all the scheme's problems, declaring that these changes will "further strengthen the system across the EU by increasing traceability and making the pet passport harder to forge or tamper with". We do not believe that this has been the case.

Motivated by continued reports of illegal landings and unconvinced by the proclaimed effectiveness of the December changes, we undertook a new investigation from March to June 2015 to see if the situation has changed.



DEFRA asked us to provide them with evidence of this problem this time last year – we gave it to them. We have given them solutions. We have brought together stakeholders. We are working with classified websites to try to stop illegal puppies appearing for sale online. We have targeted consumers with education on how to avoid buying an illegally imported pet. We have worked with over 100 Trading Standards officers, carriers, and APHA officers to provide detailed training on enforcement and promote greater awareness of the issue. DEFRA told us to raise our concerns with the European Commission – we did and were told it was a Member State enforcement issue.

We have sought evidence, again, which shows the 29th of December changes to PETS are not the deterrent they were intended to be. My question to DEFRA, what more do we need to do before action is taken to tackle this ever increasing problem?

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula Boyden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paula Boyden BVetMed MRCVS,
Veterinary Director

Rabies risk as designer dogs flood

By Claire Duffin

THOUSANDS of "designer" puppies are being illegally sent over each year by "unscrupulous" Eastern European dealers in a move which is prompting fears that rabies could return to Britain, according to the Dogs Trust.

An undercover investigation by the charity found that a number of vets in Hungary and Lithuania were prepared to falsify the passports needed to transport the puppies to say they had received rabies vaccinations when they had not.

The trust also filmed a number of breeders who admitted making weekly

French bulldogs, chihuahuas, poodle crosses and pugs among others, they are exploiting legislation designed for the transportation of family pets to bring puppies in on a commercial scale.

Under the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS), relaxed two years ago to meet EU guidelines, up to five dogs per person can be brought in if they have a pet passport.

The animals are often kept in "horrific" conditions in puppy farms before being transported across Europe, sometimes kept in the backs of vans for up to 48 hours, the charity said.

The Dogs Trust said its findings highlighted the ease with which illegal puppy

travellers' welfare and for the control of rabies. Adrian Barber, chief executive of the Dogs Trust, said: "As a nation that loves dogs we know the lengths people will go to in order to get the perfect puppy - but few would expect their young pet to have travelled over 1,250 miles to reach them."

"For fewer would expect their illegally transported puppy to come with a fake passport. Even fewer still would consider potentially lethal disease. No one would believe that this is happening every day with Government knowledge."

Figures from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs show that between 2011 and 2013, the number of dogs entering under the PETS scheme from Lithuania increased by 789 per cent from 239 to 2,102 and from Hungary by

663 per cent from 399 to 3,044. The Trust said these figures did not include dogs smuggled in.

Each passport must show the dog has been microchipped, vaccinated against rabies and tested for tapeworm. For rabies vaccine to be effective, a pup must be at least 12 weeks old. There is then a 21-day quarantine period, during the minimum age a puppy can be brought into Britain, 15 weeks.

One vet, secretly filmed in Hungary said: "The younger the dog, the more attractive it looks, but when the dog is 16, 17 weeks old, it is not so attractive looking. That's when the dog looks ugliest... so, some small correction he made, the dog can be made out to a tiny bit older."

The Dogs Trust said dealers had

SO FAR RABID PUP

Disease-riddled pets smuggled into UK

By RICHARD WHITE

PUPS given as Christmas gifts could have

...were being sold via UK websites by bent breeders in Lithuania and Hungary - now out to cash in on Christmas.

The trust, many under the three-month minimum age to be imported, boast microchips and passports to con buyers.

A six-month probe by charity the Dogs Trust found foreign vets were in on the scam. Four out of five in Lithuania happily falsified papers in Hungary, three approached all age groups. Last year, 8,000 puppies for sale alone, the charity demanded a crack

said diseases like rabies were a "real threat" richard.white@the-sun.co.uk

MORE OF THIS WITH

Euro vets' pup scam

A CHARITY has uncovered "corruption" and "shocking" animal welfare following a probe into the trade of puppies from eastern Europe.

The Dogs Trust has released footage showing vets in Hungary and Lithuania abusing the Pet Travel Scheme by creating false passports and rabies vaccination records to dodge quarantine

DOGS TRUST ACTIONS SINCE THE PUPPY SMUGGLING SCANDAL REPORT WAS LAUNCHED

Briefed a wide range of MPs and MEPs on the issue

Hosted a breakfast briefing in the House of Commons, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders to discuss the problem

Presented our report to Parliament's All-Party Group for Animal Welfare

Called on supporters to help - nearly 6,700 people wrote to their MP urging them to call on the Government to implement our recommendations

Worked with over 100 Trading Standards officers, carriers, and APHA officers to provide detailed training on enforcement and promote greater awareness of the issue

Targeted consumers with educational messaging on how to avoid buying an illegally imported puppy

Presented our report to the European Commission - the Animal Health and Animal Welfare Units within DG SANTE as well as the cabinet of the European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety.

Shared our report with the national government representations of all 28 EU Member States in Brussels.

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News

Corrupt vets are helping to smuggle farm puppies into

TOM BAWDEN
ENVIRONMENT EDITOR

Illegal puppy breeders from eastern Europe are collaborating with corrupt vets to make fake passports and vaccination records to smuggle dogs into Britain, an investigation has revealed.

As the pre-Christmas puppy rush begins, the Dogs Trust charity has exposed a "high level of corruption" and "shocking" animal welfare levels after a six-month undercover investigation into the illicit trading chain from eastern Europe to the UK.

The trust has uncovered evidence that criminal breeders

abusing the Pet Travel Scheme to allow pet dogs to enter Europe are collaborating with corrupt vets to make fake passports and vaccination records to smuggle dogs into Britain, an investigation has revealed.

The quarantine was changed into line with EU, has reduced age at which puppies can enter the country because pet younger, cut animals from now "compete" with UK puppies.



Cramped: Video footage captured by the charity Dogs Trust shows puppies being illegally imported to the UK in a tiny cage

Shoppers are buying puppies online that

Lithuania has soared nearly eight-fold since the quarantine laws were changed, while those from Hungary have jumped by 663 per cent, the trust says.

However, many of those puppies are travelling illegally with falsified documents

on camera creating false pet passports and rabies vaccination records. It also found that some puppies were forced to make journeys of more than 1,000 miles in appalling conditions without suitable treatments or vaccinations, increasing the risk that they will spread diseases such as

buy puppies have been brought into the country illegally, [so] the risk of unknowingly bringing a puppy from eastern Europe with diseases and behavioural problems into the home is very real," said Paula Boyden, director of the Dogs Trust.

