

Polizia di Stato

Cruelty to animals

European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals Chapter II Article 3:

"Nobody shall cause a pet animal unnecessary pain, suffering or distress."

"Nobody shall abandon a pet animal".

Law n. 189 of 20 July 2004 contains provisions regarding the prohibition to abuse animals and to use them in illegal animal fighting or non-authorized competitions.

As a consequence, the Penal Code was amended to include Title IX bis into Book II - "Crimes against the feelings towards animals".

Reporting an ill-treatment case Both a private citizen or an association can report one of the illicit cases provided for by the new law to any law enforcement agency (*Carabinieri, Polizia di Stato, Guardia di Finanza- Customs Police, Corpo Forestale - Forestry Corps, Vigili Urbani - Municipal Police force, etc.*) and ask for intervention to ascertain the offence and prevent its further consequences.

Many Italian municipalities have a **Desk for animals rights** open to the public for information and reports.

The LAV (Italy's anti-vivisection league) provides answers and support to reports of ill-treatment at the telephone number 06-4461325. Updates on ongoing initiatives will be available on the website www.infolav.org , while law updates are available on the site www.reteambiente.it .

Help stop straying, not straying dogs The paradox is abandoning a dog and then complaining about stray animals.

It happens more and more often that a cat, a dog or even a ferret is abandoned along suburban roads or in front of dog pounds.

Every summer **about 100 thousand dogs and 50 thousand cats are abandoned**. Straying is our fault, not theirs.

The lack of public spirit and sense of responsibility are the reasons why people abandon their dog or cat in the street, because they do not want to keep them at home any longer.

Abandoning is a crime punished by the Penal Code (section 1, sub-section 3 of Law 189/2004): "Whoever abandons a pet animal or an animal having lived in captivity is punished by arrest up to one year or with a fine from Eur 1,000 to Eur 10,000".

We should think it over very carefully before keeping a pet at home: It will be a long cohabitation which will change your life habits and those of your family. Realizing we can't look after a pet could imply the distressing decision to part from our animal.

In this case we should never get rid of it carelessly: there are **ad hoc facilities** (such as dog pounds and pet shelters) which, through countless difficulties, will host your dog and try to have him/her adopted.

Human beings are very often the cause of pets' suffering: ill-treatments, abandoning, fights and all those acts that may result in suffering and death.

But, apart from extreme situations, sometimes we may risk to increase, against our will, the critical situation of the nearly **150,000 cats and dogs hosted by Italian dog pounds**. Suffice it to say that between 21 June and 31 August **2008 14,000 dogs were abandoned along Italian roads and motorways**.

Also purebred dogs are the victims of trends! Thanks to a film or an advertisement a cat or dog becomes the latest trendy object. Fashion should not be the cause of our choice of pet.

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