



GUARDIANS OF THE PAW: PROTECTION OF DOMESTIC PETS NEEDED!





SUMMARY



It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: "A woman entered Hell because of a cat which she tied up and did not feed, or let it loose to eat of the vermin of the earth, until it died."

The issue of animal abuse and neglect in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has been a prevalent and ongoing issue. The GCC must take action in order to keep up with the European Union's (EU) resolutions and what it had amended in the European Convention for Protection of Pet Animals (ECPPA). Pets are weak creatures and need our protection, action is required.

Protection and care for pets is part of the Islamic principles. One Hadith quotes Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as saying: "A good deed done to an animal is as meritorious as a good deed done to a human being, while an act of cruelty to an animal is as bad as an act of cruelty to a human being. So much so, that one of Prophet Muhammad's companions was known as Abu Hurairah (Father of the Kittens) for his attachment to cats. The Prophet himself was a great cat-lover— Muezza was the name of his favorite cat.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the growing understanding of the significance of domestic animal welfare and protection, it continues to be an issue in the GCC . This policy brief tries to illuminate the existing issues encountered in the GCC, such as the cases of abuse and neglect, that stand as heartbreaking evidence of the urgent need for sticter pet welfare regulations.



Domestic pets are frequently left behind, chained outside during severe weather temperatures, or denied access to a healthy diet and access to emergency medical care. The necessity for thorough legislation and regulations controlling pet welfare is demanded in order to make this a better world for not only humans but also domestic pets. In order to implement effective pet protection rules, the EU and the GCC shall cooperate together.

BODY



1

The EU obliges the breeders to follow the requirements for proper socialization, veterinary care, living conditions, and genetic health testing for breeding animals. They shall as well, avoid any practices that may endanger the pets living condition. Due to this, we encourage the GCC to follow the commercial practice that EU regulates, in order to ensure the welfare and protection of the pets such as:

Pet breeders are required to keep the pets in an appropriate and suitable environment that meets their physical and behavioral needs. The EU mandates microchipping and registration in order to identify and track these pets in many ways such as controlling the pet trade, monitoring it and as well as finding it in case it was lost or stolen. This method ensures the responsibility of the pet ownership. Additionally, the EU obliges the commercial shops to be truthful about the pets age, health, origin, and any particular needs and requirements while advertising or selling the pets to customers.

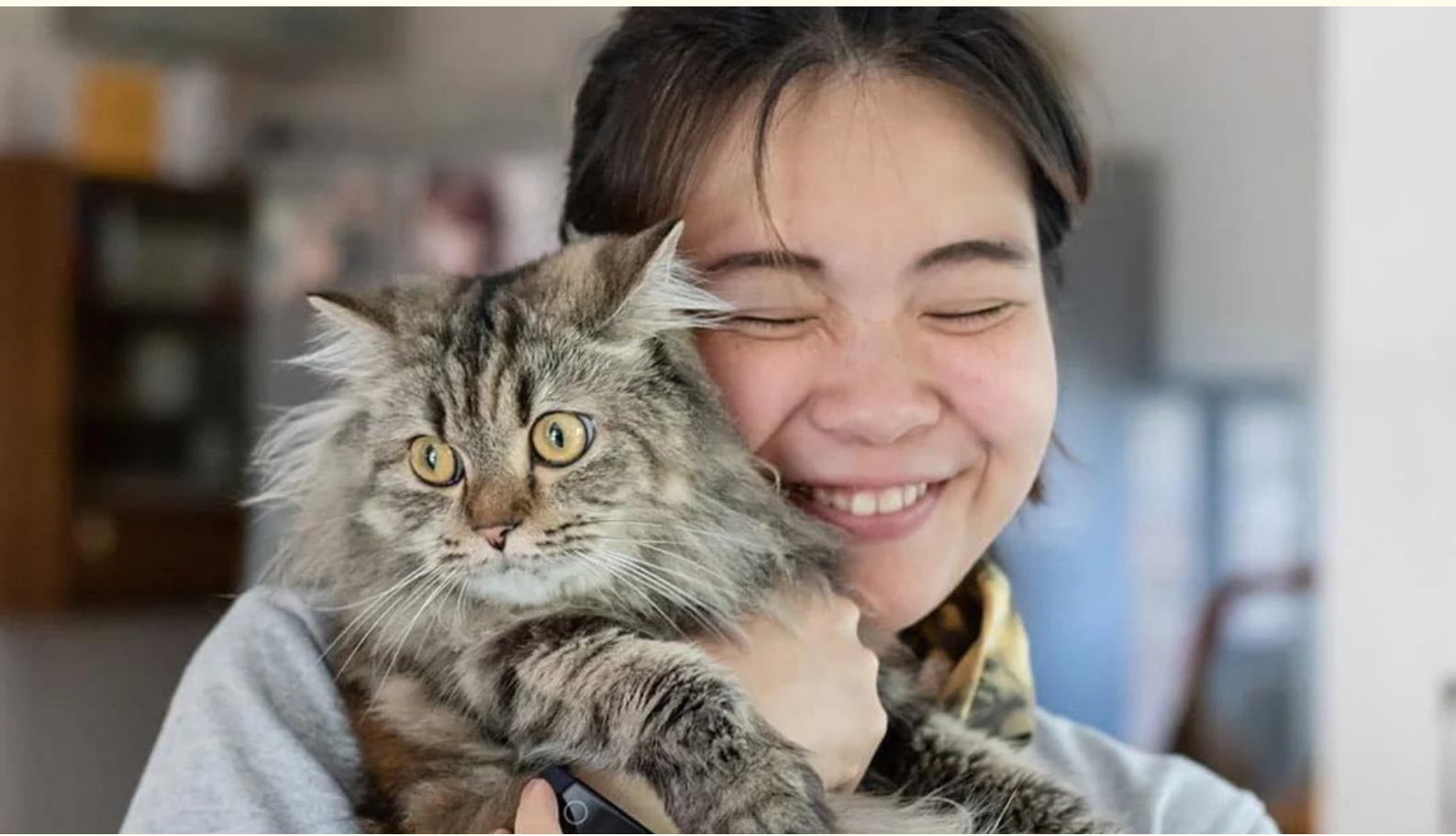
The EU assures safety and precautions when the pets are imported and exported and that is by doing health certification and quarantine requirements. These precautions are meant to stop the transmission of diseases and protect the welfare of traveling pets.