Ms Boyden has accused the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of putting its "head in the sand" over the problem.

"Responsibility for stopping the illegal movement of puppies begins in the country where they are born and we are writing to the authorities in Lithuania and Hungary to remind them of their duty to ensure passports are correct and the welfare

been illegally imported and undergone serious health checks. Pet dealers admitted to Dogs Trust investigations on carriers that they make up to £100,000 a year. Popular breeds such as French bulldogs and pugs are regularly advertised for sale online from as little as £200 to buy each dog, making £300 per sale.

After being brought to the UK in appalling and cramped conditions, the dogs are sold out to well-meaning pet owners, who believe they have

Puppy smugglers collaborating with corrupt vets

By Tom Bawden
ENVIRONMENT EDITOR

Illegal puppy breeders from eastern Europe are collaborating with corrupt vets to make fake passports and vaccination records to smuggle dogs into Britain, an investigation has revealed.

As the pre-Christmas puppy rush begins, the Dogs Trust charity has exposed a "high level of corruption" and "shocking" animal welfare levels, the trust has uncovered evidence that criminal breeders, and "transporters" in Hungary and Lithuania are abusing the Pet Travel Scheme, which was amended in 2012 to allow pet dogs, cats and

ferrets to enter Britain without a month quarantine. Puppies smuggled in could have diseases and behavioural problems.

The new law reduced the minimum age at which a foreign puppy can enter the UK to 15 weeks. Animals from overseas can now "compete" more equally with UK puppies, which can be legally sold at eight weeks, and puppy imports have surged.

The number of puppies officially entering the UK from Lithuania has soared nearly eightfold since the quarantine laws were changed, while 663 per cent, the trust says.

A Defra spokesman said: "Responsibility for stopping the illegal movement of puppies begins in the country where they are born, and we are writing to the authorities in Lithuania and Hungary to remind them of their duty to ensure passports are correct, and the welfare of pets intended for sale is safeguarded."

The charity caught vets making false pet passports and vaccination records to smuggle puppies into the UK in appalling conditions.



Cramped: Video footage captured by the charity Dogs Trust shows puppies being illegally imported to the UK in a tiny cage

faces flood of illegal puppies

to Britain, where the pet sell for up to £750.

Paula Boyden, of the Dogs Trust, said: "The implications of the smuggling trade go beyond the welfare for dogs, it affects unsuspecting members of the public looking for puppies and the animal welfare charities who pick up the pieces."

id cages in Eastern puppies on the way Christmas present



Cramped: Video footage captured by the charity Dogs Trust shows puppies being illegally imported to the UK in a tiny cage

increased by 789 per cent between 2011 and 2013, while from Hungary are bought as gifts.

The risk of unknowingly bringing a puppy from eastern Europe with diseases and behavioural problems into the home is very real, she said.

She expects if the authorities identify a pet as having been imported illegally, it is the pet owners - not the dealers who are forced to pay vet fees and quarantine charges.

DEFRA AND EUROPEAN COMMISSION PROGRESS SINCE THE PUPPY SMUGGLING SCANDAL REPORT WAS LAUNCHED



THE PUPPY SMUGGLING SCANDAL

An investigation into the illegal entry of dogs
into Great Britain under the Pet Travel Scheme

IGNORED





We take evidence of the illegal importation of pets very seriously. The action we are taking to tackle this trade is focused on three areas.

Firstly, responsibility for stopping the illegal movement of puppies begins in the country where they are born, and we will continue to raise instances of abuse of the pet travel scheme with the relevant countries.

Secondly, we are maintaining effective border controls. The UK carries out more checks on pets at the border than most other EU Member States and stringent penalties are in place where people are found to be breaking the rules.

Thirdly, the illegal trade is driven by demand for cheap, pedigree puppies and we have published guidance on the steps pet owners can take to avoid buying an illegally imported pet. <https://www.gov.uk/buying-a-cat-or-dog>

Recent changes to the EU pet travel scheme introduced measures designed to improve the security of the regime and the traceability of the pet passport. A new minimum age of 12 weeks for rabies vaccination has also been introduced, which means that pet animals from EU countries must be at least 15 weeks old to enter the UK.

George Eustice
Minister of State at DEFRA



THE UK DEMAND FOR PUPPIES

THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY
9 MILLION
DOGS IN THE UK



THIS MEANS AN ESTIMATED
900,000
DOGS ARE BOUGHT EACH YEAR
[BASED ON AN AVERAGE LIFESPAN OF 10 YEARS]



THE KENNEL CLUB
REGISTER APPROX.
223,000



RESCUE ORGS
REHOME APPROX.
250,000



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our second investigation reveals how PETS is still being used as a cover by commercial dealers in Lithuania on a regular basis to illegally import puppies into Great Britain. It is clear that last year's investigation did have an impact in Lithuania, with some vets and breeders now refusing to issue false passports – however the issuing of false passports for underage dogs is still widespread. We entered a new country – Romania – this year, and found that, like Lithuania and Hungary, unscrupulous breeders, dealers, and vets are regularly exploiting PETS loopholes to illegally import puppies into Great Britain for commercial purposes.

It is clear that the 29th December changes to PETS are not having the desired effect of curbing this illegal trade. Vets are continuing to supply fraudulent passports, and are willing to go to the extra lengths required by the amended scheme for financial reward. With no physical borders in the continental EU, dealers do not face passport control until they reach Great Britain, and here, this report unveils, adequate enforcement is still sorely lacking.

As highlighted in our previous report, Dogs Trust does not believe that the carriers (ferry companies and Eurotunnel) should be the chief enforcers of PETS. However, this continues to be the case, and our new investigation reveals the completely inadequate nature of the checks that DEFRA requires the carriers to carry out on dogs entering Great Britain. There is no obligation for the carriers to do a sight check of the animals being imported. In current practice, carriers simply ask to see the pet passport, and the transporters of the dog scan it themselves – not necessarily in sight of the carrier, who merely checks to see that the microchip number which appears on the scanner matches that on the passport. Unscrupulous dealers can simply attach a microchip to the puppy's collar, scan it out of sight of the carrier, and then bin the chip as soon as they enter the country. The puppy can then be implanted with a UK microchip, all traces of its origins hidden from the buyer.

In July 2015, Dogs Trust took in a number of illegally imported puppies to two of our rehoming centres. Many of these puppies had entered the UK without a microchip, meaning that their country of origin could not be identified. We suspect that the intention of the dealers involved was to microchip the puppies with UK chips and advertise them as British bred to unsuspecting consumers. The puppies will be rehomed through Dogs Trust, but these lucky ones represent the mere tip of the iceberg of this illegal trade. What becomes of the many more that travel undetected each year?

