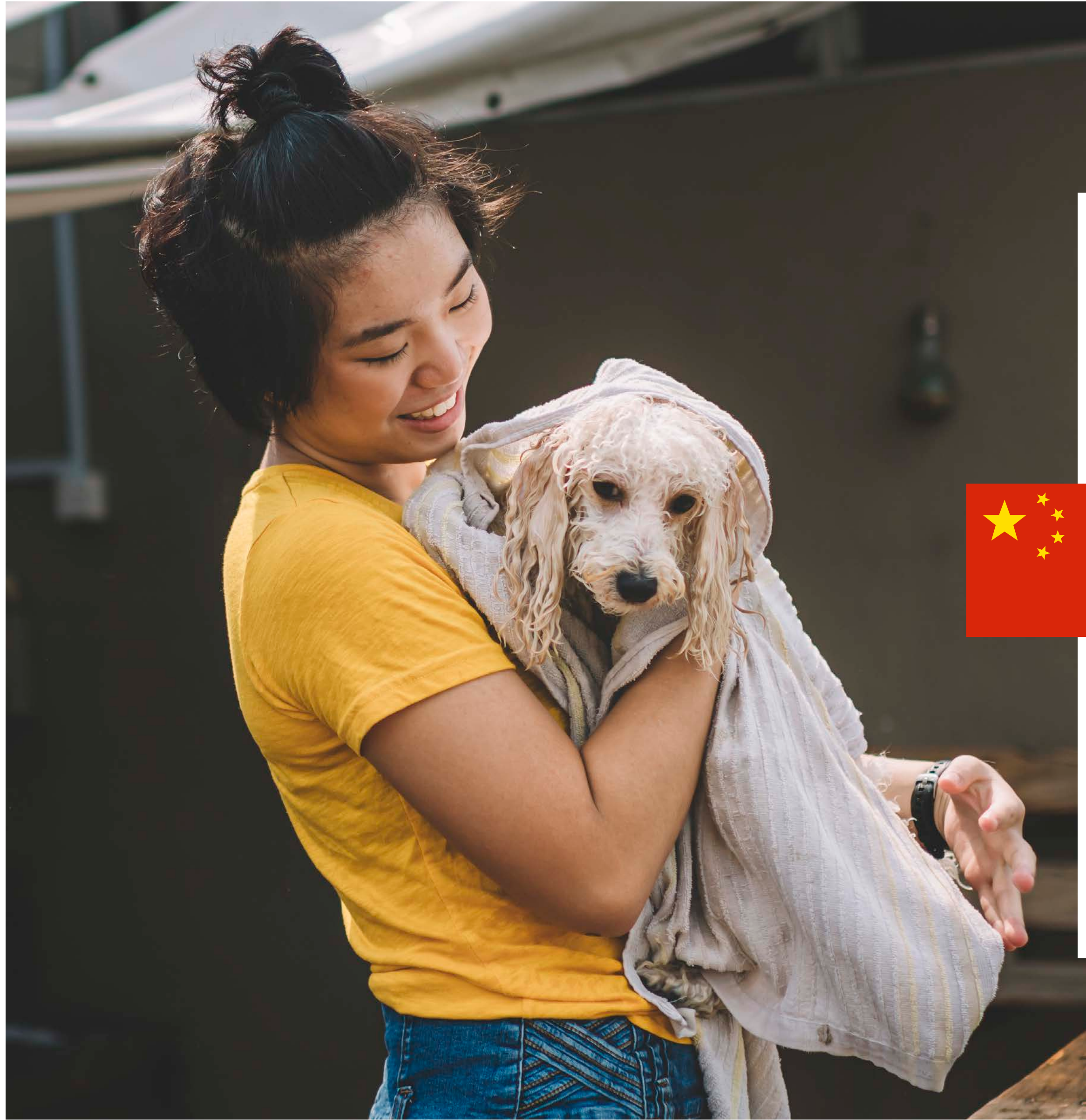




CHINA

State of Pet Homelessness Project

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the State of Pet Homelessness Project market report for China. This is a global data project undertaken by Mars alongside leading animal welfare experts and organizations across 20 countries. It seeks to help gather data and insights to better understand the number of dogs and cats who do not have regular access to the care they need, within a loving home or a community – and the factors that may contribute to solving the related challenges.

OBJECTIVE

Our aim is that the data collected can help identify the points in the cycle where pets are most at risk for becoming or remaining homeless and inform actions that reduce its prevalence. Pets that don’t receive the sustained human care they need are at risk of poor health and compromised welfare. Tackling pet homelessness helps both animals and people – bringing the benefits of the human-animal bond to more people and ensuring every pet gets the sustained care and nutrition they need to thrive. Until now, there was no common way of looking at the issue. It is our hope that sharing this work and the collected data, will create conversations, drive action, and make a difference in the lives of millions of homeless cats and dogs.

HOW THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED

Measuring the scale of pet homelessness is a complex task, as the homeless pet population fluctuates constantly due to its many interconnected contributing factors. Stray pet numbers are difficult to count and increasing every day due to the rapid reproduction rates of unsterilized strays, and, in most countries, there is no single source of information on the shelter pet population at any given point in time.

The State of Pet Homelessness Project provides a wealth of data and uncovered insights into areas of action critical to tackling the pet homelessness challenge. Three areas were identified where we believe concerted effort and focus could make the biggest impact:

PREVENT UNWANTED PETS. ENSURE SUSTAINED CARE. KEEP PETS IN HOMES.

This report contains a small set of that data for China. The full data sets from all 20 markets are available online at stateofpethomelessness.com.



This global data project across 20 countries consisted of:

930 SOURCES REVIEWED	44 ANALYST INTERVIEWS	~30,000 PUBLIC SURVEYS	9+ MONTHS OF FIELDWORK
7,700+ HOURS GATHERING DATA	180 DATA POINTS	200 PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEWS	

China has an above average level of overall pet homelessness of the 20 markets this project looked at. The opportunity is to understand how to prevent homelessness increasing and tackle the challenges that are present.

