

# Annual Report 2016

## Summary of issues related to breeding and health



### 1 STARTING POINTS FOR THE FINNISH KENNEL CLUB'S OPERATIONS IN 2016

#### 1.1 Connection to the operational strategy

The Annual Report of 2016 is based on the Finnish Kennel Club's operational strategy, which follows the operational strategy for 2007-2016 that was approved by the Council on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016. The Club's goal is the realisation of the vision. In 2016, The Club operated in accordance with the values set in the operational strategy.

#### 1.2 Objectives and tasks of the Finnish Kennel Club

The Finnish Kennel Club is a nationwide expert organisation on canine matters. Its aim is to promote the breeding of pedigree dogs, support diverse dog-related activities and improve dog-keeping standards in Finland. The Finnish Kennel Club disseminates expert information and serves as a comprehensive lobbying organisation for Finnish and international dog activities.

#### 1.3 Values

##### **An open kennel community**

Our activities are transparent and democratic, international and open to interaction.

##### **A healthy, socially acceptable dog**

We maintain and develop healthy dogs that are typical for their breed for diverse companionship, hobby and working purposes.

##### **Native breeds – Finland's national treasures**

We safeguard the vitality and appreciation of Finland's native breeds domestically and internationally by maintaining and developing their original hunting and other working characteristics.

##### **Diverse expertise in canine matters**

We take the initiative to respond to changes in the needs and expectations of dogs, people and the operating environment.

#### 1.4 Vision

The Finnish Kennel Club is a publicly recognised central organisation for dog-related activities in Finland, and the only official keeper of a dog register in Finland.

The Finnish Kennel Club is heard in all dog-related issues in our society's decision-making.

For both the society and the private individual, a dog is an important and useful partner both as company, in hobbies and at work.

The Finnish Kennel Club provides a strong setting for organised kennel activities and for dog-keeping in Finland.

With its youth activities, the Finnish Kennel Club guarantees the continuity of dog activities.

## 1.8 Implementation of Breeding Strategy

The guidelines for dog breeding, set by the Finnish Kennel Club, and the steering of dog breeding are defined in the Club's General Breeding Strategy<sup>1</sup>. The aim of the Breeding Strategy is to improve the health of also those breeds which are in a more troublesome situation. A conformation that is healthy and unexaggerated as well as a balanced character are fundamental prerequisites for a dog's everyday welfare. The aim of the strategy is also to safeguard the genetic diversity of the breeds.

Many practical actions of the Club furthered the realisation of the Council-approved General Breeding Strategy as well as the Club's General Breeding Programme which is based on the Breeding Strategy.

Show judges drew up reports at International and Speciality shows. The judges' reports are in connection with the Breed Specific Instructions (BSI)<sup>2</sup> set up by the Nordic Kennel Union (NKU)<sup>3</sup>. The BSI concentrate on observing exaggerated features in quality grading.

The Finnish Kennel Club has templates for breeding inspections regarding both behaviour and exterior, that are suitable for all breeds, as well as general instructions for the inspections. The breeding inspection regarding behaviour concentrated particularly on situations that dogs face in everyday life. In the breeding inspection regarding exterior, attention was also paid to possible exaggerated features of the exterior. The inspections were intended to be used as tools for breed clubs interested in the matter. The Finnish Kennel Club received reports of official breeding inspections of behaviour and exterior of seven breeds. Education for Breeding Inspectors and officials was held on 11<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> June in Klaukkala, Southern Finland.

The Finnish Kennel Club continued the reform project of the Dog Registry Guideline. The reform aims at taking the General Breeding Strategy into account better than before.

A representative of the office did some live interviews on TV and radio and gave lectures for veterinary students with the subject *Breeding Programmes of the Finnish Kennel Club*. The Finnish Kennel Club also had its own stand at the seminar of the Finnish Association of Veterinary Practitioners held on 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> March in Tampere as well as at the Annual Veterinary Congress 30<sup>th</sup> November – 2<sup>nd</sup> December in Helsinki.