Shockingly, our investigators successfully smuggled a fake dog through British ports three times. Our fake dog, Mitzi, had a microchip, a passport – but no pulse. Yet in three out of four attempts, Mitzi freely passed through borders without any enforcer identifying “her” as fake. The fourth attempt was only thwarted due to a malfunctioning microchip scanner, which prompted the carrier operative to try to scan Mitzi himself.

Although slightly ridiculous, this fake dog test unveils a much darker reality. In the absence of any visual check, unethical dealers can smuggle underage, sickly, or even undocumented puppies into Great Britain. They must simply bear the minimal risk of their vehicle being selected for a random spot check, the purpose of which is usually to find drugs, weapons, or illegal immigrants. When illegal shipments of puppies are discovered, they are seized and quarantined, and a minimal fine is imposed on the transporter. This small penalty is no deterrent to dealers making tens of thousands of pounds per year through the illegal trade. Many will simply dump the puppies at the border rather than pay the quarantine costs, ultimately resulting in the innocent animals being euthanised.

A member of checking staff at one of Britain's main carrier companies recently adopted a puppy which had been abandoned at the French border. Discrepancies had been noticed in the pup's documentation and the importer had decided just to dump the puppy at the port and continue on their journey. Taking pity on the tiny puppy, the member of carrier staff brought it home, but it sadly died from parvovirus just a few days later. The member of staff explained that they see similar cases every week.

This report also confirms what we already knew – puppies are being bred in horrendous conditions, transported over thousands of miles for days with little food, sometimes dying before they even reach Great Britain. When they reach our shores, some dealers are dumping their original documentation and advertising them on classified websites with no reference to their Eastern European origins. It is only later, when unsuspecting owners present their sickly, poorly socialised puppy to a UK vet and a foreign microchip is found, that they realise they have been unwittingly sold an illegal import.

Since we went public with our 2014 findings, Dogs Trust has heard from distraught members of the public with concerns that they have unwittingly bought a puppy that has been smuggled into Great Britain, with no clue what to do, and are being passed from agency to agency. Dogs Trust chairs the Pet Advertising Advisory Group and we have developed a set of Government-endorsed minimum standards, asking the UK's leading classified websites to comply with them. One of these minimum standards stresses the need for websites to display advice on many aspects of pet ownership, including warning messages about suspected illegal imports. What has become clear through moderating the websites, however, is that adverts for potential illegal imports are becoming increasingly difficult to spot. Dealers are now clearly aware of the terminology they need to use to avoid suspicion, and adverts are therefore slipping through the net. DEFRA has published guidance on the steps pet owners can take to avoid buying an illegally imported pet, which is a positive step towards educating consumers about this important issue. However, this advice alone will not combat the problem so long as the unethical dealers remain one step ahead of the buyers. It is clear, therefore, that action is needed at the ports before the puppies reach the advertisement stage of the chain and the purchaser ultimately pays the price for this illegal activity.

With a case of rabies recently reported in a dog in France illegally taken to Algeria and back with its owner, the risk to the UK of this and other zoonotic diseases such as the *Echinococcus multilocularis* tapeworm grows ever stronger. How long will DEFRA and the European Commission fail to tackle the public health risk, animal welfare abuse, and consumer protection scandal that the myriad failings of PETS continue to impose on puppies and people across the UK?

“...puppies are being bred in horrendous conditions, transported over thousands of miles for days with little food, sometimes dying before they even reach Great Britain.”

¹<https://www.gov.uk/buying-a-cat-or-dog>

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS IN THE REPORT

- Ineffective border controls and enforcement of PETS at British ports, with no requirement on enforcers to carry out even a basic sight check on the animal being imported
- Breeders and dealers from Lithuania and Romania using the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) for the commercial importation of puppies to Great Britain, despite the recent introduction of changes designed to strengthen the scheme
- Breeders and dealers from Lithuania and Romania supplying young puppies under 12 weeks of age – the legal age at which puppies can be vaccinated against rabies – with dates of birth simply being faked on pet passports
- Vets in Lithuania and Romania falsifying data on pet passports for PETS. The changes to PETS introduced on 29th December were intended to prevent these fraudulent actions
- Puppies bred in horrendous conditions in Eastern Europe
- Puppies from Eastern Europe advertised online with no reference to their countries of origin



SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIONS FROM THE ON-THE-GROUND INVESTIGATION WORK

- Successfully smuggled a fake dog without a visual check at British borders in three out of four attempts
- Filmed three breeders in Lithuania, all of whom sold us puppies under the age of 12 weeks and arranged for passports to be issued via their own vet contacts
- Obtained eight passports from seven vets in Lithuania who falsified data on the passports in order to puppies under the age of 15 weeks to travel to Great Britain
- Filmed a vet in Lithuania who suggested giving a sedative to a puppy before travelling, implying that this is a way to smuggle a puppy through border controls unnoticed
- Filmed seven vets in Romania, two of whom stated that they could falsify passport information for us (including one for a nine week old puppy)
- Filmed five breeders in Romania who had sold puppies to the UK in the past, all of whom said they could arrange fake passports for underage dogs
- Contacted one further breeder in Romania by phone who said he could arrange passports for eight week old puppies
- Visited nine sellers/breeders from Lithuania, Hungary and the Czech Republic selling puppies (via advertisement on UK classified websites) that had recently come over from Eastern Europe under PETS to be sold in the UK



THE EFFECTS OF THE CHANGES TO THE PET TRAVEL SCHEME

A number of changes to PETS came into force on 29th December 2014 – a clear acknowledgement that there was a problem with the original scheme. These changes were heralded by DEFRA as a solution to the issues highlighted in our first report. We, however, had concerns that the changes would not have a significant impact, and the findings of our second investigation have proven us correct.

The key 29th December changes intended to act as a deterrent to illegal activity are as follows:

- A new minimum age of 12 weeks before a pet can be vaccinated against rabies
- New pet passports which include laminated strips and a requirement for more contact details (name and address) to be provided by the vet issuing the document and certifying the veterinary treatments
- A new requirement for all member states in the EU to carry out non-discriminatory checks
- A tighter definition of non-commercial movement which means that owners unable to accompany their pet on its journey must travel within five days of the pet's movement (or authorise a named person to do so)

We outlined our numerous concerns with these changes in our original report, namely:

- Unscrupulous vets in other countries will continue to issue fraudulent rabies certificates – faking a puppy's age on the document – they may simply charge more
- It is not practical for ferry companies and other carriers to check names and addresses on every passport
- The vast majority of European countries do not have road borders, rendering non-discriminatory checks almost impossible
- A breeder's ability to authorise a named person to travel with the pet or within five days of its movement is a major loophole which actually makes it easier for pets to be transported by unethical dealers

Our second investigation has revealed that the 29th December changes to PETS have not had the Government's desired effects. Unscrupulous vets, aware of the new requirements, are not deterred and are continuing to vaccinate puppies under the age of 12 weeks – faking dates of birth on the documentation – or not vaccinating them at all, and simply issuing fraudulent documents and laminated pet passports which appear compliant.

