

Scientific Assessment of the Austrian Extreme Breeding Commission



Dr. med. vet. Christine Arhant,
DipECAWBM(AWSEL)

on behalf of Chair Person of the Austrian
Extreme Breeding Commission

Priv.-Doz. MMag. Dr. Alexander Tritthart,
LL.M.

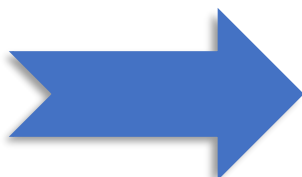


- *Veterinary Specialist (FTA) Animal Welfare & Behavioural Medicine*
- *EBVS® European Veterinary Specialist in Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law*
- Institute of Animal Welfare Science, Vetmeduni Vienna
 - Research focus - welfare of dogs & cats
- Practice Behavioural Medicine Tierfairhalten
- Postdoc at the Office of the Austrian Extreme Breeding Commission (QZK)
 - Located in the Austrian Animal Welfare Centre at the University of Veterinary Medicine (Vetmeduni Vienna)
 - One fulltime / two parttime scientific staff

Change of the Federal Law in 2025



- Forbidden to breed animals when pain, suffering, harm, or distress to the animal or its offspring are foreseeable
 - Examples of symptoms related to extreme breeding expanded
 - Restrictions on importing, purchasing, passing on, exhibiting and advertising animals with extreme breeding symptoms added
- More responsibility to breeders
- Establishment of a scientific commission



Austrian Extreme Breeding Commission

- Currently: duration of five years
- Chairperson: Dr. Alexander Tritthardt
- **Independent experts (18) on**
 - Animal breeding and genetics
 - Animal welfare
 - Ethics
 - Clinical specialties: Orthopaedics, Ophthalmology, Cardiology, Dermatology, Neurology, Diagnostic Imaging, Reproductive Medicine, Respiration, Gastroenterology, Endocrinology etc.

The goal is to support kennel clubs and breeders in developing evidence-based breeding strategies

Current focus of the Commission



- **Framework for assessing significant burden caused by extreme breeding incl. hereditary disease**
 - Six main analytical questions → Burden category and breeding recommendations
- **Brachycephalic dogs**
 - Literature review on problems in brachycephalic dogs
 - Respiration/BOAS, Eyes/BOS, Teeth, Ears, Spine, Nervous system, Skin, Gastrointestinal etc.
 - Incl. genetics & diagnostics
 - Output: Guidelines for veterinarians & breeders
 - *Plus Database search on hereditary diseases by breed*
- **Evaluation of breeding and action programs for pets with the aim of preventing extreme breeding**
 - Programs submitted by kennel clubs/breeders to commission
- Commission works on
 - General requirement for breeding and action programs
 - Which data are needed to assess submitted programs?
 - Breed-specific requirements
 - Conformational problems
 - *Database search on hereditary diseases by breed*
 - Which of these diseases are relevant, e.g. in the European/Austrian population?
 - Which problems are relevant regarding the Austrian law?

Challenges

Limited to no evidence in some areas

No data on prevalence, e.g. in Austria or for specific breeds

High work load (> 200 breeds)

No central registry for results of health testing

Thank you for your attention!