The Finnish Kennel Club was also a member of the international organisation International Partnership For Dogs (IPFD). One of the IPFD's purposes was to maintain the DogWellNet website. The aim of DogWellNet was to connect the forces of several actors that register dogs and collect and produce information, to improve dog health and welfare as well as to share information in a centralised manner. The website was supplied with information on the Club's breeding-related guidelines, Breeding Strategy, cross-breeding and good results achieved when combating hip dysplasia.

During the year, a new guideline for radiography and classification of shoulder joint osteochondritis as well as for radiography and classification of elbow joint incongruence in chondrodystrophic breeds were prepared. The effective date of these guidelines depends however on when the digital system for saving the results is completed.

The Finnish Kennel Club counted and published BLUP index results for hip dysplasia for nearly 60 breeds and for elbow dysplasia for 12 breeds during the year. Indexes are the most reliable tool for combating these diseases. Progress is made if the mean value of the indexes of the dam and the sire exceeds 100. The hereditary progress of index breeds was monitored. Some of the index breeds have not yet exploited indexes as a tool in breeding. Spondylosis indexes for Boxers were updated to be used by the breed club.

By the end of the year, altogether 165 breeds had a valid Breed-specific Breeding Programme<sup>4</sup> approved by the Finnish Kennel Club. The programme is valid for five years at a time at the most, after which it needs to be updated. During 2016,

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.kennelliitto.fi/sites/default/files/media/breeding\\_strategy\\_0.pdf](https://www.kennelliitto.fi/sites/default/files/media/breeding_strategy_0.pdf)

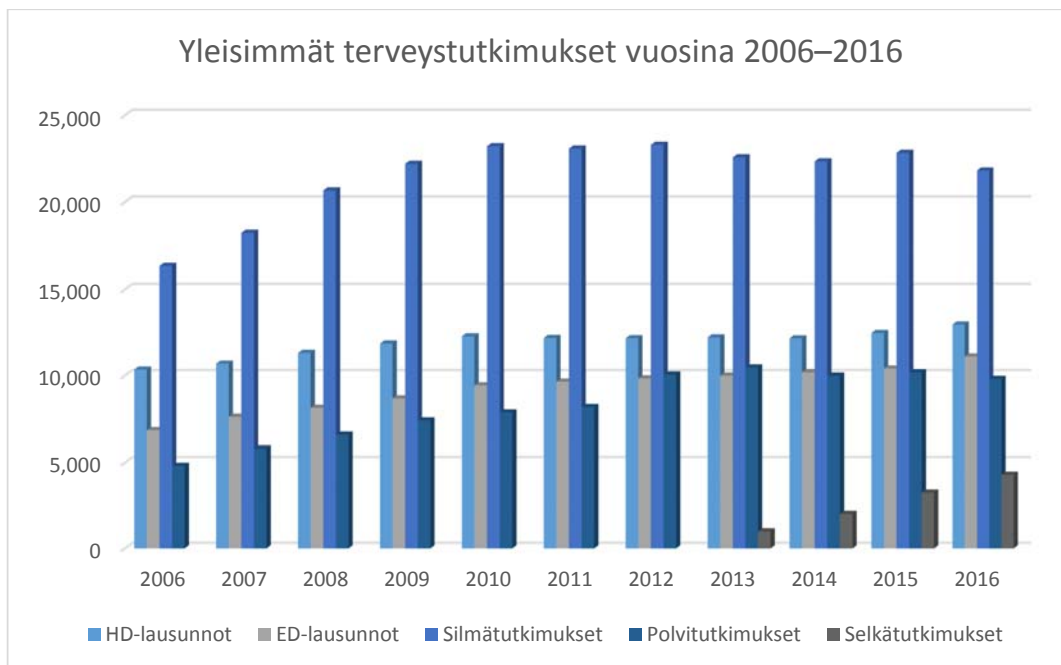
<sup>2</sup> [https://www.kennelliitto.fi/sites/default/files/media/special-breed-specific-instructions-a8\\_0.pdf](https://www.kennelliitto.fi/sites/default/files/media/special-breed-specific-instructions-a8_0.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.skk.se/en/NKU-home/>

<sup>4</sup> Breed-specific Breeding Programmes are drawn up by the breed clubs and approved by the Finnish Kennel Club. They are mandatory for breeds with more than 50 registrations per year and take up topics such as the breeds current situation, population, character and working qualities, health and reproduction, exterior and goals to be achieved by breeding.