The complete disregard for the new requirements and continued poor enforcement of PETS at our borders means that the 29th December changes have not had their desired impact. The scheme continues to be abused on a regular basis, and until a critical review is undertaken and changes implemented, Dogs Trust fails to see how this issue will ever be adequately tackled once and for all.

“Our second investigation has revealed that the 29th December changes to PETS have not had the Government's desired impact”

ESTIMATED TURNOVER OF A BREEDER WITH 20 PUGS IN HUNGARY

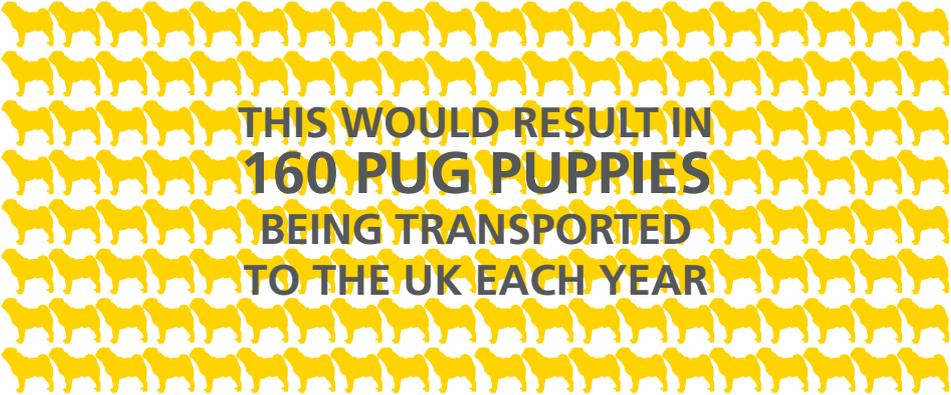
20
BREEDING BITCHES



PRODUCING
TWO LITTERS A YEAR
WITH 4 PUPS IN EACH



THIS WOULD RESULT IN
160 PUG PUPPIES
BEING TRANSPORTED
TO THE UK EACH YEAR



EACH PUP CAN BE
SOLD FOR
£650



THE DEALER COULD BE
TURNING OVER
£104,000 A YEAR



CONCLUSIONS

It is clear from our second in-depth investigation that the changes to PETS implemented on 29th December 2014 have done nothing to stop the abuse of the scheme. The controls at British border ports continue to be ineffective. The fact that our investigators were easily able to enter Great Britain under PETS with a fake dog highlights the inadequacy of the checking requirements imposed on the carriers.

Vets in Eastern Europe are still falsifying data on passports and bypassing the new measures introduced to combat fraud. Vets in Lithuania who refused to issue fraudulent documents did so citing the “scandal” caused by our previous report, not the recent changes to PETS or the illegality of these activities.

Puppies that have been transported under PETS from Eastern Europe into the UK by breeders and dealers are commonly available for sale on classified websites. These puppies are not necessarily advertised as being from Eastern Europe, which is potentially misleading for consumers.

The recommendations made in our first report have not been taken into account, and this murky, illegal trade has been allowed to continue unhindered. DEFRA, APHA, Trading Standards, and the European Commission need to act now to implement our recommendations and tackle this serious problem.

THE COMMERCIAL MOVEMENT OF PET ANIMALS – BALAI DIRECTIVE

The unscrupulous dealers uncovered in our investigation are importing puppies for sale under PETS, which is intended to cover the non-commercial movement of dogs, cats, and ferrets. Anyone importing a puppy under PETS with the intention of selling it is therefore operating illegally.

The commercial movement of pet animals in the European Union is covered by the Balai Directive 92/65/EEC, which imposes more stringent controls on importers. In addition to complying with the PETS regulations:

- All dogs must come from a holding or business registered in the EU country of origin
- Importers must obtain a health certificate (issued by download from the TRACES website) for each group of more than five dogs. Each animal in transit must be listed individually on the health certificate
- A vet authorised by the competent authority in the country of origin must carry out a clinical examination of each animal ensuring that they are fit to travel under Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 within 48 hours before dispatch, and complete the health certificate
- Notice should be given of the shipment to APHA one working day before the move takes place
- Dogs must be held at their point of destination for 48 hours to allow for follow up spot checks by APHA

When unscrupulous dealers can so easily smuggle pets for sale illegally under PETS – with no proper identity checks and minimal paperwork or transparency – it is little wonder that they choose to import puppies using this route. We do fear, however, that as more and more PETS abuses are exposed and dealers grow wary of being apprehended, we may see an increase in the abuse of Balai instead. This is of great concern, as the enforcement of Balai is carried out at the points of origin and destination, not at the port. Dealers willing to risk travelling under Balai with incorrect or fraudulent documentation may ultimately benefit from taking this route. Any crackdown on abuses of PETS should therefore be coupled with more stringent enforcement of Balai to ensure that a decrease in illegal activity through one route does not result in an increase in the other.

“Anyone importing a puppy under PETS with the intention of selling it is operating illegally.”

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Visual checks of all dogs entering British ports under PETS need to be undertaken to ensure that puppies entering this country are healthy, not underage, and matching the information given in their pet passports. Intelligence-led physical checks should also be a requirement where necessary.

Intelligence to be shared between agencies and carriers and acted upon where necessary as part of a nationwide multi-agency strategy to tackle the problem.

Workshop based training for APHA staff, enforcers at the ports, Trading Standards Officers, and Local Authority personnel across the country. Dogs Trust are willing to facilitate this training where needed.

EU legislation to be adopted requiring the compulsory permanent identification and registration of dogs on a database which is linked to an EU database. The new EU Regulation on transmissible animal diseases will provide framework legislation under which this could be introduced.

“Visual checks of all dogs entering British ports under PETS need to be undertaken to ensure that puppies entering this country are healthy, not underage, and matching the information given in their pet passports.”

