

Lessons learned in implementation and enforcement : the Belgian example

Els Vanautryve

FPS Public Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment

Department for Animal Welfare and CITES



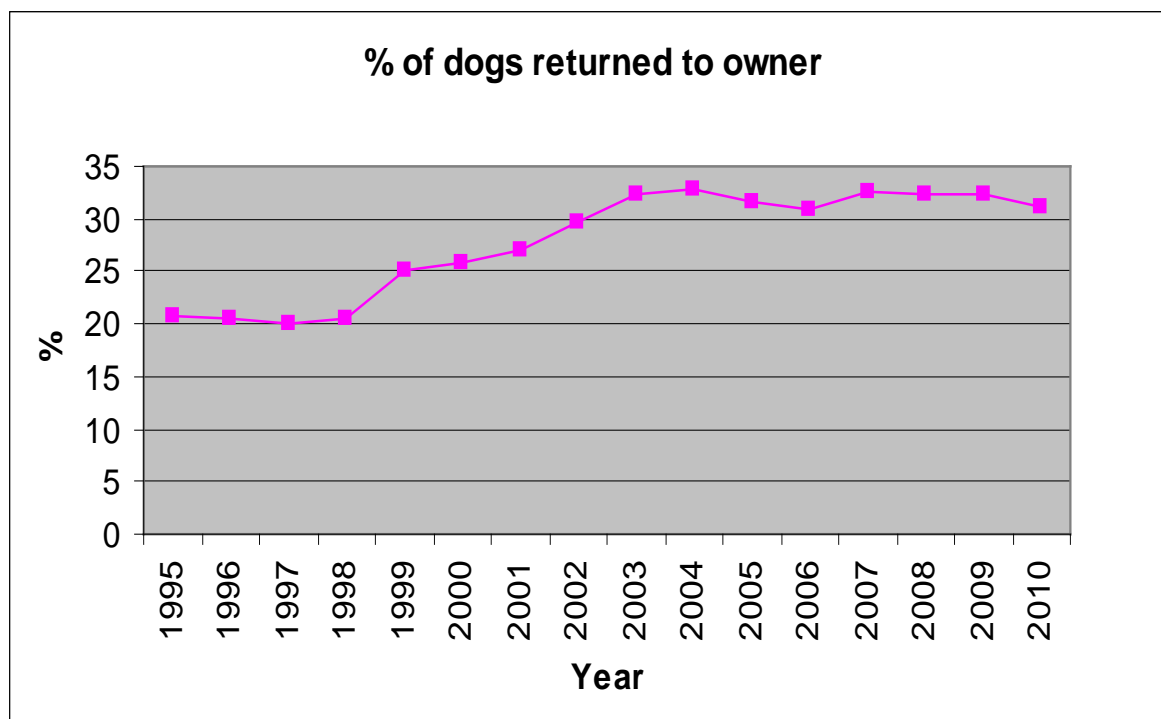
2 Registration of dogs in Belgium

- Mandatory since 1/9/1998
 - reasons?
 - ← ↓ number of dogs euthanized in pet shelters
 - ← ↑ control of the national market
 - when?
 - before change of owner
 - before age of 4 months
 - % of dogs registered?
 - estimation from 50 to 90 %



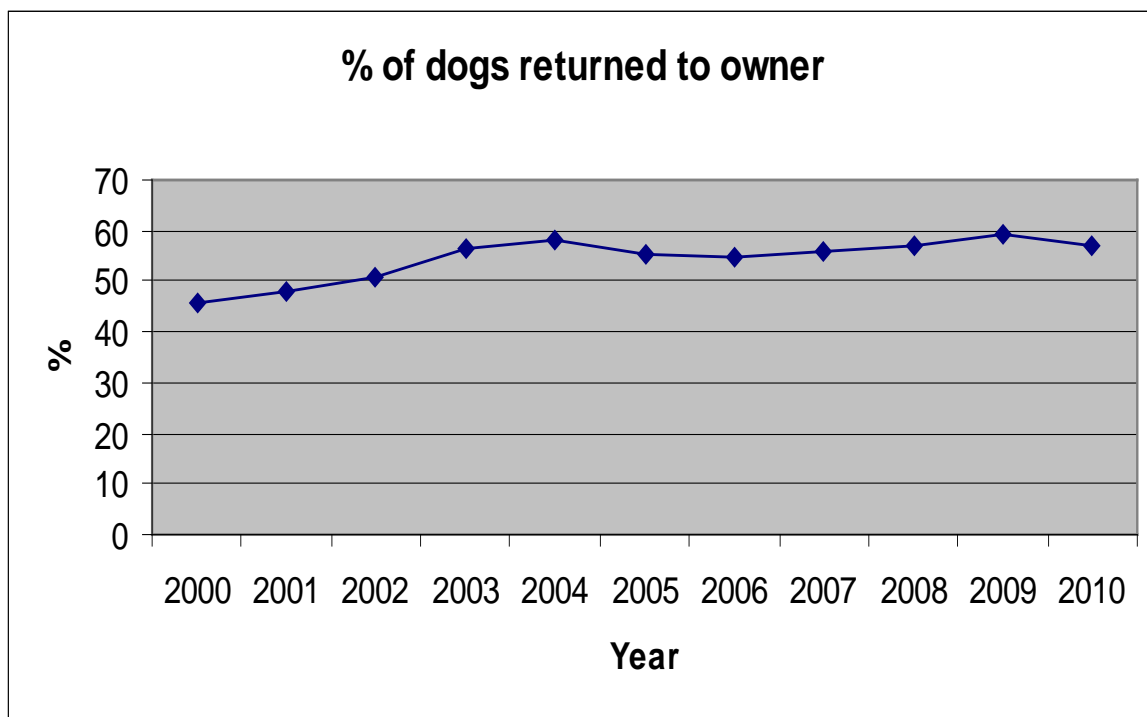
3 Registration - Results

total number of dogs arriving in shelter (stray dogs + brought in by owner)



4 Registration - Results

number of stray dogs arriving in shelter



5

European passport

- 7 june 2004
 - no passport without registration
 - replacement of passport only by central authority
- results
 - ↑ number of registrations
 - 2003 -> 2004 : + 5 %
 - known origin of puppies (consumer protection)



6 European passport

- findings

- thanks to possibility of cross checks with Traces => enhanced control of European pet trade

- reuse of microchips and passports

- shipping of puppies without sanitary documents

- puppies going to another destination than the one indicated on accompanying documentation

- veterinarians often want to change key data (microchip number, birth date, identification date)



7 European passport

- conclusions

- infringements of R998/2003 do exist

- registration is necessary in order to allow for efficient implementation of R998/2003

- practicing veterinarians often underestimate the importance of the European passport and the data recorded herein

=> The situation today implies serious risks regarding public health as well as animal health and welfare



Recommendations

- ensure tracability ("decisive element" in R998/2003 according to the Court of Justice of the EU)
 - registration of all dogs going from one MS to another
 - preferably registration of all dogs
 - consultation of all registration data by competent authorities of MS
 - 1 European database <-> search engine linked to different national databases
 - ban on the systematic replacement of passports
 - raising awareness of veterinarians on the importance of correct implementation of the European passport

