

Cat welfare legislation in Belgium

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In numbers...



Inhabitants: 11.000.000



Dogs : 1.700.000

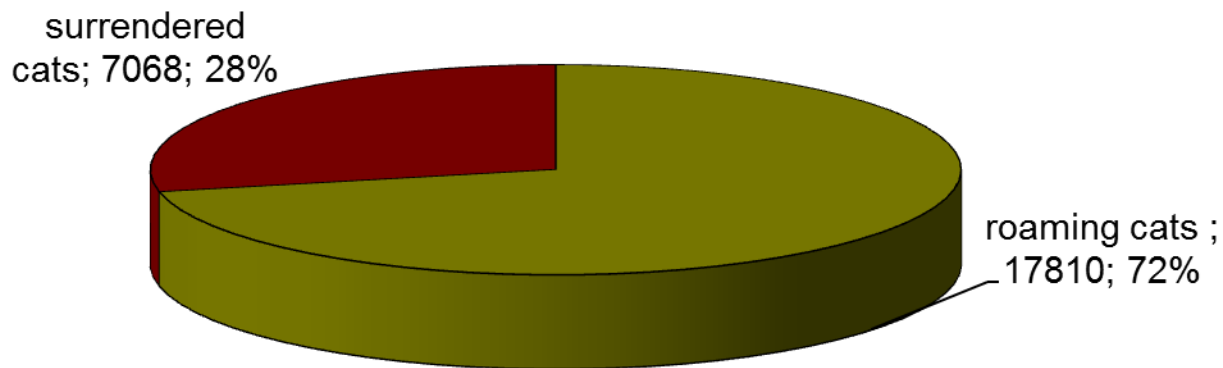


Cats : 1.900.000



3 Belgian shelters: input of cats

IN

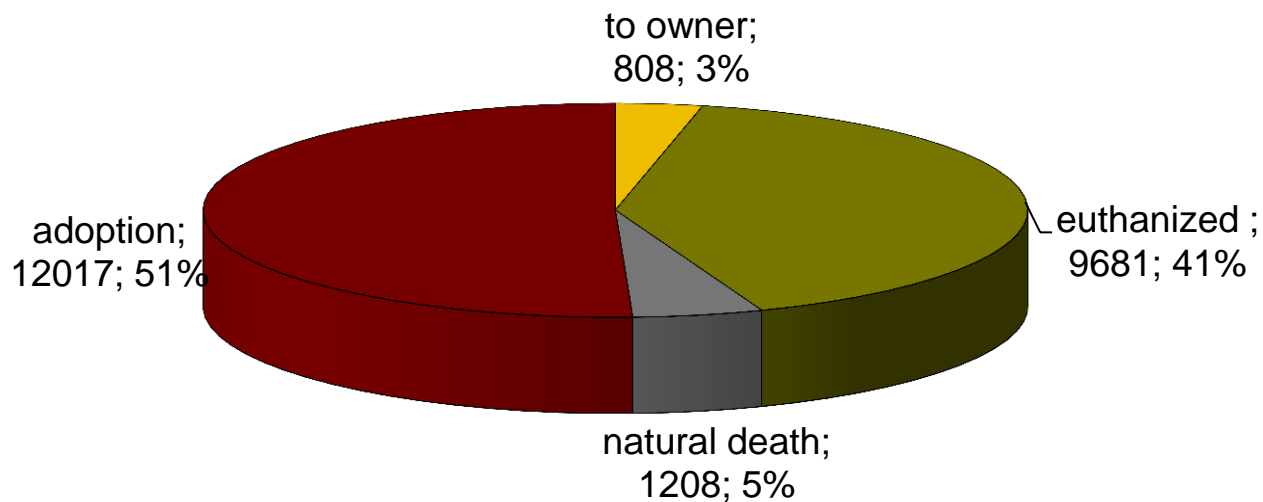


Source: Statistics of Animal Welfare Department (2013)

4

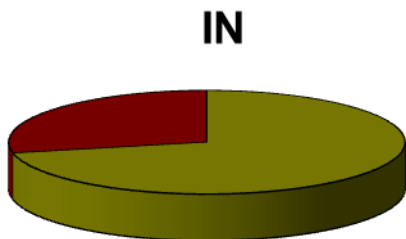
Belgian shelters: output (destination) of cats

