

The rumours that dogs from Eastern or Southern Europe are sold to labs in Germany are in my opinion not true.

1. The German Animal Protection Law allows procedures only on purpose bred animals. Exceptions can be granted by the competent authorities, but these are mainly for wild animals and agricultural animals. It is very unlikely that the authorities grant exceptions for dogs from other countries or from dubious sources.

2. It is known that in Russia, Ukraine and the USA and probably also other countries stray dogs are used in experiments. In Germany dogs with unknown origin and background are regarded as useless for research purposes. In Germany only purpose bred beagles, foxhounds and cross breeds are used. I would not exclude that in very rare cases also dogs from unknown sources are used, but this cannot explain the great number of dogs shipped from Eastern and Southern Europe to Germany.

3. According to the official German statistics of the use of animals for scientific purposes that the use of dogs and cats is quite stable (about 3,000 to 5,000 dogs and about 800 cats per year). Also according to the statistics most of the dogs are bred in registered centres in Germany.

4. The animal shelters in Germany are full of dogs which no-one wants, including so called "fighting dogs" and German shepherds. These dogs often have got psychological disorders and also can cause problems with the authorities (e.g. special licence for certain breeds). That's why not many people want to adopt such a dog. Street dogs from Eastern and Southern Europe are regarded as uncomplicated and grateful. They are very popular pets.

5. There are many German organisations and individuals who try to take care of the huge stray animal problems in East- and South-European countries. They run shelters in those countries, but often see the only realistic chance to help the animals by finding new homes for them in Germany. Some animal welfare organisations in Germany don't support this shipping of stray dogs to Germany, because of the overfilled shelters in Germany. My personal opinion is that, if the stray dogs were not shipped to Germany, it wouldn't relieve the situation in the German shelters, because the stray dogs address a different target group of potential dog owners.

6. The main and in my opinion only problem with this issue is that there are scrupulous people who misuse the popularity of Eastern and Southern stray dogs and make business out of it. So people in Germany should be warned not to buy dogs from dubious business men.

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