

STRAY DOG & FERAL CAT POPULATIONS IN EUROPE: FROM CULLING TO CARE

Animal Welfare and Castration Center in Odessa, Ukraine



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Original situation in Odessa

- Approximately 70.000 – 80.000 stray dogs and several thousand feral cats used to live in the year 2000 in the streets of Odessa without any care
- Furthermore, the unneutered pets from private households were roaming the streets
 - Contributing to the overpopulation



Original situation: Dealing with stray dogs - *Budka*



- Catching of around 200 stray dogs weekly by the municipal dog catchers
- Stay in *Budka*
 - Lack of food, water and care in general
 - Lack in space and freedom of movement
 - Horrendous hygienic conditions
- Culling after five days in *Budka*



Budka



- As well catching of free roaming dogs
 - Private owners had to buy back their animals within five days
 - Or they were gassed in containers
- Not hermetically sealed containers
 - Slow and painful death
 - Afterwards, some were buried alive (just unconscious)



Approaches to manage stray animal populations (1)



Catching & Culling

- Neither an animal welfare friendly nor an effective solution to the problem, because
 - Every habitat provides resources (food, water, shelter etc.) for a specific quantity of animals of the same species (“carrying capacity”)
 - Vacant gaps are refilled by:
 - Migration of other animals from surrounding areas
 - Increased breeding success (increased birth rate, decreased death rate)



Approaches to manage stray animal populations (2)



Trap Neuter Release

- Animal welfare friendly and effective solution
 - Catching animals as gently as possible
 - Vaccination – Neutering – Marking
 - Clinical recovery
 - Return animals to original territory

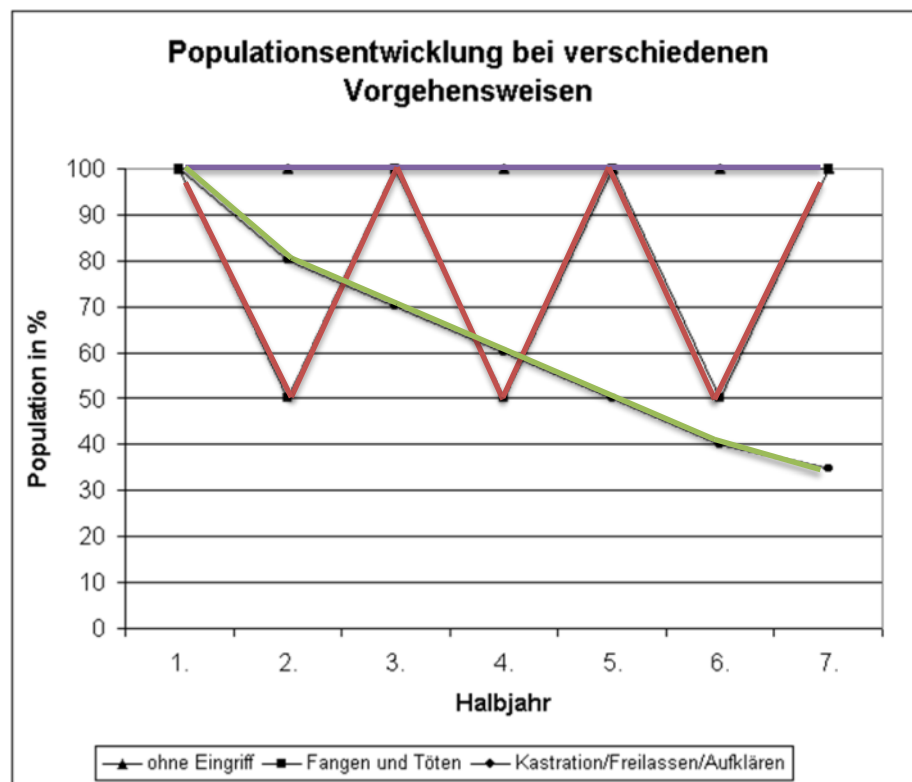


Ear tag



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Comparison of the influence of different control measures on population development



- No management
- **Catching & Culling**
- **Trap – Neuter – Release (TNR)**



Beginnings of the castration project in Odessa (1)



Main goals

- Animal welfare friendly, effective reduction of the number of stray dogs by TNR
- Veterinary hospital for medical treatment
- Animal shelter (adoption)

Mandatory requirement

- Contract signing between town committee and the German Animal Welfare Federation
- Acceptance of the concept „catch, neuter, release“ (by competent authorities and citizens)
- Providing a location free of charge by the city
- City bears a part of the running costs



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Beginnings of the castration project in Odessa (2)



- **2000:** German Animal Welfare Federation starts its work
 - Negotiations with the head of the Budka, the city authorities (deputy major offered to provide a free of charge location), members of the local animal welfare organizations, the German Ambassador (contact to major), meetings with veterinarians
- **2001:** killing of dogs in *Budka* stopped
 - Budka → animal shelter
- **2004:** signing the lease agreement for the Animal Welfare and Castration Center



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Animal Welfare and Castration Center Odessa



- Opening in 2005
 - 90 kennels (3-4 dogs per kennel), fenced running areas
 - two cat houses
 - Quarantine area
 - Clinic with examination, surgery and recovery rooms
- Center is managed by locals
- Operations are carried out by professionals and according to the latest scientific knowledge



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Animal Welfare and Castration Center Odessa



- Municipal dog catchers or private persons bring dogs to the Center
 - The dog catchers have been trained to use animal friendly capture methods, one district after another
- In the Center:
 - Medical treatment (e.g. wound management)
 - Castration (also from private dogs)
 - Antiparasitics, rabies vaccination, marking (tattoo and ear tag) and registration
 - Release after recovery time

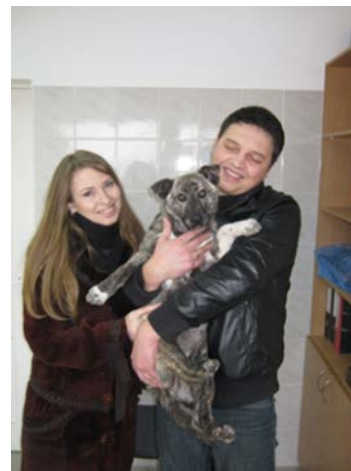


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Castration Center – Preconditions for success



- Acceptance among the population (campaigning, open days etc.)
 - Taking animals to the center
 - Feeding of stray dogs and feral cats
 - Rehoming/adoption



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Current situation



- Reduction of stray dog population from around 70.000 to 3.000 - 4.000
 - Project expansion to surrounding areas
- Less complaints about stray dogs (high acceptance and big support)



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Current and future plans

- Neutering project for stray cats (1. Nov 2016 – 28. Feb 2017)
 - Population of several ten thousand animals (mostly hidden)
 - Free vouchers for 32 collaborating veterinary clinics
 - Neutering of more than 5.000 cats → prevention of estimated 77.000 births





Thank you for your attention!

