

Identification, Registration and Traceability of Dogs

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Background

With the introduction of electronic identification – the FECAVA standard and ISO standards 11784 / 11785 in 1996, animal welfare databases in Europe were foreseeing that reuniting lost pets with their owners could be brought a step forward by linking the individual databases through the internet.

Under a very engaged leadership two Belgian veterinarians, Marc Buchet and Michel Schoffeniels, created EuroPetNet (EPN), whose statutes were signed in 2000.

Today EPN has developed into a large association with 48 databases situated in 21 European countries, covering a total number of registered pets exceeding 40 million.

The management of EPN

EPN is a democratically managed association with five elected EPN Board members co-ordinating the daily management with twice yearly EPN General Assembly meetings. All the work within EPN is done by volunteers and is unpaid; the only exception to this is the technical work undertaken by IC Services in Brussels.

How it works

EPN members send the following data on a regular basis:

- microchip number
- last update date in their database
- sex and birth date of the animal
- lost or stolen status

Search process

There are three levels of automatic search:

- Associations' databases: a search in these databases shows where the animal has been registered and the latest updates in that database(s). This last information gives an opportunity to the searcher to focus first on the most recent information. This search is carried out in ALL our members' databases regardless of whether they have a search engine or not.
- Connected associations' live search: this search scans "live" every connected database in addition to the previous search. This search can find data not yet transferred.
- Microchip manufacturers/distributors: our active collaboration with microchip manufacturers and distributors enables our system to find information on where the microchip was distributed at a national/local level. That way, we can find the vet to whom the microchip was distributed and with their help trace the animal's owner.

Futhermore, the EPN is unique as it also offers a "manual" search. Quite often, our members have additional sources of information (e.g. information coming from local distributors, or access to non-members' databases). If the automatic search fails, a targeted communication is sent to the relevant database.

Call Centre

Our multilingual call centre helps national/local associations to resolve language issues and provide information on the different processes we run.

The plans for the future

If you look at the EPN statutes and read the purpose of this association you will see that our remit is animal welfare and reuniting lost pets with their owners – without any costs arising for the owner.

For that reason we constantly work on developing EPN, getting more members and more databases connected.

The more pets that are identified and registered, the more animal welfare we will see within Europe.