255.5M TOTAL CATS AND DOGS IN CHINA

89.65M TOTAL DOGS | 165.85M TOTAL CATS

123.65M TOTAL OWNED CATS AND DOGS 200K TOTAL SHELTER CATS AND DOGS 131.65M TOTAL STRAY CATS AND DOGS



26.51M(30%)

DOGS ARE HOMELESS



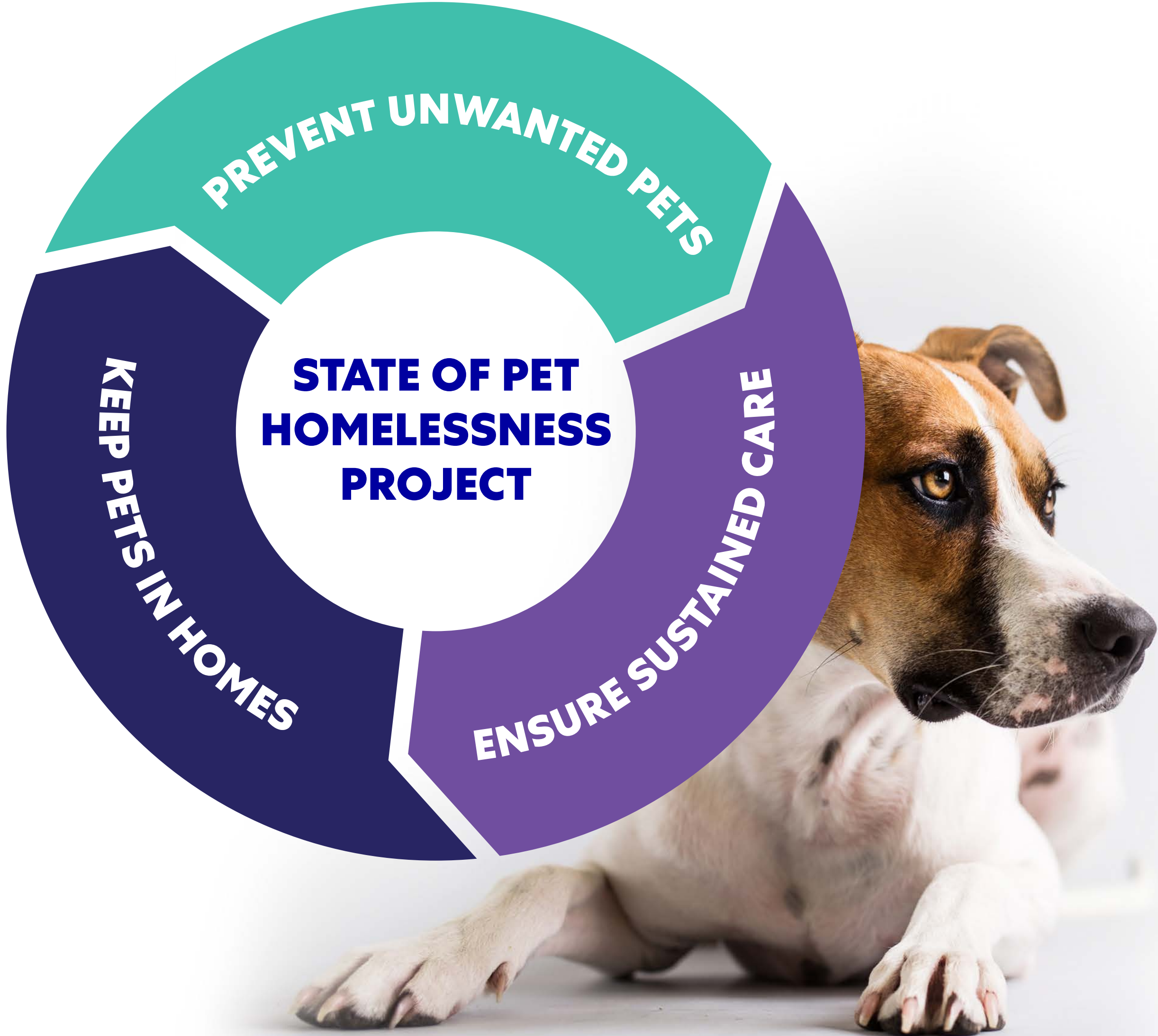
105.34M(64%)

CATS ARE HOMELESS

180K IN SHELTERS 26.33M STRAYS 20K IN SHELTERS 105.32M STRAYS

Pet Homelessness estimates based on primary and secondary research conducted by Euromonitor International (EMI) in 2022-2023, and owned pet estimates collected by Mars Consumer & Marketing Insights (CMI). Additional interviews were conducted with local expert organizations.





To bring transparency, awareness and insight to the challenge of pet homelessness, we have set out to build a data set that can offer insights into a range of attitudes and behaviors that impact the issue. Three interconnected themes emerged from the data, highlighting where interventions could help reduce pet homelessness.

PREVENT UNWANTED PETS

Large populations of stray pets which can breed at a rapid rate are a huge part of the problem. This, coupled with irresponsible breeding practices, e.g. those that do not pay enough attention to health, temperament, positive early socialization, or to ensuring a good fit with the pet owner, can result in increasing numbers of homeless pets and groups of pets that are difficult to provide sustained care to or match with a home. Our data looks at this significant and critical piece of the challenge.

ENSURE SUSTAINED CARE

Helping to provide more homeless pets with responsible loving homes, or the sustained human care they need in the community, is a foundational step in tackling pet homelessness. Achieving it requires an understanding of the key barriers to acquiring or adopting a pet, or accessing veterinary care, as well as facilitating pathways to ownership, and provision of care for community animals, whose home may not be a conventional house but still need access to sustained care. Shelters may provide care for cats and dogs, but resources are often strained and, if pets are not adopted to new homes, demand may exceed capacity.