2



The pet caretakers shall not be cruel to the pets or torture them to satisfy their desire. According to article 3 of the European Convention Protection of Pet Animals (ECPPA) “Nobody shall cause a pet animal unnecessary pain, suffering or distress.” “Nobody shall abandon a pet animal.” The EU obligates the pet caretakers to provide accommodation, care, and attention which takes account of the ethological needs of the pet by giving it suitable and sufficient food and water, providing it with adequate opportunities for exercise, and taking all reasonable measures to prevent its escape.

GCC citizens and residents must take care of pets and shall not abandon or harm them and learn from the EU that pets deserve a life just as human beings.



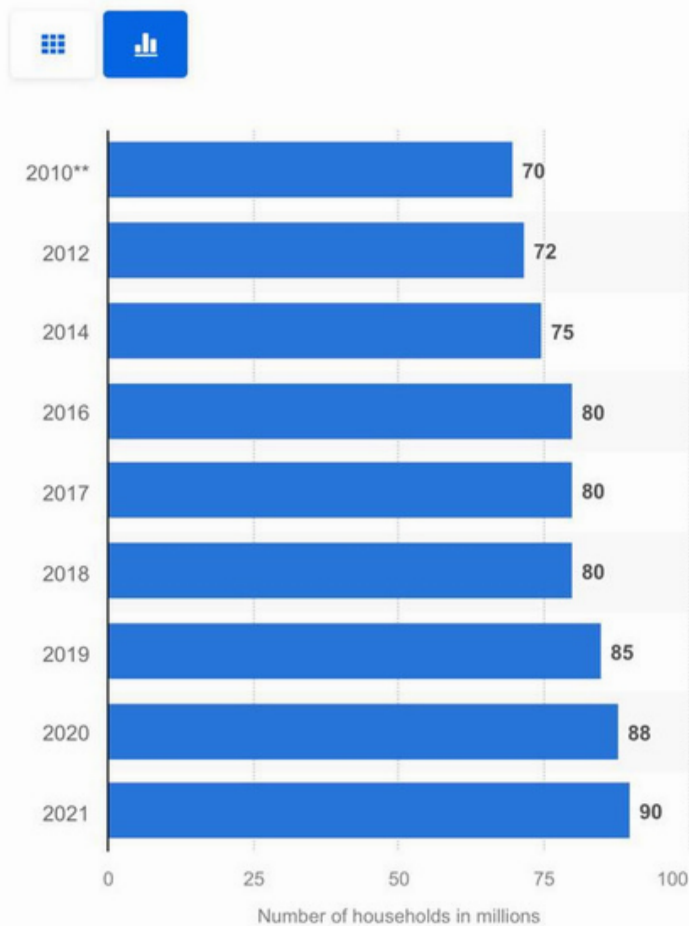
3



Recently, in the GCC, the ownership of the pets has increased, especially due to the pandemic, where many people felt lonely and needed some company. After the pandemic restrictions lifted, many new pet owners have been neglecting pets and becoming irresponsible in taking care of them due to traveling abroad, not wanting to invest in expensive treatment, and getting bored and tired from the responsibility of cleaning. Moreover, on long vacations, many people recklessly abandon their pets. On the opposite, people in European countries have always had pet animals and maintained ownership, as we can see the difference the chart below.

Estimated number of households owning at least one pet animal in Europe from 2010 to 2021

(in millions)





Suggest legislation and policies

We must put the pet's life into consideration by placing laws regarding the welfare, protection, care, adoption, and commercial activities of pet ownership. To do so, we should enforce sanctions and fines to whoever defies these laws and policies.

Create a database for IDing (microchipping)

We could take influence and inspiration from the EU convention regarding the protection of pets by assuring that they are legally identified and registered in accordance with local laws. Proper registration and microchipping aid in reconnecting missing/stolen pets with their owners, as well as tracking and monitoring their steps.

Education and Awareness

Promote and advertise community education and awareness campaigns on domestic pet ownership. Encourage others to treat animals with compassion and respect and to understand their needs. In accordance with article 14(b) from (ECPPA) " the need to discourage:

- i. gifts of pet animals to persons under the age of sixteen without the express consent of their parents or other persons exercising parental responsibilities;
- ii. gifts of pet animals as prizes, awards or bonuses."

In conclusion, it is critical to emphasize the moral obligations and religious values of preserving and caring for pets while teaching students in the GCC region about pet neglect. Pets are helpless and rely on us humans for their survival. It is important to motivate students to take action, report animal abuse, and advocate proper pet ownership. Students learn the value of compassion and empathy by making comparisons between how pets are treated and how other living things are treated. We can improve pet welfare in the GCC by educating students and promoting a caring culture throughout programs and social media platforms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This policy brief is a part of Jean Monnet Model courses on the European Union Law.

Doha-Qatar

Qatar University - College of Law

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