131 (129) breeds were included in the Programme to combat hereditary diseases and defects (PEVISA)<sup>5</sup>, having different breed-specific conditions that influence the choice of combination.

In the following table, the most common health examinations of the last ten years are presented. In 2016, eye examinations were performed the most, HD evaluations achieved the second highest number.



**Table 1. The most common health examinations in 2006–2016.** Explanations: *HD-lausunnot* = HD evaluations, *ED-lausunnot* = ED evaluations, *Silmätutkimukset* = Eye examinations, *Polvitutkimukset* = Patella examinations, *Selkätutkimukset* = Spinal examinations.

A dog owner had the possibility to report the time and cause of death of his or her dog via the Omakoira member service<sup>6</sup>. It was possible to examine this information in the Breeding Database breed by breed. In 2016, the cause of death of 95,800 (84,000) dogs were reported to the Finnish Kennel Club.

The Finnish Kennel Club prepared the establishment of a gene bank together with the breed clubs of Finnish breeds<sup>7</sup> and Natural Resources Institute Finland.

<sup>5</sup> Each breed within the PEVISA programme have laid their own restrictions for registration regarding health results of the sire and the dam. For example, to register a litter of Dalmatians, the sire and the dam both need to have HD results with the result C or better. Another example is the Labrador Retriever; to register a litter of Labradors, the sire and the dam need to have an HD result as well as be eye examined. An eye examination results is valid for 24 months for Labradors, after which it's no longer valid and needs to be renewed if the breeder wishes to use the dog for breeding. Some breeds may also have requirements such as spinal examinations, elbow evaluations, heart examinations or patella examinations.

<sup>6</sup> Omakoira is Finnish Kennel Club's online member service, where members can for example pay their membership fees and their dogs health examination fees to the Club. Members can also report their dogs' death, order a Champion diploma etc. Veterinarians use the service as well when saving examination results and sending x-rays to the Finnish Kennel Club for evaluation. Also breed clubs and kennel districts use the service for example when applying for permission to organize dog shows, trials etc.

<sup>7</sup> Finnish Spitz, Finnish Hound, Finnish Lapphund, Lapponian Herder and Karelian Bear Dog.

## Committees under the Board

### Scientific Committee

The Committee's field of activity include matters related to breeding, veterinary medicine and registrations, so far as the matter does not lie with the Breeder Committee. The Scientific Committee prepared matters to be treated by the Board and that were included in its field of activity and made independent decisions within the framework of the guidelines set for its activities. The Committee collected, produced and shared information on dog health and breeding. The Scientific Committee was composed of dog breeding and veterinary medicine experts.

The Committee convened ten times.

Members: Kirsi Sainio (chair) (10/10), Sade Hohteri (vice chair) (8/10), Tuire Kaimio (10/10), Juha Kallio (5/10), Nina Menna (8/10), Esa Ojanen (8/10), Maija Päivärinta (7/10) and Maaret Tapio (10/10). Furthermore, the meetings were attended by the expert at the Finnish Kennel Club's office Katariina Mäki (9/10) as well as Anu Lappalainen (9/10), who served as a member at the first meeting and, starting from meeting 2/2016, as an external expert to the Committee. Päivi Rantasalo (9/10) served as the introducer and as the secretary of the Committee.

The Committee treated 45 (43) proposals for breed-specific breeding programmes (JTO) during the year. The Committee found 39 (37) of these proposals as acceptable with possible alterations and two (2) proposals were returned for complementation. The Committee issued only preliminary opinions on four proposals. The Committee treated programmes to combat hereditary diseases and defects (PEVISA) for altogether 36 (48) breeds.