KEEP PETS IN HOMES

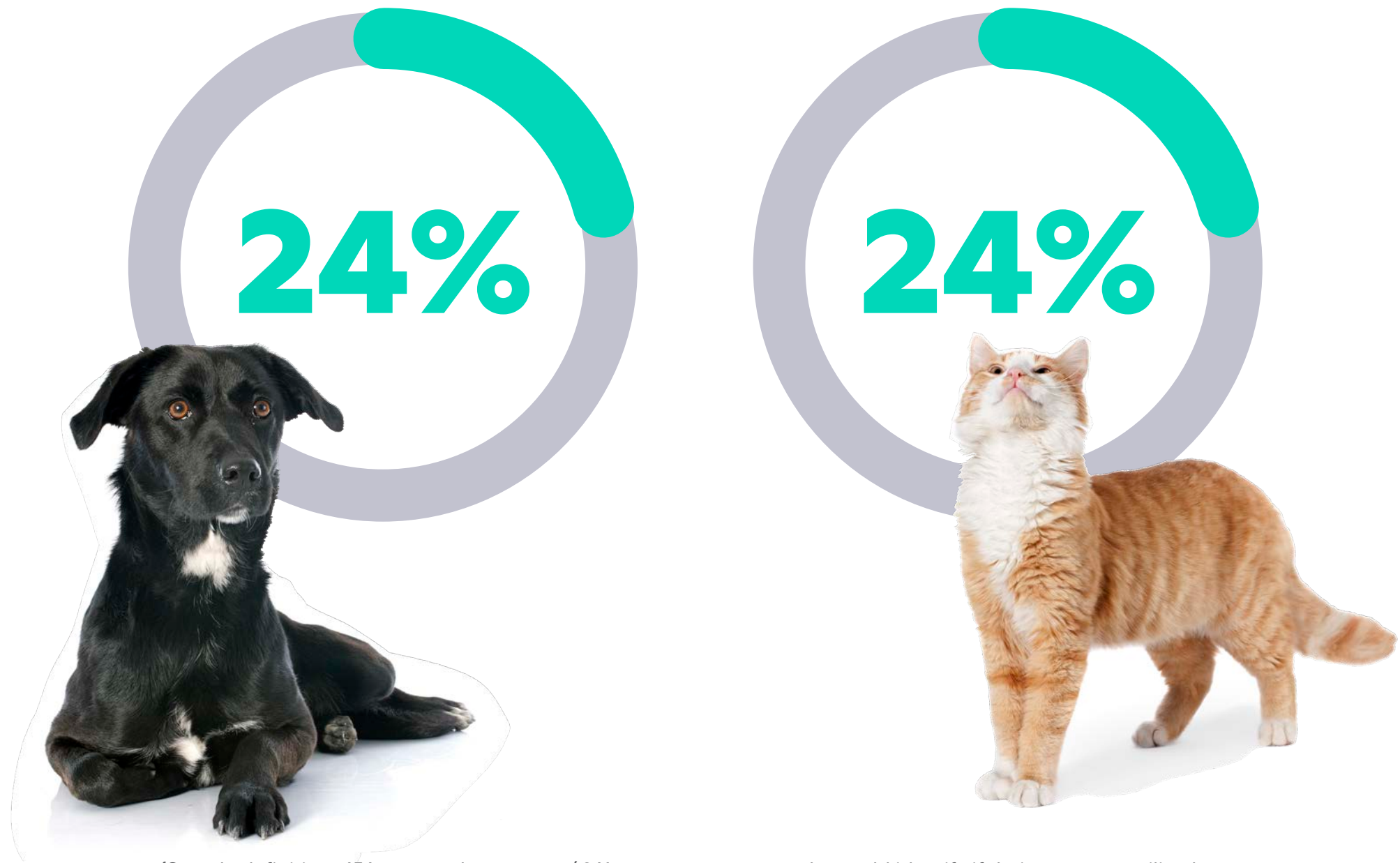
Keeping pets in homes is vital for both pet and owner to benefit from a longstanding bond. Pets are at risk of becoming homeless through being relinquished or abandoned if the pet ownership experience is difficult, or a pet owner can't access the advice and support they need. Pet owning practices which easily allow pets to stray or become lost can also result in owned pets becoming homeless. Our data looks at issues such as the cost of caring for a pet, common pet care practices and the incidence of lost pets.



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One unsterilized homeless pet can quickly create many more. Reducing uncontrolled or unplanned breeding is a critical approach to decreasing pet homelessness.

