



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Luxembourg, 10 June 2013
10581/13
PRESSE 244

Non commercial movements of pets in the EU made easier

The Council adopted today a regulation on the non-commercial movement of pet animals in the EU following a first reading agreement with the European Parliament ([9/13](#)). This means that e.g. dogs, cats and ferrets accompanying their owner will have greater opportunities to travel across EU borders and into the EU.

The position of the European Parliament at first reading was adopted in May this year. The regulation should enter into force once it has been formally signed and published in the Official Journal. It will apply 18 months after its entry into force.

The adoption of this regulation also amends the current directive 92/65 laying down *inter alia* the animal health requirements governing trade in and imports into the EU of dogs, cats and ferrets ([10/13](#)).

The new arrangements build on the success of "pet passports" legislation approved a decade ago (regulation 998/2003).

Cat, dogs and ferret - which are susceptible to rabies - accompanying their owners can move if they are clearly identified, and accompanied by an identification document ("passport") proving they have been vaccinated against rabies.

Under current rules for non-commercial movement, people shall not cross borders with more than five pets (cats, dogs and ferret) at once. This restriction was needed to prevent or discourage any abuse of the rules for commercial purposes. However, under the new regulation owners may be exempted from that limit if they can prove that they are taking part with their animal in a competition, exhibition or sporting event (e.g. with a team of sledge dogs).

The new legislation lays down clearer rules on pet identification, identification documents and anti-rabies vaccination.

P R E S S

Rue de la Loi 175 B - 1048 BRUSSELS Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319 Fax: +32 (0)2 281 8026
press.office@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/Newsroom>

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Identification documents must be issued by an authorised veterinarian and should specify the identification number, anti-rabies vaccination details and other information on the animal's health status.

Since July 2011, electronic tagging has been the only officially approved means of marking pet dogs, cats and ferrets. However, a clearly readable tattoo applied before that date is still considered valid.
