



ABSTRACT

Situation of companion animals in Sweden

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According to a survey done by SCBⁱ for Manimalisⁱⁱ published in 2007 there were 2 457 539 pet animals kept in households in Sweden: 729 000 dogs, 1 256 000 cats and 472 539 other pet animals (rabbits, birds, snakes etc.). 12.8 % of the household keep a dog and 16.8 % keep a cat.

There are no stray dogs in Sweden. A national law requires that all dogs have to be ID-marked and registered in a public record kept at the Swedish Board of Agriculture. The public record has a total of 659 321 dogs and 519 764 dog owners registered.

The Swedish Kennel Club keeps a private record and has a total of 1 098 707 dogs registered.

There is only one dog shelter in Sweden and it is situated in Stockholm. In 2009 they received 421 dogs. 182 got new homes, 12 were put down and 227 were returned to their owners. The number of days for taking care of dogs were 13 049.

The estimated number of stray cats in Sweden is 100 000. There is no obligation for ID-marking the cat and Sweden does not have a public record for the registration of cats. The Swedish Kennel Club keeps a private record which shows that there are 608 792 cats registered. There is also a private record at SVERAKⁱⁱⁱ, and in their records there are 69 229 cats registered. The numbers of cat shelters is unknown. Cat shelters organized under Shelter Association are 27 and if you search on the internet you will find a list of 81 cat shelters.

Legislation

National legislation enforced

Government:

SFS 1988:534 Animal Welfare Act

SFS 1988:359 Animal Welfare Ordinance

SFS 2007:1150 Act on the supervision of dogs and cats

SFS 2007:1240 Regulation on the supervision of dogs

Central Authority:

Swedish Board of Agriculture, (SBA)

Swedish Board of Agriculture regulations and general guidelines (SJVFS 2008:5) on keeping dogs and cats

Swedish Board of Agriculture regulations and general guidelines (SJVFS 2010:2) on transportation of live animals



Animal Welfare Agency regulation (DFS 2004:5) regarding authorization requirement under the Animal Welfare Act 16 §
Swedish Board of Agriculture regulations (SJVFS 2009:85) on surgical procedures and obligations of keepers, and staff of animal health

Swedish Board of Agriculture regulations (SJVFS 2010:8) identification and registration of dogs

Local Authority:

Municipality

Local regulations, example: obligation to keep your dog in leach during some period of the year.

The competent authority for animal welfare control is the County Administration. Before 2009 animal welfare control was the task of municipalities.

23 018 controls were carried out in 2008.

12 731 controls were carried out in 2009.

The decreased numbers of controls was due to the miscalculations of resources needed when the control was changed from municipal to governmental animal welfare control.

Trends and developments

The reasons for getting a pet (dog) have changed in some ways. Some people seem to buy more an accessory than an animal for companion. Like “Paris Hilton” they want a small dog that cannot walk alone but must be carried around wearing clothes and jewels. Other people are the dog owners who keep a dog more like a weapon.

There is an ongoing governmental investigation into welfare legislation designated to place more responsibility on pet owners.

Specific problems of companion animals

The trend of keeping a small dog has resulted in more smuggling of these kinds of dogs into Sweden. This increases the risk of spreading diseases.

Keepers of fighting dogs are often persons who keep dogs for wrong reasons and they are usually dog owners who lack responsibility.

Both groups of dog owners have an impact on breeders. Greater future demand for certain breeds increases the number of unscrupulous breeders.

Stray cats are a major problem in Sweden. Stray cats engage a lot of people and the problems will not be solved until we have the same legislation on identification and registration for cats as we have for dogs.

Wish list

Enough resources for the County Administration in order to:

- employ more Animal Welfare officers;
- educate Animal Welfare officers;
- provide legislation on identification and registration of cats.

ⁱ SCB: Statistics Sweden is a government agency that produces statistics.

ⁱⁱ Manimalis: Swedish organization in the network of IAHAIO, International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organization

ⁱⁱⁱ SVERAK: Swedish Federation for purebred cats