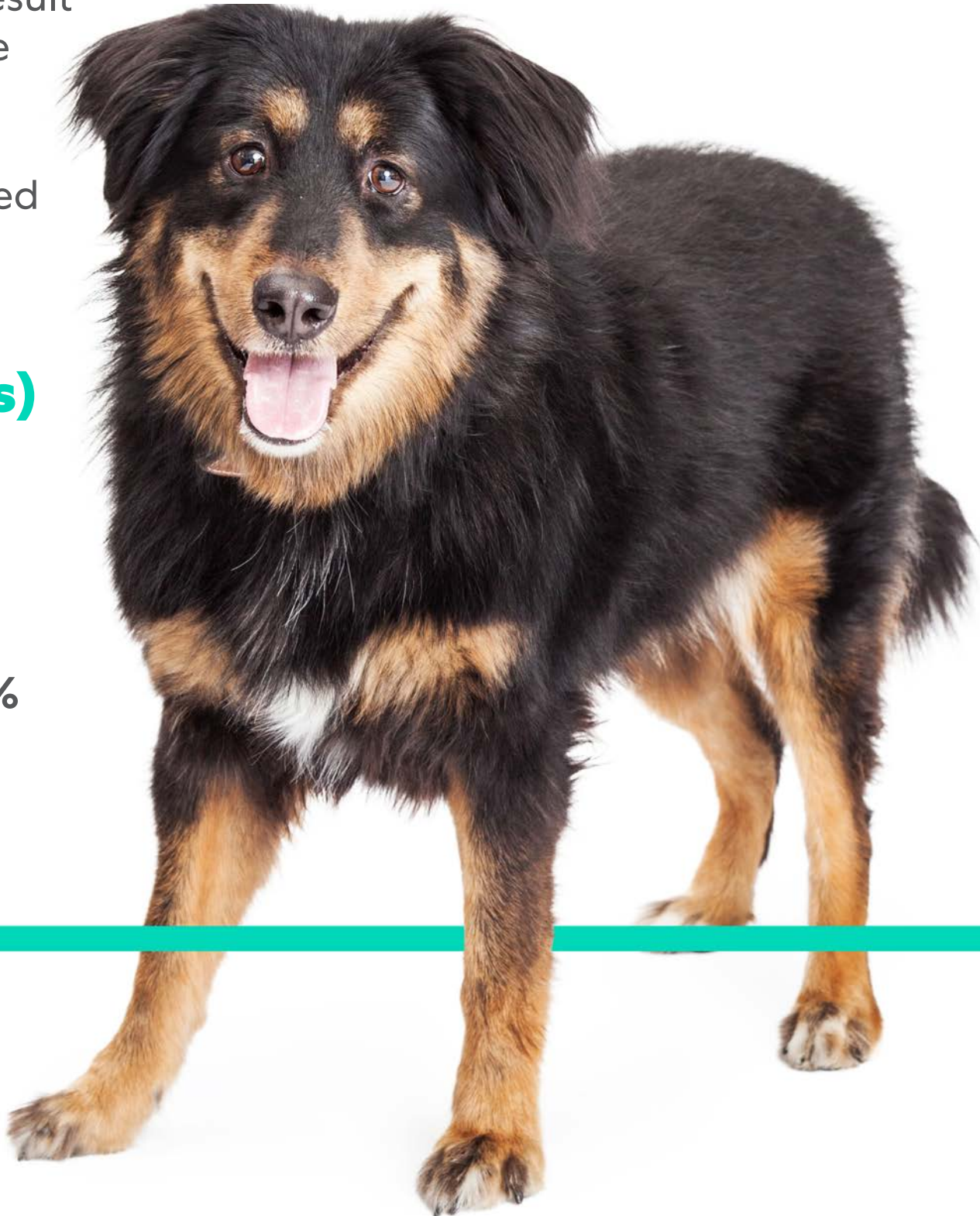
IS YOUR PET NEUTERED/STERILIZED?¹



¹Sample definition: 456 current dog owners / 261 current cat owners who could identify if their pet was sterilized

WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR PET?¹

Where people get their pets reveals important insights about the pathways to pet ownership and the proportion of people making a direct impact on homeless pet numbers through adoption of shelter pets or strays. Pet breeders are also key. While responsibly bred pets are more likely to be matched to lifelong homes, irresponsible breeding practices, e.g. those that neglect health and temperament issues, or fail to ensure a good fit with the pet owner can result in unwanted pets. These behaviors increase the numbers of pets for which a home cannot be found, or pets which may find a home but later be relinquished or rehomed due to problems.

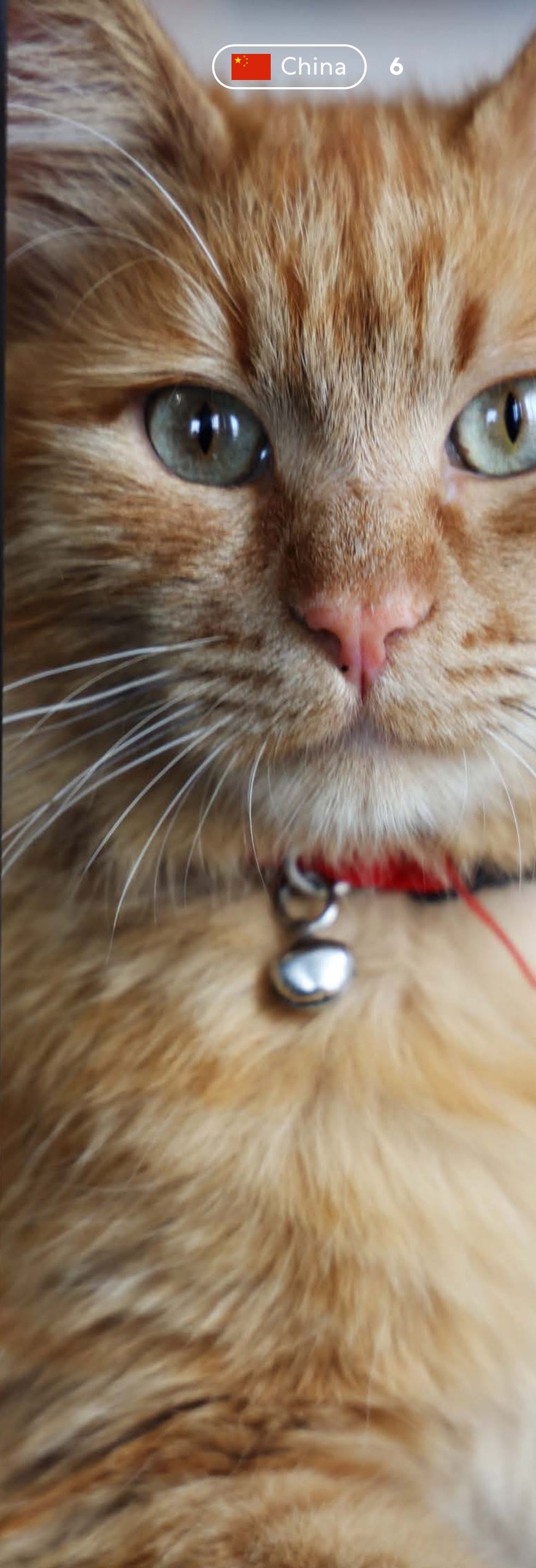


DOGS (Top 5 Responses)

- 1. FRIEND/RELATIVE: 42%
- 2. Pet shop: 26%
- 3. Private Individual: 9%
- 4. Rescue Center/Shelter: 6%
- 5. Farm: 5%

CATS (Top 5 Responses)

- 1. FRIEND/RELATIVE: 38%
- 2. Pet shop: 19%
- 3. Rescue Center/Shelter: 12%
- 4. Private Individual: 12%
- 5. Born into the household: 6%



¹Sample definition: 456 current dog owners / 261 current cat owners



WHAT ACTIONS DO YOU TAKE IF YOU ENCOUNTER A STRAY?¹

Stray pets may interact with humans or remain hidden. Encouraging people to learn about appropriate ways to interact with different types of stray pets can help pets who would benefit from human care get access to what they need.

DOG

60% ACT OF KINDNESS



5% CHASE IT AWAY



26% DO NOTHING



CAT

53% ACT OF KINDNESS



7% CHASE IT AWAY



30% DO NOTHING



¹Sample definition: 733 has seen a stray dog / 850 has seen a stray cat

WHICH MEASURES DO YOU THINK WOULD BEST REDUCE PET HOMELESSNESS?²

Gathering opinions about potential solutions from a wide range of pet owners suggests solutions that can be quickly scaled.

