

MIDDAY EXPRESS

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Commissioner Vassiliou welcomes entry into force of ban on imports, exports and trade in cat and dog fur

A comprehensive EU ban on imports, exports and intra-Community trade in cat and dog fur and products containing such fur entered into force on 1 January 2009. European Health Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou said: "I am delighted that this long awaited measure is now in force, so that European consumers can be confident that they will no longer be at risk of inadvertently purchasing products containing cat or dog fur. This ban reflects the profound attachment that Europeans have to cats and dogs as companion animals only, and their total rejection of this appalling practice." The European Commission proposed a ban on cat and dog fur in November 2006, due to evidence that cat and dog fur was being placed on the European market, usually undeclared or disguised as synthetic or other types of fur. Diverging national bans on cat and dog fur threatened to disrupt the single market. The vast majority of cat and dog fur is believed to be imported from third countries, notably China, where the rearing of these animals for their fur is practiced. The Commission's proposal for a regulation was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union on December 11 2007. It assures EU citizens that cat and dog fur will no longer be sold anywhere in the EU through a harmonised approach, prohibiting all production, marketing and imports and exports of cat and dog fur in the EU. Cat and dog fur, found occasionally on the EU market in the past, provoked a strong response from EU consumers, who demanded that measures be taken to prevent such fur and fur products from being sold in the EU. Tens of thousands of Europeans sent protest letters to the Commission and handed petitions to Members of the European Parliament.

For more information, see: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/fur_cats_dogs_en.htm