OUT

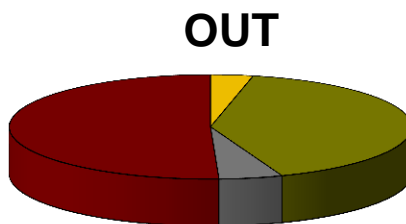


Source: Statistics of Animal Welfare Department (2013)

5 Input-output= OVERPOPULATION



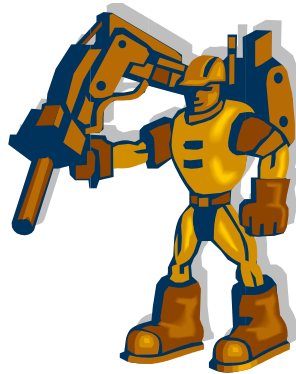
- Overpopulation in shelters



+ A large population of
roaming cats



Time for some action?



⇒ Several measures taken to reduce the numbers of cats



Ban on sale on markets (1996)

7



Restriction of publicity for sale of dogs/cats (1997)

8



- Only in specialized press
- Or by licensed breeders, shelters

Note : internet!



Ban on sale of dogs and cats in pet shops (2009)

9

Proposal from the Parliament



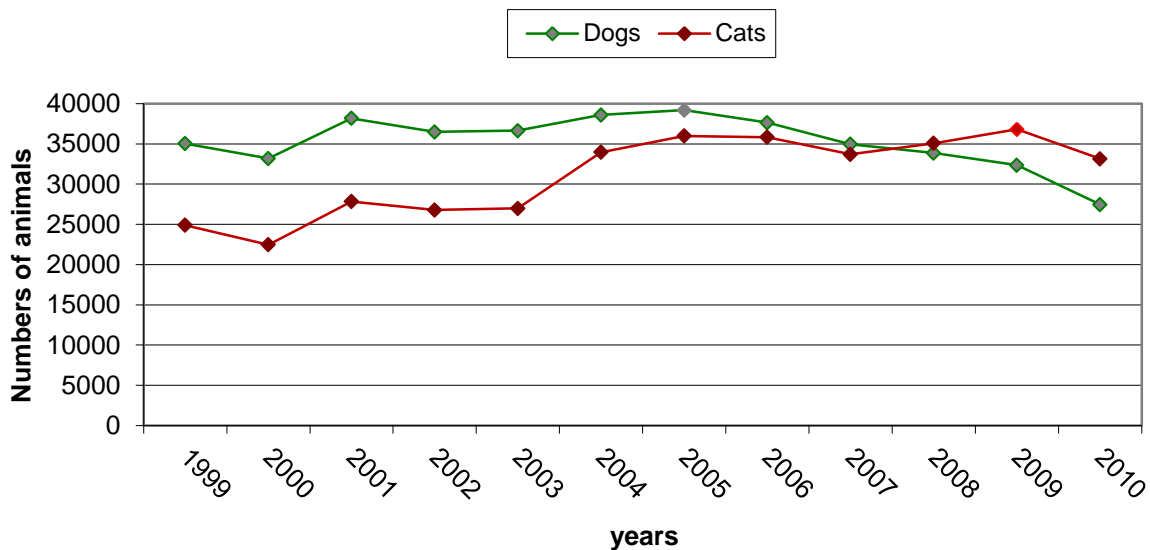
- But
1. five female cats for breeding
 2. Not at the same address as a pet shop selling other species

Conclusion : pet shops → “commercial breeders”

2009 = 2014



Results?: numbers of dogs and cats in shelters



Opinion of AWC Belgium in 2009 (1)

1. STATE OF THE ART

- Cat
 - Domesticated
 - not part of ecosystem (no role as predator and has no predators)
- Uncontrolled reproduction
 - Large population of roaming cats
 - Overpopulation in shelters



welfare of cats, welfare of other species (predation), human health (diseases) in danger



12 Opinion of AWC Belgium in 2009 (2)

2. MEASURES

a) to control the reproduction (of domestic cats)

- mandatory sterilisation (exemption in case of breeding)
- mandatory identification

b) to control populations of roaming cats



Opinion to legislation/actions (1)



Agreement by Council of Ministers on a Multiannual action plan :