DOGS (Top 5 Responses)

- 1. PROMOTING PROGRAMS SO PEOPLE KNOW WHERE TO ADOPT: 25%
- 2. Providing aid to address or prevent behavioral issues: 24%
- 3. Raising awareness of the benefits of having a pet: 22%
- 4. Microchipping: 21%
- 5. Supporting programs that connect people to shelters: 21%

CATS (Top 5 Responses)

- 1. PROMOTING PROGRAMS SO PEOPLE KNOW WHERE TO ADOPT: 30%
- 2. Supporting programs that connect people to shelters: 28%
- 3. Raising awareness around responsible breeding practices: 26%
- 4. Raising awareness of the benefits of having a pet: 26%
- 5. Promoting programs so people know where to find foster pets: 24%

²Sample definition: 571 current or previous dog owners / 320 current or previous cat owners

WHAT THE PROFESSIONALS TELL US

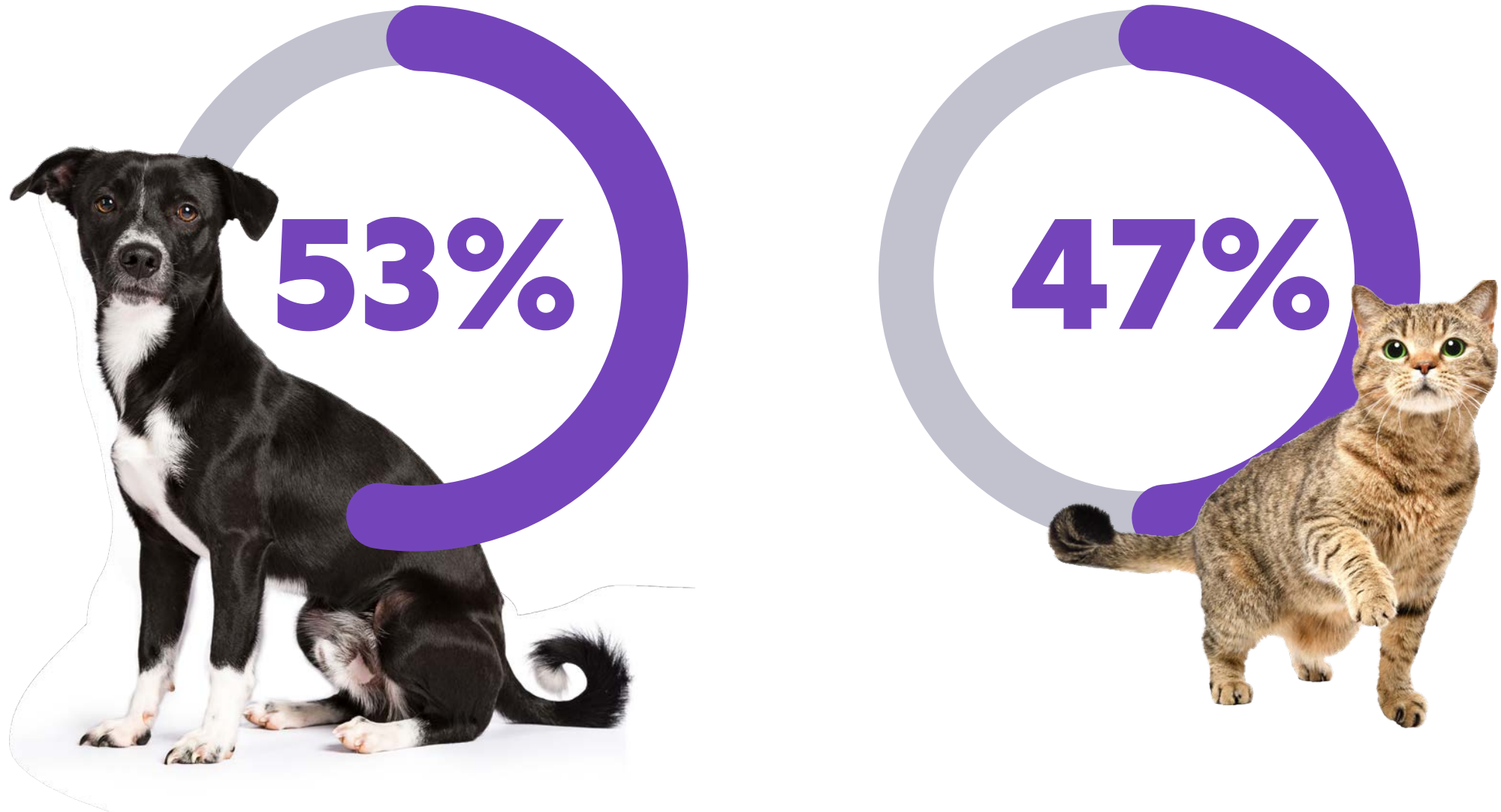
We get no support from the government at all. There's no regulation at all to manage the abused animals. While shelters face evacuations and demolishing.”

- President, Shelter (cats and dogs)

Helping to provide more homeless pets with responsible loving homes, or the sustained human care they need in the community, is a foundational step in tackling pet homelessness. Achieving it requires an understanding of the key barriers to acquiring or adopting a pet, or accessing veterinary care, as well as facilitating pathways to ownership, and provision of care for community animals, whose home may not be a conventional house but still need access to sustained care. Shelters may provide care for cats and dogs, but resources are often strained and, if pets are not adopted to new homes, demand may exceed capacity.

Getting more people interested in pet ownership and turning that interest into action creates more loving homes for pets.