The committee prepared updates for the following instructions: Dog Registry Guideline, Guideline for Artificial Insemination, Guideline for drawing up a Breed-specific Breeding Programme, Guideline for taking a DNA-sample and Saving the results as well as the Guideline for Identification Marking of Puppies. Furthermore, the Committee prepared the following new instructions: Guideline for radiography and classification of shoulder joint osteochondritis, Guideline for radiography and classification of elbow joint incongruence for chondrodystrophic breeds, and Guideline for walk tests.

The Scientific Committee negotiated with the representatives of Chihuahuas, Italian Greyhounds, Leonbergers, Rottweilers and German Shepherds of their respective breeds. In addition, unclarities in pedigrees of some working dog breeds were negotiated with their respective representatives.

In the framework of the Working Group for Health Mapping of breeds, a guideline for walk tests for brachycephalic breeds was prepared. The test results are utilised while steering the breeding of breeds concerned.

The Committee gave suggestions for improving the Breeding Database<sup>8</sup>. Furthermore, the Committee produced articles on hereditary diseases and breeding to the Finnish Kennel Club website. Members of the Committee also wrote articles to the Club's member magazine Koiramme<sup>9</sup> as well as to breed club publications.

The Committee continued to plan the more extensive reform of the Dog Registry Guideline.

A consultation meeting between the Breeder Commission and the Scientific Commission convened on 14th September.

The Committee treated alterations in the breed-specific conditions for registration for 5 (6) breeds and made some changes to this list on a more general level as well. Furthermore, the Committee treated altogether seven (2) matters of unclear parentage, 13 (14) applications of transferring a dog between the EJ<sup>10</sup> registry and the FI/ER registry, 12 (9) applications for a special permit, 2 applications for cross-breeding, 5 (12) cases of breeding with or registration of a dog registered outside the FCI, and 20 (27) other registration-related applications or issues.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://jalostus.kennelliitto.fi/frmEtusivu.aspx?FCI=0> Can be used both in Finnish, Swedish and English.

<sup>9</sup> Finnish Kennel Club's Koiramme magazine is sent out to members 11 times per year and can also be found at most stores and libraries in Finland, reaching some 344,000 readers.

<sup>10</sup> The EJ registry is meant for dogs that are not be used for breeding, most commonly due to health issues. The FI registry is the main registry and the ER registry an appendix to the studbook.

## **Events and education**

Introductory Course for breeding advisers<sup>11</sup> was held on 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> November in Jyväskylä. There were 110 participants at the course.

NKU Scientific Commission convened on 1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> June in Uppsala, Sweden. Kirsi Sainio and Katariina Mäki attended the meeting. They also attended the NKU DNA Working Group meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> May in Uppsala.

A working group for brachycephalic dogs appointed by the NKU had two ordinary meetings, the first one on 17<sup>th</sup> August in Helsinki and the second one on 29<sup>th</sup> November in Stockholm. In addition, the working group convened to two video meetings, to which the Finnish Kennel Club's representatives Kirsi Sainio, Tiina Taulos and Katariina Mäki attended.

Anu Lappalainen, Annie Liman and Vilma Reunanen attended NKU's Nordic X-ray Panel meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January in Oslo and on 23<sup>rd</sup> August in Helsinki.

Kirsi Sainio participated in the activities of the FCI Scientific Commission.

Members of the Committee actively joined the social discussion on dog health and diseases as well as attended breed club events as experts.

## **Working groups under the Committee**

### **Working Group for Skeletal and Joint Diseases**

The working group convened four times.

Juha Kallio (chair), Anu Lappalainen, Vilma Reunanen, Anu Saikku-Bäckström, Marjatta Snellman and Annie Liman

### **Working Group for Eye Diseases**

The working group convened two times.

Tuire Kaimio (chair), Sari Jalomäki, Elina Pietilä and Päivi Vanhapelto (eye examiners as representatives of Finnish Society of Veterinary Ophthalmology)

### **DNA Working Group**

The working group convened once.

