



Press Office

60 MILLION PETS LIVING WITH ITALIAN FAMILIES THURSDAY, THE PRESENTATION OF THE 10TH ASSALCO-ZOOMARK REPORT

14.5 million cats and dogs and over 30 million pet fish in Italian homes Zoomark International is ready to open for its 17th edition at BolognaFiere

In Italy there are an estimated 60 million pets, which are considered by their owners as members of the family. They tend to belong to larger than average sized families (2.8 components compared with the average of 2.4). Among the most numerous type of pets are fish, which number almost 30 million, and birds (13 million), a figure that places Italy as the number one country in Europe in terms of bird ownership. There are also almost 7 million dogs, around 7.5 million cats, while other small mammals (such as rabbits, ferrets and rodents such as hamsters, guinea pigs, chinchillas and degus) number 1.8 million and reptiles (tortoises, snakes and iguanas) number around 1.3 million. These are the figures that emerge from the tenth edition of the Assalco-Zoomark Report, the annual overview of pet ownership, which will be presented on Thursday 11th May in Bologna at the opening of Zoomark International 2017, the international fair for pet products and equipment. Speaking at the inauguration will be Franco Boni, President of BolognaFiere, Antonio Bruzzone, General Manager of BolognaFiere, Gianmarco Ferrari, President of ASSALCO (National Association for companies involved in pet care and pet food) and Antonio Manfredi, director of ANMVI (Italian National Association for Veterinary Doctors). The event is in its 17th edition and is organized by BolognaFiere, it will conclude on Sunday 14th May at the Bologna Exhibition Centre.

The Report, which has been compiled by Assalco and Zoomark International, with the contribution of IRI Information Resources and ANMVI, highlights the social role of pets in Italy and the consequent importance that society recognises this fact. Italy is, without doubt, a country that loves animals. Much is being done and much remains to do in order to promote their wellbeing. The Report includes information from the most authoritative sources and many themes relating to the presence of pets in society. Here are some of the highlights of the report: the countries with the most advanced legislation for safeguarding and respecting animals, such as Austria, Germany and Switzerland, recognise animals' status as sentient beings, not only in legislation and civil law but also in those countries' constitutions. Another aspect, which has been noted by various sources, relates to the importance of the social acknowledgement of pets through the inclusion in the next population census in Italy and through the creation of a national pet registry (currently being considered and reported in the Act of Address 2017 of the Ministry of Health). This would enable also the compilation of more accurate information relating to the pet populations, as already happens in Belgium and France, where there are already shared databases on a national level. This would make research even more reliable as it is currently necessary to rely on estimates when trying to evaluate the presence of pets in Italy.

Of equal importance is the theme of further facilitating pet access to bars, cafes, stores and public premises, an aspect that the private sector, in particular that of hotels and hospitality has been able to respond to. According to a study by the hotel booking company Hotel Tonight, in fact, 50% of hotels are pet friendly. In this respect Italy is well above the global average (which is around 37%) and the European average (40%). Finally, due to the fact that pets' wellbeing passes through care for their health and their diet, a recent investigation has claimed that 70% of Italian pet owners consider that these costs are subject to excessive levels of taxation, which are comparable to



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those for luxury goods. Veterinary care and pet food are, in fact, taxed at a rate of 22% VAT, a level which is one of the highest in Europe.

In spite of this, Italians are particularly careful to guarantee the utmost quality of life possible for their pets. 77% of pets in Italy are fed with industrial pet food, 85% of vets recommend it because they believe it to be balanced, nutritious and safe.) Nine out of ten pet owners have a particular vet that they see and 85% visit the vet at least once per year. It is usually women that accompany pets to the vet (68.5%). The proportion of men taking the pets to the vet is increasing, however from 24.7% ten years ago to 31.5% today.

The Assalco Zoomark 2017 Report will be available from 11th May at www.zoomark.it and www.assalco.it.

Bologna, 9th May 2017

Zoomark International, is Europe's leading biennial fair (held in odd-numbered years) and is organized by BolognaFiere. The previous edition in 2015 involved 615 exhibitors, of which 394 came from overseas. Visitor numbers reached a total of 22,299, of which 15,526 were Italian buyers and 6,773 foreign buyers (+15% compared with the previous edition in 2013) from 85 different countries. Further information is available at www.zoomark.it.

ASSALCO - the National Association for companies involved in the sector for pet food and pet care, represents the main companies in these sectors operating in Italy. The companies that belong to the association today represent almost the entire national market for pet food. On a European level ASSALCO belongs to FEDIAF, the European Pet Food Industry Federation.

**Zoomark International 2017
Press Office**
Mediarkè srl
tel. +39 06 45476584
zoomark.ufficiostampa@mediarke.it

**ASSALCO
Press Office**
Silvia Colleoni / Martina Balconi
Cohn & Wolfe
tel.+39 02 20239.1
silvia.colleoni@cohnwolfe.com
martina.balconi.ce@cohnwolfe.com

**BolognaFiere SpA
Press Office**
Gregory Picco
tel:+39 051 282862
gregory.picco@bolognafiere.it