ARE YOU THINKING OF GETTING A PET IN THE NEAR FUTURE?¹

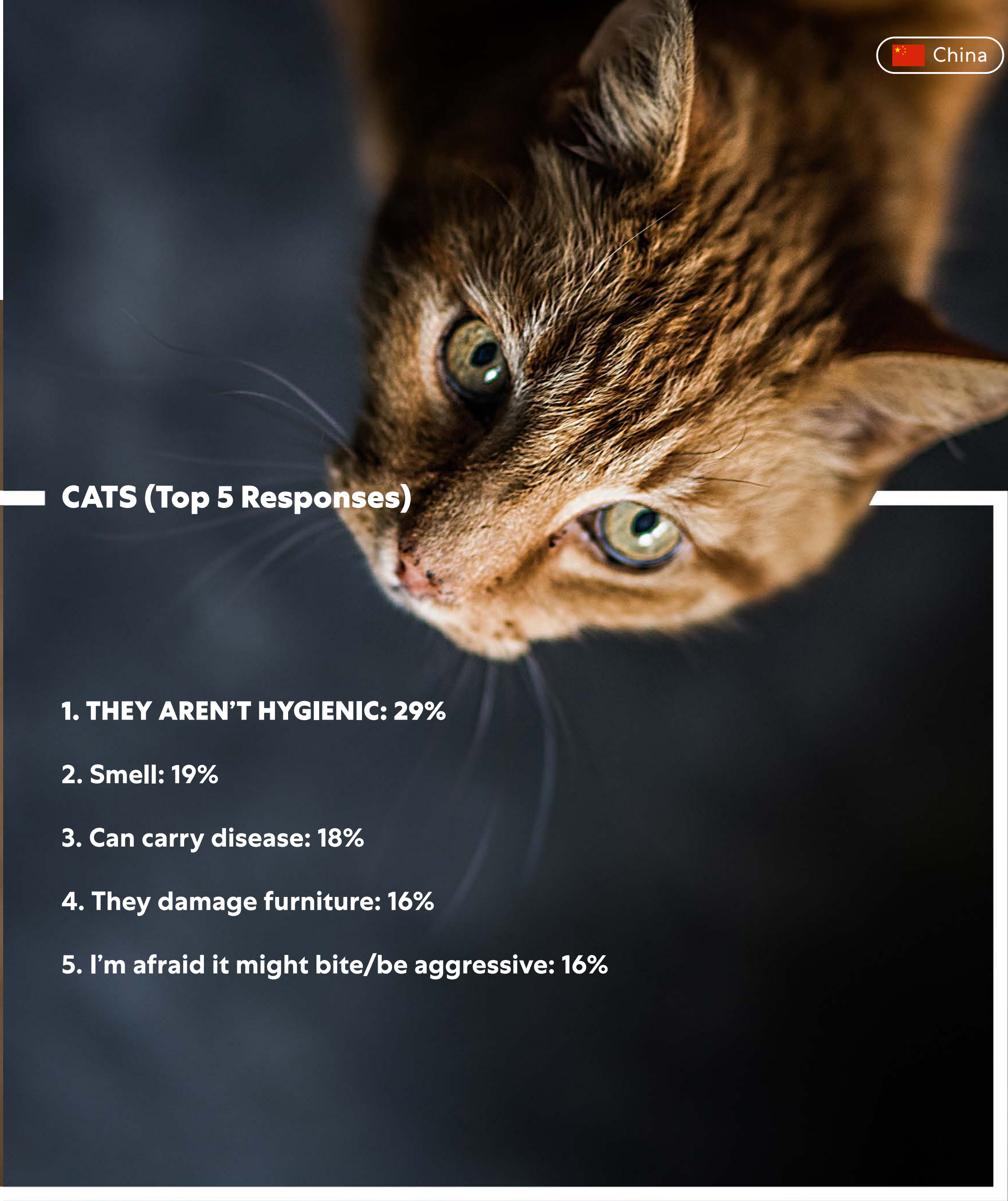


¹Sample definition: 2002 owners and non-owners



WHAT’S PREVENTING YOU FROM OWNING A PET?¹

Reducing the initial barriers to pet ownership makes it easier for more people to become pet parents.



¹Sample definition: 1431 non-dog owners / 1682 non-cat owners

WHAT THE PROFESSIONALS TELL US



Cats are easier to adopt than dogs. Requirements for dogs are higher because you need to have a dog ownership license. In Beijing, some districts don't issue dog ownership certificates to dogs with over 35+ cm of shoulder height."

- Education Manager, Shelter (cats and dogs)



Changing the perception of rescued animals can get far more pets out of shelters and into loving homes.

IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING GETTING A PET, DO YOU PLAN ON ADOPTING FROM A SHELTER?¹

**13%
CONSIDERING
GETTING A DOG
FROM A SHELTER**

**9%
CONSIDERING
GETTING A CAT
FROM A SHELTER**

¹Sample definition: 629 dog considerers / 534 cat considerers



Keeping pets in homes is vital for both pet and owner to benefit from a longstanding bond. Pets are at risk of becoming homeless through being relinquished or abandoned if the pet ownership experience is difficult, or a pet owner can't access the advice and support they need. Pet owning practices which easily allow pets to stray or become lost can also result in owned pets becoming homeless. Our data looks at issues such as the cost of caring for a pet, common pet care practices and the incidence of lost pets.

Pets are lost more frequently than many may realize, leading to an unintended yet noteworthy increase in homeless pets. Keeping pets from straying is a beneficial objective for pets and the people who care for them.

HAVE YOU EVER HAD A PET GO MISSING?¹

DOGS
32% (20.2M)

14% (2.83M) of those who lost their dog got them back.

CATS
18% (10.9M)

19% (2.07M) of those who lost their cat got them back.

HAVE YOU HAD A PET GO MISSING IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?¹

DOGS
4%



CATS
3%

¹Sample definition: 1145 has or had a pet



WHAT ARE THE BEST METHODS TO HELP LOST PETS?¹

Understanding public perceptions of lost pet prevention techniques and how to help find lost pets can focus community efforts and increase utilization.

DOGS (Top 5 Responses)

- 1. TAGS WITH CONTACT DETAILS: 55%
- 2. Microchipping: 36%
- 3. Signs in local community: 21%
- 4. Direct access to contact pet shelters/rescue centers: 20%
- 5. (Tie) Updates in social networks and Local news channels and Communication from shelters when the pet turns up in their shelter: 15%

CATS (Top 5 Responses)

- 1. TAGS WITH CONTACT DETAILS: 63%
- 2. Microchipping: 31%
- 3. Communication from shelters when pets are lost by an owner: 29%
- 4. Signs in local community: 24%
- 5. (Tie) Direct access to contact pet shelters/rescue centers and Local news channels: 21%

IS YOUR PET MICROCHIPPED?²

Microchipping is considered an effective way to permanently identify pets but, crucially, reuniting lost pets with owners via this method relies on owner contact details being registered and kept up to date on the microchip database.