ORIGINAL URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS²

FOR DEFRA

The Government must develop an immediate action plan to address the abuse of PETS

All puppies under the age of six months must be banned from entering Great Britain under PETS, by extending the post-vaccination wait period from three weeks to three months

The focus on enforcement of PETS must ultimately be shifted from carriers to Government agencies

The creation of a centrally accessible database logging pets' microchip numbers at the point of entry into the UK

Quarantine regulations must be brought in line with the incubation period of rabies – most cases will present within three months

To crackdown on vets who supply fake pet passports through work with the veterinary regulatory authorities in the countries that import puppies into the UK

To actively encourage cross agency working and develop an intelligence system to record and share data in respect of illegally traded commercial animal consignments

Carriers to have 24/7 access to APHA or Trading Standards officials

The introduction of a punitive fixed penalty charge for those caught illegally importing dogs

FOR APHA

APHA must target potentially illegal commercial puppy importers through a rigorous programme of vehicle spot checks and have an on-call vet available to respond to queries from the carriers

FOR TRADING STANDARDS

Trading Standards Authorities must ensure that they operate an out-of-hours service

FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The European Commission's Food and Veterinary Office's inspection programme should include checking compliance with EU Regulation No 576/2013 on the non-commercial movement of pet animals

² For a detailed list of recommendations from the original Dogs Trust report, see *The Puppy Smuggling Scandal* (2014), [https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/press-materials/dt_puppy_smuggling_report_v12_web\(1\).pdf](https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/press-materials/dt_puppy_smuggling_report_v12_web(1).pdf)

KEY CASE STUDIES

LITHUANIA

Lithuanian Case Study A – Vet

When our last puppy smuggling report launched DEFRA notified the relevant authorities in the country, and the vets involved had their licences revoked.

We decided to revisit one of the vets from the original investigation whose licence to issue pet passports had been suspended, and this suspension was still in place on the date of our visit. The vet administered the rabies vaccine and microchipped the puppy. We then returned and were given a passport, albeit in a different vet's name, and the vet in question altered the dates so that we could import our puppy.

Although suspended, this vet was still falsifying passports.



Lithuanian Case Study B – Vet

One of our main concerns with the illegal importation of puppies into Great Britain is the arduous journeys the puppies have to go through before they reach the British border. This was highlighted by one of the vets we visited who suggested that puppies could be sedated to cross the border to avoid raising suspicion. This vet also gave us the rabies vaccine to administer once the puppy was in the UK, and therefore the puppy had no immunisation at all.

Investigator "But vets do agree to make puppies older?"
Vet "There is no other option for us nowadays. If you want to take a puppy to England, it must have a rabies vaccine... or you can give it some sedatives and hide the puppy somewhere."

Investigator "And secretly cross the border?"

Vet "Yes, sedate a puppy and hide it"

Investigator "Do people do this?"

Vet "Yes, you know, there are many ways to smuggle a puppy. People are very creative."



Lithuanian Case Study C – Breeder

We have known for years that the illegal importation of puppies into Great Britain is a major issue. Although we can't begin to fathom the numbers of pups being illegally smuggled, we spoke to breeders who have been doing this for years. One breeder we investigated was selling Russian Toy Terriers to the UK market. He told us he has a lot of buyers in the UK, and has been selling puppies there for many years. He arranged for a pet passport to be given to us and altered the dates by four weeks so we could bring the puppy straight back to the UK. We were told that the puppy was pedigree, however after having him in our care for four weeks it became clear that the puppy was a crossbreed. We double checked this with industry experts and they confirmed that the puppy was indeed a crossbreed. This highlights that UK consumers are being duped into buying puppies with fraudulent paperwork and also fraudulent pedigree certificates.



ROMANIA

Romanian Case Study A – Vet

We visited a senior vet who confirmed that he could issue four passports to us for our fictitious 11 week old pups, proving that obtaining multiple fake passports for underage puppies was not an issue for this vet. He did say that if the pups were too young for the vaccine to be effective, we could get them done in the UK; and to stay under the radar while transporting the puppies, it's best not to have any paperwork at all.

We wanted to see if he would do the same for an even younger puppy, so went back and said we now had a nine week old pup as the original was not in good health. He said that he would be happy to give this underage puppy the rabies vaccine, and added that before the law change they used to administer the vaccine at eight-nine weeks so it would be fine. We were issued with falsified passports.



Romanian Case Study B - Breeder

We visited a breeder who was selling multiple breeds, such as Yorkshire Terriers, Chihuahuas, and French Bulldogs. They were four weeks old at the time we visited, and we were told we could take them at six weeks, well before a puppy should be leaving its mum. The puppies were kept in barren faeces-ridden cages, with little stimulation and the puppies' mums were nowhere to be seen. The breeder was prepared to sell us the puppies under the legal age and falsify the passports.

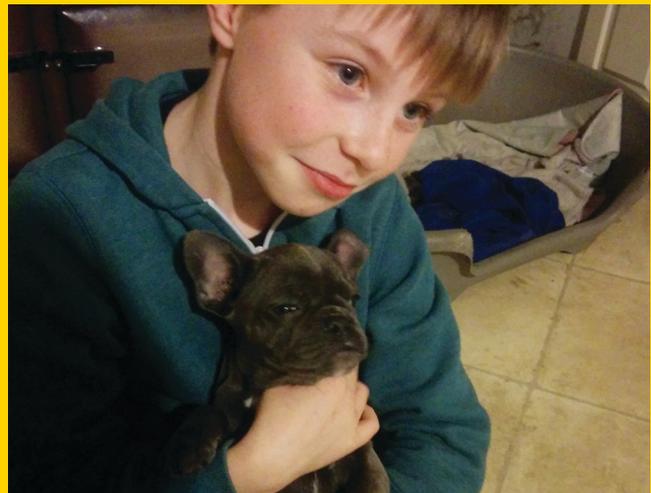


DUPED UK BUYER

An unsuspecting UK buyer responded to an advert online for a French Bulldog puppy from what she thought was a reputable breeder. She didn't choose a 'cheaper' puppy and paid £2,000 for her new 'UK bred' French Bulldog. To be sure that a consumer buys a healthy and socialised puppy, we advise that shoppers always ask to see the litter with its mother, and that's just what she did. However, breeders are wise to this, and this particular one suspiciously said that the puppy's mother had died during the Caesarean to deliver the pups.

Unfortunately the puppy quickly developed pneumonia once she had bought him and had to be rushed to the vet. Treatment for this cost a further £600. The vet carried out a routine scan of the puppy and found that his microchip was registered to a puppy that had entered the country last year from Hungary. This suggested that the puppy could have been illegally imported into the UK with a microchip that had been reused. As a result the puppy had to be seized by Trading Standards and taken into quarantine for five weeks.

Understandably, the whole family was distraught. Not only did they have to leave their puppy for five weeks but they also got landed with extensive quarantine kennel fees. Trading Standards have since seized the puppy's litter mates, all of whom were illegally smuggled into Great Britain from Hungary.