Kirsi Sainio (chair), Päivi Jokinen and Inka Vaskimo.

### **Working Group for Dog Health Care**

The working group convened eight times.

Maaret Tapio (chair), Jessica Aschberg, Merja Dahlbom, Iris Kaimio, Sanna Koponen (from 1st May), Lena Lindh and Maija Päivärinta as well as Theresia Wikström as the Breeder Committee representative.

### **Cardiac Working Group**

The working group convened three times.

Kirsi Sainio (chair), Anders Eriksson, Nina Menna and Maria Wiberg.

### **Neurology Working Group**

The working group convened twice.

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<sup>11</sup> Breeding advisers are breed club representatives who, for example, answer breeding-related questions the breeders may pose and help selecting a suitable dam or sire for the litter, if needed.

Maaret Tapio (chair), Anu Lappalainen, Sigitas Cizinauskas, Anna-Mariam Kiviranta and Tarja Pääkkönen. Katariina Mäki was the secretary of the Working Group.

#### **Working Group for Breeding of Behaviour**

The working group convened twelve times.

Tuire Kaimio (chair), Auli Kiminki, Riitta Liimatainen, Pirita Pärssinen and Maaret Tapio.

#### **Working Group for Health Mapping of Breeds**

The working group convened once.

Kirsi Sainio was the convoker of the meeting. The Working Group for Walk Tests operated within the framework of the Working Group, consisting of Kirsi Sainio, Anu Lappalainen, Liisa Lilja-Maula, Minna Rajamäki and Katariina Mäki. The Working Group prepared a proposal for a Guideline for walk tests.

### **Breeder Committee**

The Breeder Committee operates under the Board as an expert organ, preparing different issues regarding dog breeding and the set of norms in relation to breeding, protection of animals, kennel consulting, identification marking and the Vuolasvirta prize for merited breeders. The Committee was responsible, where applicable, of matters regarding registrations and different special permits, as far as they do not lie with the Scientific Committee. The Committee prepared actions for the Board regarding disciplinary measures on breeders.

The members of the Committee have been chosen by the Board and are experts in breeding registered pedigree dogs as well as experts in breed club activities.

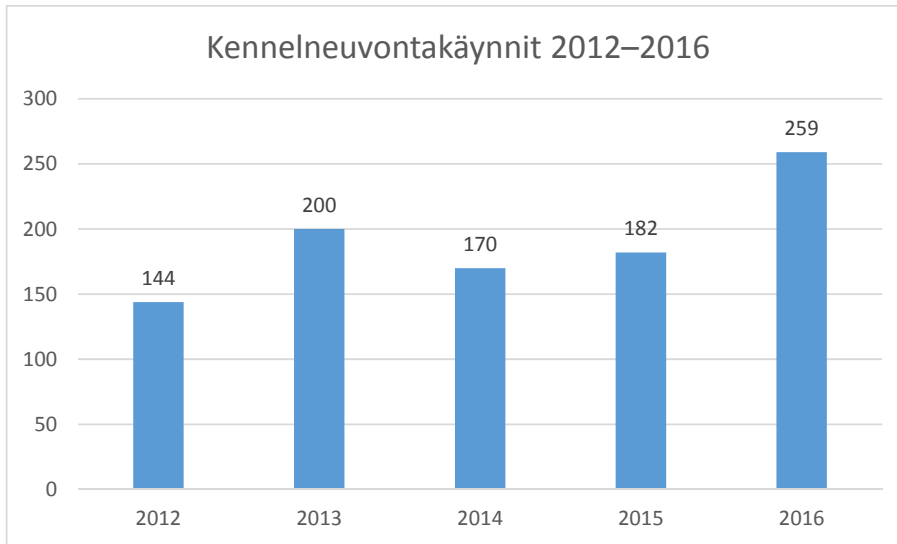
The Committee convened to 12 meetings of which 4 were e-mail meetings.