DOGS

11%

CATS

10%

¹Sample definition: 371 has lost a dog / 112 has lost a cat

²Sample definition: 456 current dog owners / 261 current cat owners

WHY MIGHT YOU CONSIDER REHOMING YOUR PET?¹

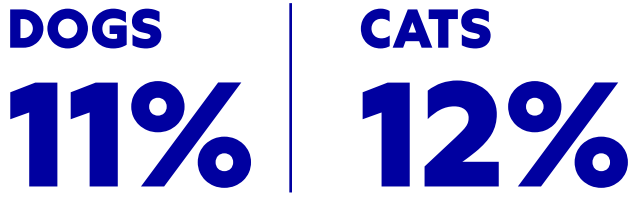
Caring for a pet is a significant commitment of time, energy and money. Understanding the potential causes for rehoming can guide the efforts of organizations and businesses in supporting current pet owners to continue to care for their cat or dog.



¹Sample definition: 571 current or previous dog owners / 320 current or previous cat owners

ARE YOU CONSIDERING GIVING UP YOUR PET IN THE NEXT YEAR²

The benefits of pet ownership are numerous, but when confronted with significant challenges, giving up or rehoming might seem like the only option.



²Sample definition: 456 current dog owners / 261 current cat owners

WHAT THE PROFESSIONALS TELL US

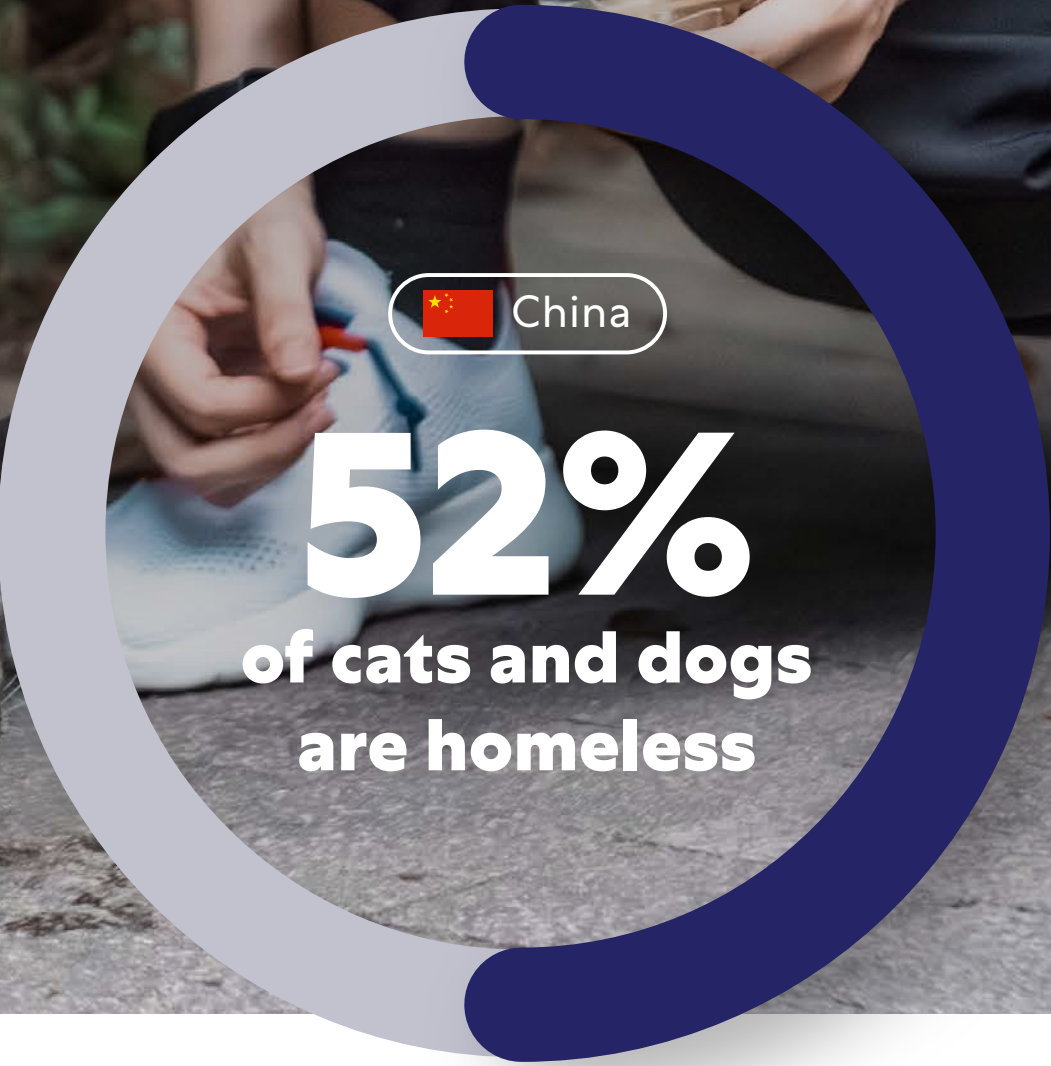
We need to talk a lot of people out of rehoming. If they have really difficult reasons, like having an incurable disease or family accident, we can take back the animals adopted from us, but they need to find solutions on their own if the animals are not adopted from us.”

– Director, Shelter (cats and dogs)



TAKEAWAYS

China is above the global average¹ of 35% homeless cats and dogs. There are significant opportunities to address the stray pet population and help more pets find the sustained human care and nutrition they need to thrive.



PREVENT UNWANTED PETS

Only 24% of cats and dogs are sterilized, leaving the rest potentially able to contribute to the unwanted pet population through unplanned breeding.

Friends and family are the primary source for where cats and dogs are acquired from in China (42% of dogs and 38% of cats).

More than half of the public have acted with kindness when seeing strays (60% for dogs, 53% for cats).