"...the whole family was distraught. Not only did they have to leave their puppy for five weeks but they also got landed with extensive quarantine kennel fees."

MITZI

The fake dog we 'smuggled' into the UK

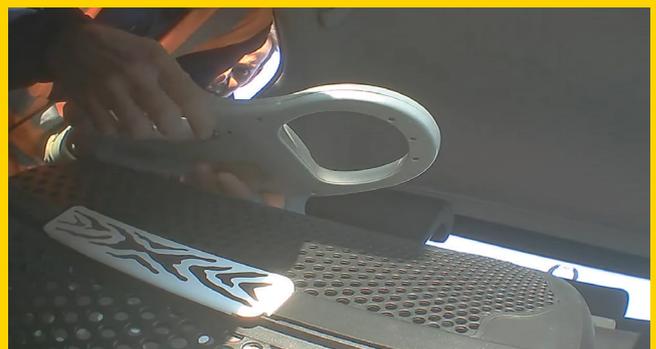
In our 2014 investigation, we highlighted the ineffective controls at our UK borders which were aiding the illegal commercial trade of importing puppies into the UK for sale.

There is no obligation for carriers to do a sight check of the animals being imported. Dogs Trust wanted to demonstrate the inadequacy of this, and thus undertook an investigation to see if we could transport a fake dog, named Mitzi, into Great Britain via both sea and train.

Using a microchip and pet passport we brought Mitzi into Great Britain multiple times via various ferry routes and also Eurotunnel. We used both a reputable and well known animal transport company, and made the attempts alone.

We 'illegally imported' Mitzi into Great Britain four times and three out of the four attempts were successful. At no point did anyone notice that Mitzi was a fake dog. Staff never looked inside her carry cage to check and she was waved through border control. This is because owners are handed the scanner themselves to scan their pet. Carrier personnel merely check that the microchip number matches up with the passport. Our microchip was sellotaped to the inside of the pet carrier, not actually on Mitzi.

The only reason the fourth attempt was stopped was because the microchip scanner malfunctioned, and therefore the carrier personnel had to come to the car and scan Mitzi.





APPENDICES



Findings from Dogs Trust Investigation into the Pet Passport Scheme in Lithuania

Vet Visits

Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 1
Date of visit:	17/03/2015
Actual DOB of Puppy:	4/01/2015
DOB put on passport:	10/12/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>Lithuanian Vet 1 did not administer a rabies vaccine, but instead gave us a phial of the vaccine to give to the puppy once it was in the UK.</p> <p>The vet also offered to give a sedative injection to the pup before travelling, to ensure that it would be asleep when crossing the border. They suggested that this is a way to smuggle a puppy through border controls.</p>
Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 2
Date of visit:	07/04/2015 18/04/2015
Actual DOB of Puppy:	19/01/2015
DOB put on passport:	01/01/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>The vaccine was administered on 18/04/2015, but backdated on the passport to 02/04/2015. The vet agreed to alter the dates for two weeks as in their opinion it "would be reasonable", but not more, as other colleagues had lost their licence.</p> <p>We were told that the puppy would be three months old on 19/04/2015. They microchipped the puppy and said that they would put a microchip date of 01/04/2015 and a rabies vaccination date of 02/04/2015 into the database.</p> <p>On 18/04/15 (at the vet's request) we picked up the passport. They vaccinated the puppy and gave us a completed passport.</p> <p>They asked when we are thinking of crossing the border to the UK to which we replied 23/04/2015. They then put an anti-echinococcus treatment stamp for 22/04/2015 in the passport despite not giving the treatment.</p> <p>In addition, the vet stated on the passport that they had carried out a clinical examination of the puppy on 22/04/2015 and it was fit to travel.</p>
Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 3
Date of visit:	26/03/2015
Actual DOB of Puppy:	27/01/2015
DOB put on passport:	15/12/2014
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>The vet dated the rabies vaccine 18/03/2015, for travel on 01/04/2015</p> <p>The vet filled in the passport to imply that the puppy was ready for travel. They did not, however, administer any anti-echinococcus treatment.</p> <p>The vet also left the date and timings of the clinical examination and anti-echinococcus treatment blank, advising us to fill in these dates on the passport when we wanted to leave the country.</p>

Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 4
Date of visit:	14/03/2015 (NB – Passport picked up by Breeder)
Actual DOB of Puppy:	03/01/2015
DOB put on passport:	06/12/15
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>The vet gave the vaccination on 14/03/2015 for travel on 26/03/2015. The rabies sticker was not laminated.</p> <p>The vet filled in the passport so the puppy was ready for travel. However they did not administer any anti-echinococcus treatment.</p> <p>The breeder picked up the passport from the vet themselves, stating that the vet did not want to give the passports directly to strangers. We were told to stay in nearby shops and car parks whilst the breeders obtained the passport.</p>

Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 5
Date of visit:	12/05/2015
Actual DOB of Puppy:	22/02/2015
DOB put on passport:	22/01/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>The vet backdated the rabies vaccine to state that it was administered on 20/4/2015. In reality it was given on 12/5/2015 – just one day before travel to the UK.</p> <p>The vet had filled in the passport to imply that the puppy was ready for travel. They did not, however, administer any anti-echinococcus treatment.</p> <p>The breeder picked up the passport from the vet themselves, stating that the vet did not want to give the passports directly to strangers. We were told to stay in nearby shops and car parks whilst the breeders obtained the passport.</p>

Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 6
Date of visit:	08/05/2015 12/05/2015
Actual DOB of Puppy:	24/02/2015
DOB put on passport:	12/02/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>The rabies vaccine was given on 12/02/15, but written down as 11/05/2015 on the passport. The rabies sticker was not laminated.</p> <p>The vet didn't put an anti-echinococcus treatment sticker in the passport, instead asking us to come back two days before travelling, without the puppy, at which point the vet would write the details in the passport.</p>



Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 7
Date of visit:	11/05/2015
Actual DOB of Puppy:	19/02/2015
DOB put on passport:	10/02/2015

Key Facts from Meeting: The rabies vaccine was given on 11/05/2015 for travel on 02/06/2015.

The vet agreed to alter the birth date of the puppy to make it older. We did, however, have to wait 21 days after the vaccination before travelling.

They issued the passport and also wrote down the date of anti-echinococcus treatment in advance.

They gave medicine for ticks and worms, but advised not to give it before leaving in case the puppy has worms, as then the puppy could have diarrhoea and we would possibly be stopped at the border.

Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 8
Date of visit:	13/05/15 01/06/15
Actual DOB of Puppy:	25/02/15
DOB put on passport:	13/02/15

Key Facts from Meeting: The rabies vaccine was given on 13/05/2015. This was handwritten in to the passport rather than on a sticker, and therefore not laminated.

