



SURGERY FOR COSMETIC AND OTHER NON-CURATIVE PURPOSES

Background

Article 10¹ of Chapter II from the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals adopted in 1987 recommends the prohibition of surgical operations for the purpose of modifying the appearance of a pet animal or for other non-curative purposes.

The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) fully supports this recommendation, as surgical operations for the purpose of modifying the appearance of a pet animal or for other non-curative or non-diagnostic purposes, causes the animal unnecessary suffering.

Particular examples:

- ?? Docking of tails
- ?? Cropping of ears (with the exception of unilateral ear notching in neutering schemes for stray animals)
- ?? Devocalisation
- ?? Defanging

FVE is however concerned that cosmetic surgery is still carried out in a number of European countries having signed the 1987 European Convention.

Position

FVE considers that surgery for cosmetic reasons should be prohibited.

FVE urges member States of the Council of Europe to sign, ratify and ensure proper implementation² of the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals and in particular of its Article 10, if they have not done so already.

FVE considers that surgical procedures should only be undertaken

- ?? to treat injury or disease,
- ?? to prevent disease,
- ?? to be of some other benefit to the animal,
- ?? to prevent breeding, which would be of long term detriment to the species or to public health.

FVE also encourages breed associations and authorities to modify their breed standards so that surgery for cosmetic reasons is no longer required and to promote this change to all show judges, breeders and the pet owning public. FVE also calls on the authorities to introduce rules to ban the exhibition of animals that have been subject to these operations.

¹ See Appendix 1

² See Appendix 2

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Appendix 1: Chapter II, article 10 of the European convention for the Protection of Pet Animals.

European convention for the Protection of Pet animals (ETS No. 125)

Strasbourg, 13.XI.1987

Chapter II

Article 10 - Surgical operations

1. Surgical operations for the purpose of modifying the appearance of a pet animal or for other non-curative purposes shall be prohibited and, in particular:
 - Docking of tails
 - Cropping of ears
 - Devocalisation
 - Declawing and defanging;
2. Exceptions to these prohibitions shall be permitted only:
 - If a veterinarian considers non-curative procedures necessary either for veterinary medical reasons or for the benefit of any particular animal;
 - To prevent reproduction.
3.
 - Operations in which the animal will or is likely to experience severe pain shall be carried out under anaesthesia only by a veterinarian or under his supervision.
 - Operations for which no anaesthesia is required may be carried out by a person competent under national legislation.

Appendix 2: Chart of signatures and ratifications of the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals (18.06.2001).

Member States of Council of Europe that signed, ratified and put the legislation in force: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland.

Member States of Council of Europe that signed the treaty but have not yet put the legislation in force: Italy, Netherlands, France and Turkey.