ENSURE SUSTAINED CARE

Findings suggest that many in China are interested in owning pets with 53% of people thinking of getting a dog and 47% thinking about getting a cat in the near future.

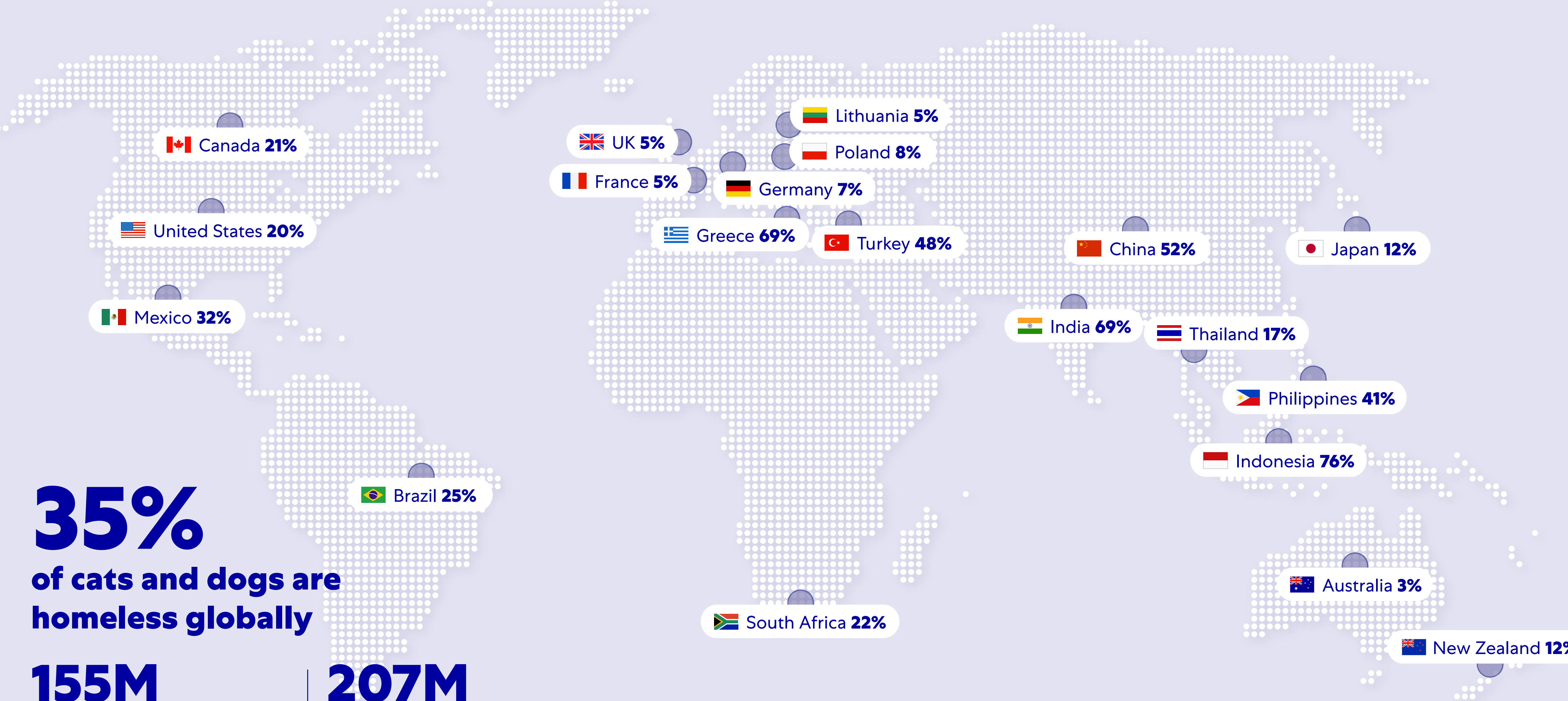
Very few of those surveyed would consider adopting from a shelter (13% for dogs, 9% for cats), despite around a quarter believing that promoting pet adoption is the best way to tackle homelessness (20% for dogs and 25% for cats).

KEEP PETS IN HOMES

Microchipping is low at only 11% of dogs and 10% of cats, and there is a low proportion of lost pets that were ever reunited with their owners (14% of lost dogs and 19% of lost cats).

¹“average” or “global average” refers to the average of the 20 countries included in this project

20 COUNTRIES INCLUDED IN THE STUDY



35%
of cats and dogs are
homeless globally

155M
HOMELESS DOGS

207M
HOMELESS CATS



At Mars, we have worked for many years to play our part in tackling pet homelessness issues around the world, with a wide range of programs, partnerships and donations to support vulnerable pets.

WE ADVOCATE FOR:

- Organizations and individuals to get involved in recognizing, measuring and acting to change the issue of pet homelessness; helping to improve the accuracy and availability of data around the number of homeless pets.
- Pet-friendly government legislation and policies to keep pets and people together and enable more people to benefit from the companionship of pets.
- Pet owner and prospective pet owner education to promote and support responsible pet ownership.
- Programs to help homeless pets find a loving home or receive sustained care.
- Programs to limit the uncontrolled breeding of stray and street pets.
- Programs to reduce the number of pets at risk of becoming homeless.

WHERE DID THE DATA COME FROM:

The data in this report is drawn from three sources:

1. Pet Homelessness estimates based on primary and secondary research conducted by EMI in 2022-2023, and owned pet estimates collected by Mars CMI.
2. Public sample surveys (online and in the field) of pet owners and non-pet owners conducted by Kantar in 2022-2023.
3. Pet Professional interviews, such as shelters and NGOs working in the pet homelessness space.

To find out more about the State of Pet Homelessness Project and the actions that we are taking alongside partners and stakeholders please visit: stateofpethomelessness.com.

The following partner organizations are among those working to drive the efforts to end pet homelessness and are members of the advisory panel of the State of Pet Homelessness Project. Please continue to support them and the local resources in China.





Disclaimer

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this research study are solely the beliefs and personal opinions of the individuals who participated in the interviews or surveys. These perspectives do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of Mars or any affiliated organizations. The purpose of this research is to gather varied viewpoints and insights from different individuals and these should not be interpreted as endorsed or supported by Mars.