- Since September 2012 all cats in shelters before adoption
 - = neutered (early neutering)
 - = identified
 - = registered
- September 2014: neutering of all cats sold*
- (if effect not satisfactory: neutering of all cats)



* Exemption breeding cats

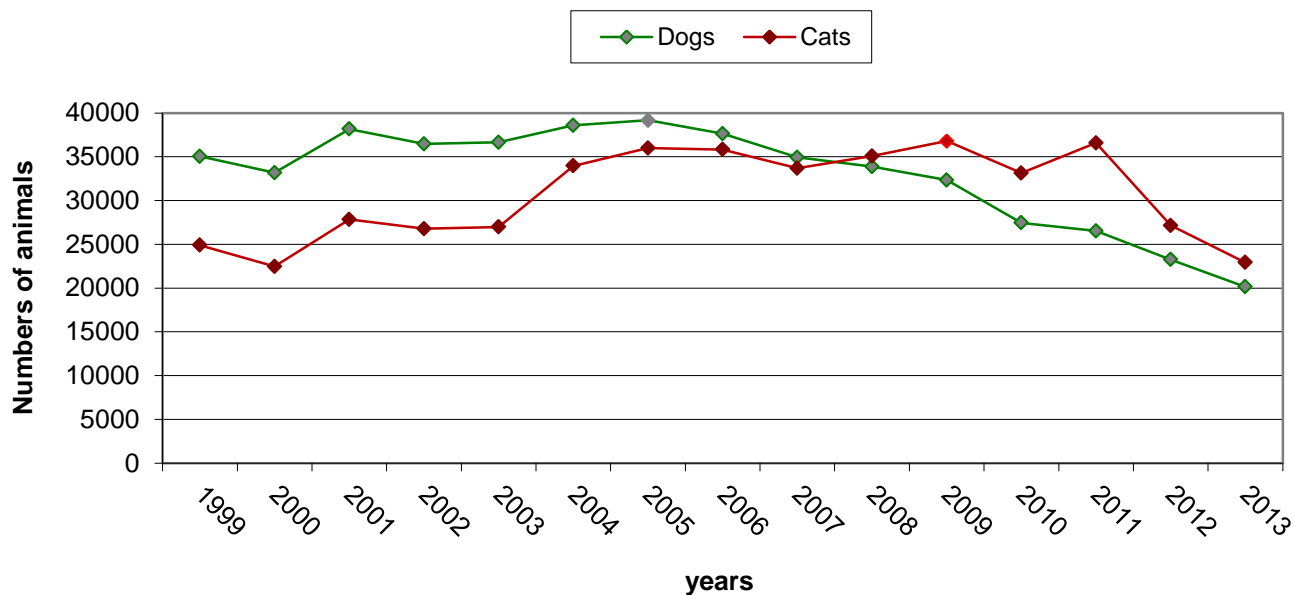


Opinion to legislation/actions (2)

- Guidance to all municipalities
 - with information and measures to control their roaming cat population



Results?: numbers of dogs and cats in shelters

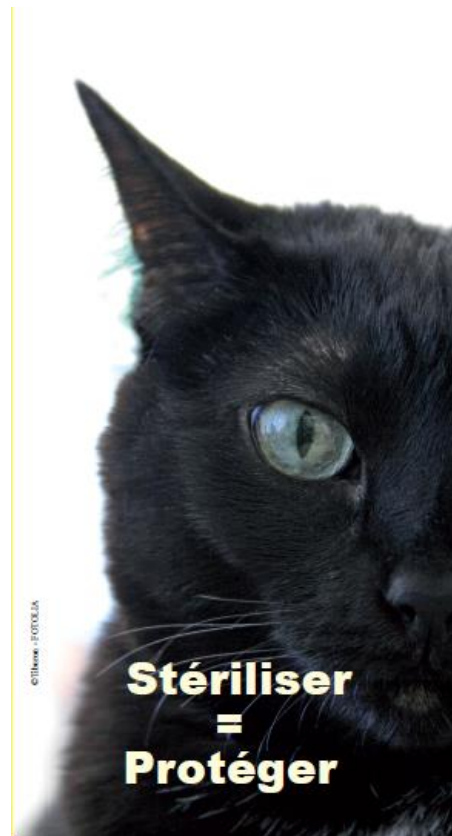


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Thank you