During our original investigation, this vet issued us two passports for dogs that did not exist. As a result, the state veterinary service suspended authorisation for their licence to issue pet passports. This suspension is currently in place. Despite this, the vet administered the rabies vaccine and microchipped the puppy, but asked us to come back to pick up a passport (without a puppy) at the end of the 21 day term, stating that at that moment they don't have spare blank passports.

When our investigators returned to pick up the passport, they had an empty passport stamped and signed by another vet and they filled it in, altering dates, in our presence. They also stamped and signed anti-echinococcus treatment without seeing the puppy.

Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 9
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Key Facts from Meeting: We visited this vet without a puppy. We told them that we were going to buy one soon and would like to know what we needed to take the puppy to the UK. We said that the puppy was two months old.

The vet explained official procedure and official timings for vet procedures. We expressed concerns that this might take too long, and they asked when we would like to travel with the pup.

We explained that we would like to leave for the UK as soon as possible, and asked if there was anything we could do. They said to buy the puppy first and come back to them, because there was a possibility they could "do something".

Vet:	Lithuanian Vet 10
Key Facts from Meeting:	We visited this vet without the puppy, and were asked to come back the next day with a puppy so that they could see it. They said that if it looked old enough they would alter the dates on the passport.

Vet:	Lithuanian Vets 11-17
Key Facts from Meeting:	This vet was not prepared to falsify passports.

Meetings with Breeders

Breeder:	Lithuanian Breeder 1
Date of visit:	11/03/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	This breeder is advertising popular breeds for sale on the internet and organises documents for puppies to travel to the UK by request. On the day of the meeting we bought a female Pug with a Lithuanian passport, which stated that the puppy was born 03/01/2015. The pup's name and address appeared on the owner's page of the passport. The breeder agreed to help organise a blue EU passport. The breeder didn't want us to go to their vet and mentioned that the vet wouldn't trust 'strangers'.

On 14/03/2015 the breeder asked to meet us not far from the vet clinic with the puppy so the breeder could take it to the vet for its rabies vaccination and microchip. The breeder didn't want us to go to the vet and asked us to wait at the shop nearby. The breeder returned with the microchipped puppy and said that it was vaccinated against rabies. The vet, however, did not have a passport to give to us on that day. It would be ready on 23/03/2015 and we would need to meet them and pick it up. We were told that the passport/microchip would be in the breeder's name and once we were back in the UK we would have to change the microchip details to our name. From 23/03/2015, we would have five days to enter the UK. The breeder advised us not to go to a vet in the UK for at least a month as the vets in the UK would be able to identify that the dogs were under age and not four months old as stated on the passport.

Breeder:	Lithuanian Breeder 2
Date of visit:	18/03/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	This breeder was advertising popular breeds for sale and offering males and females for breeding. On the day of the meeting we purchased a Chihuahua puppy. They stated that the puppy would be three months old on 27/03/2015. Initially they did not want to help with a vet, telling us that they always do everything according to the regulations. However, when we said we were going to take the puppy by car, they said that they did know a vet who could help. They stated that every second puppy from their premises goes abroad for sale in the UK. They advised us not to write down the breed of the puppy, but state that it is a cross breed as it was easier to get across the border controls. They stated that they had a vet, who used to help them a lot, but now, after the scandal caused by the original Dogs Trust report, this vet has had their licence suspended for issuing passports. They called another local vet and asked by how many days they could alter dates in the passport for us. During the conversation they asked if they could alter the birth dates by a week and the vet agreed to do so. Then they asked us to wait somewhere and come back in an hour to pick up the puppy. The puppy was vaccinated and microchipped on the same day and we were told that the vet would come to Kaunas the following week to give us a passport.

Breeder:	Lithuanian Breeder 3
Date of visit:	03/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>We met Breeder 3 at Kaunas market on 03/05/2015 where they were selling Russian Toy Terriers. We asked about buying puppies for resale in the UK. Breeder 3 stated that they have a lot of buyers who purchase dogs and take them to the UK. Breeder 3 also explained that vets, for a certain fee, can make a puppy older by a month so that they can travel to the UK.</p> <p>We visited the premises on 11/05/15. Breeder 3 said that they had been breeding dogs and cats for many years and had experience with selling puppies and kittens to the UK. Breeder 3 sold their last litter to the UK for €300 each. They sold us a puppy and organised a passport from the vet. Breeder 3 told us that the puppy was born on 22/02/2015. However in the passport, it was stated that the puppy was born on 22/01/2015. The vet didn't want us to go to pick up a passport, so we waited not far from the clinic for the breeder to organise everything.</p> <p>Breeder 3 stated that the puppies' parents were pedigree dogs and gave copies of their pedigree certificate. However after a month of the puppy being in our care we noticed that he was growing bigger than a normal pure bred Toy Terrier. We then had the puppy examined by a Kennel Club Show Judge who told us that the puppy was not pure bred but, in fact, a crossbreed.</p>

Other notable visits

14/03/2015 (Saturday)	Visited a market in Kaunas. No breeders were present
15/03/2015 (Sunday)	Visited a market in Kaunas. There were breeders present selling puppies, but none of them could organise a passport. Our investigators didn't see any breeders or dealers from past filming.

Calls to drivers of puppies to the UK

Lithuanian Driver 1:	We explained that we wanted to take puppies to the UK that had had their birth dates altered so it appeared that the puppies were older than they really are. They said they know 'this thing' and take such puppies to the UK. However they will only take two or three in one go as more puppies can cause problems at the border. They leave Lithuania to go to the UK on Tuesdays.
Lithuanian Driver 2:	We explained that we want to take puppies to UK that have had their birth dates altered so it appeared that the puppies were older than they really are. Lithuanian Driver 2 agreed to take the puppies, but explained that they cannot be very young, as at the border their teeth can be checked and puppies can be stopped for being too young. They have transported puppies for ten years now, leaving every Friday. They stated that at the border, they usually only have to put the scanner into the transportation box to scan the puppies and nobody checks on them.

ROMANIA

Vet Visits

Vet:	Romanian Vet 1
Date of visit:	13/05/2015 15/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>Romanian Vet 1 said that they will issue four passports for us for puppies that we said were going to be 11 weeks the following week. Romanian Vet 1 said that if the puppies do not have a microchip and are not registered in the Government database they can adjust the ages of the puppies and alter the dates they had the rabies vaccination.</p> <p>They agreed that if the puppies are too young we can take them to the UK and get the rabies injection done there. Romanian Vet 1 says it is better if the puppies have no papers and no microchip at all. We phoned the vet back and said that the puppies we mentioned were not in good health so we were not going to buy them. We did, however, have another puppy that was nine weeks old (DOB 12/3/15) and asked if they could do all the papers for it. They confirmed that they could do this.</p> <p>When we returned the next day we obtained a passport and health certificate for our nine week old puppy which was now nearly 16 weeks – new date of birth 27/11/2015. The vet insisted on giving the rabies vaccine to the puppy and entered this into the Government database. When we asked whether it was too early for the puppy to have the rabies vaccination they said that it was okay – before they passed “the new law” which says to give the vaccine when the puppy is three months old, they used to do it around eight-nine weeks of age anyway. They assured us that the vaccine would work. The vet also microchipped the puppy.</p>
Vet:	Romanian Vet 2
Date of visit:	11/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>Romanian Vet 2 said that they could arrange passports for us without any problems. They could issue passports for puppies under 16 weeks providing they knew the breeder and that the puppies were in good health. Romanian Vet Two gave us some phone numbers of breeders that they know and recommend. They said that they are not the cheapest but had good kennels and the vet could vouch for them breeding good quality puppies.</p> <p>Romanian Vet 2 also knew people that transport puppies and could give us contact details for them. If we bought puppies from any of their contacts and they knew that the puppies were healthy, they confirmed that the paperwork could be done, passports issued, and the puppies could travel the next day.</p>
Vet:	Romanian Vet 3 and 4
Date of visit:	11/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	These vets were unclear in their intentions to issue passports.
Vet:	Romanian Vet 6, 7, and 8
Date of visit:	11/05/2015 – 13/05/15
Key Facts from Meeting:	These vets would not alter birth dates on passports.



Breeder Visits

Breeder:	Romanian Breeder 1
Date of visit:	16/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>We met up with Romanian Breeder 1 near to the Hungarian border. They said that they could supply a lot of puppies and already send puppies to the UK, Italy and Germany. They showed us a couple of their kennels. The first kennel had six-eight breeding bitches but no puppies. The other kennel had bigger breeds of dogs (Great Danes, Saint Bernard, etc.).</p> <p>Romanian Breeder 1 dealt mainly with Italy and Tunis, and sold only a few puppies to the UK. They claimed that they could supply as many puppies as we would need. They had contacts all over the place (including Hungary) that are breeding all types of puppies. They said that they could get passports and health certificates for puppies from 11 weeks old, depending on the breed. Romanian Breeder 1 had spoken to the vet and been told that the rabies vaccine could be done early and birth dates of puppies could be altered depending on the breed. Some of the breeds, especially smaller ones, are more difficult because they look too young. They said bigger breeds were easier to falsify documents for. They stated that we would not have to wait the regulation 21 days for the rabies vaccination before taking the animal out of the country, but instead we would have to wait around only 12 days or so.</p>
Breeder:	Romanian Breeder 2
Date of visit:	15/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>Romanian Breeder 2 breeds Yorkshire Terriers, Bichon Malteses, Caucasians, etc. They said that they could get passports and all necessary documents from their vet and the true age of the puppies could be altered so the puppies' ages would be okay for travel. They said that their vet had done this for them before – "this is Romania, we can arrange everything about the paperwork!" We only saw six week old Terriers priced at 250 Euros on the day of our visit.</p>
Breeder:	Romanian Breeder 3
Date of visit:	15/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>Romanian Breeder 3 is a breeder of English and French Bulldogs and has kennels on the third floor of an apartment block!</p> <p>They are a breeder of top quality English and French Bulldogs and take the dogs to shows all over Europe, including Crufts. They told us that all of the puppies are KC registered and come with a pedigree if needed. The prices are high and they demand up to €1000 per puppy.</p> <p>Romanian Breeder 3 said that they could supply us with puppies at ten weeks old with passports and health certificates. They had a vet that could falsify documents and the ages of the puppies. They told us that they would give us two passports for each puppy we buy – one would be the proper one and the other a fake one.</p>

Breeder:	Romanian Breeder 4
Date of visit:	11/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>We telephoned a breeder of Yorkshire Terriers, Chihuahuas, and French Bulldogs.</p> <p>Romanian Breeder 4 had some four week old puppies that we could buy priced at €600. They had spoken with the vet and discussed at what age they could sell us the puppies with passports, agreeing that the puppies could be six-eight weeks old.</p> <p>We then visited Romanian Breeder 4 and saw the kennels and some puppies. The kennels were in the garden and the dogs kept in barren pens which smelled and were very dirty. They had many dogs of various breeds.</p> <p>Romanian Breeder 4 said that they were willing to sell us puppies under the legal age and getting the passports would not be a problem. When we mentioned that we didn't think that was legal, they said that they would not use the regular vet because he "liked to do things by the book", but they would use another vet and there would be no problems.</p> <p>Romanian Breeder 4 said that they had already sold puppies to the UK. The puppies would be wormed and microchipped and have all the necessary documents for travel.</p>
Breeder:	Romanian Breeder 5
Date of visit:	15/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>We visited a breeder who had bred a lot of dogs and had some kennels out of town. Romanian Breeder 5 showed us some ten week old Bichons, assuring us that they could get passports for them in one day. We went with them to see the vet to ask about this but the vet gave us the official story about puppies needing to be 12 weeks old to have the rabies vaccine and then wait three weeks before travel.</p> <p>After seeing the vet the breeder said that they were afraid to talk to strangers about this procedure. They assured us that they could still get the passports. They also said that this vet had done this for them many times in the past.</p>
Breeder:	Romanian Breeder 6
Date of visit:	15/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>We visited a breeder of Shih Tzu and Bichon puppies at their kennels. They had not previously dealt with selling puppies outside of Romania. However, they said that they would ask their vet about obtaining passports for 10-12 week old puppies and let us know.</p> <p>Since the investigation was completed, Romanian Breeder6 has confirmed with us that they have met vets that can arrange passports for underage puppies.</p>
Breeder:	Romanian Breeder 7
Date of phonecall:	11/05/2015
Key Facts from Meeting:	<p>We spoke with another breeder who had three Jack Russell puppies for sale. They had also spoken with a vet and agreed that we could buy the puppies and transport them to the UK at eight weeks old. They said that a vet would issue the passports for us.</p>



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Dogs Trust is the UK's largest dog welfare charity caring for over 17,000 dogs at its network of 20 rehoming centres throughout the UK and one in Ireland. We will never put to sleep a healthy dog. Our mission is to bring about the day when all dogs can enjoy a happy life, free from the threat of unnecessary destruction. Dogs Trust is a registered charity in England [227523], Scotland [SC037843] and Ireland [CHY16218].

Tracks Investigations is an ethical investigation agency supporting the work of conservation and animal protection NGO's and charities worldwide.

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