Members: Pertti Korhonen (chair) (12/12), Anu Suikkanen (vice chair) (11/12), Marja Blomqvist (4/12) during 1<sup>st</sup> January–15<sup>th</sup> June, Voitto Valta (9/12), also partially connected by phone, Theresia Vikström (6/12), Jessica Löfgren-Eriksson (0/12) during 1<sup>st</sup> January–4<sup>th</sup> February, Merja Dahlbom (8/12) from 17<sup>th</sup> March, Paulina Hermunen (4/12) from 18<sup>th</sup> August. Johanna Kuru (9/12) served as the introducer and as the secretary of the Committee. Eva Bensky served as the introducer in a few issues related to her work duties at the Club's Office (4/12) and as the introducer at two meetings as well as in one e-mail meeting. Katariina Suomi served as the introducer in issues related to kennel consulting (4/12).

In the end of the year, there were 36 active kennel consultants<sup>12</sup> in 16 different kennel districts. Three kennel consultants from different kennel districts were on a leave of absence. In 2016, kennel consultants did 259 kennel consultancy visits to breeders.

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<sup>12</sup> Kennel consultants are the Finnish Kennel Club's elected officials who visit breeders at their kennels and advise them on breeding, dog-keeping etc. A breeder may also ask a kennel consultant to come and visit on his or her own initiative.



**Table 2. Kennel Consulting visits 2012–2016**

Kennel consultants answered many inquiries by e-mail, did active counselling by phone, and took more than 200 DNA samples of dogs. Kennel consultants gave lectures 60 times at different dog events and at the Finnish Kennel Club's courses.

In the autumn, vacant posts of kennel consultants were advertised. The national search for kennel consultants was advertised both in the Koiramme magazine and on the Finnish Kennel Club's website. Due to this, a lot of applications meeting the requirements for kennel consultancy was received.

It was found that the Guideline for Kennel Consultants and the Work Instruction for Kennel Consultants needed some updating, both of which are administered by the Breeder Committee. The Breeder Committee presented the updated guidelines to the Board. The Board approved of the updated guidelines. The updated Guideline for Kennel Consultants and Work Instruction for Kennel Consultants entered into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.

The Breeder Committee treated 143 (137) issues in 2016. During the year, the Committee proposed to the Board that 15 issues (54) would be reported to the Disciplinary Board. The Committee proposed to the Board a warning to be given in 12 (8) issues. The Committee also worked a lot on different disputes between breeders and dog buyers as well as owners and possessors of dogs. In most of these disputes, the Finnish Kennel Club did not have jurisdiction. The Breeder Committee made 21 other proposals to the Board.

Since the Committee had delegated these issues to the Club's Office, it treated only 5(11) different applications on registration and 9 different applications regarding kennel names.

The Committee made a proposal to the Board to grant 42 kennel names the Lauri Vuolasvirta prize for merited breeding, of which the Board approved of.

### Events and education

Kennel consulting activities were further developed in 2016. A seminar for kennel consultants was held on 28<sup>th</sup>–29<sup>th</sup> of February in Hämeenlinna. 29 kennel consultants participated in the seminar. Cooperation with other animal protective actors was discussed as well as challenges and changes in the kennel consultants' work. Kennel consultants were also educated at the Club Congress<sup>13</sup> on 15<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> October in Vantaa. 17 kennel consultants participated in the event. The

<sup>13</sup> Seminar for member clubs of the Finnish Kennel Club.

person in charge of kennel consultancy, together with three kennel consultants, took part in the Annual Veterinary Congress on 30<sup>th</sup> November–2<sup>nd</sup> December.

Kennel consultants also participated in the activities within their own district and took part in the Annual Veterinary Congress at Helsinki Fair Centre together with the Scientific Committee. Participants were informed about kennel consulting as a service and a brochure on the subject was handed out. Furthermore, several new contacts with official veterinarians, municipality veterinarians as well as other animal welfare actors were created. Five kennel consultants participated in Dog Fair Finland<sup>14</sup> at the Finnish Kennel Club's stand, answering questions posed by clients and by giving information about kennel counselling.

Anu Suikkanen, a member of the Breeder Committee, gave a presentation at KoiraExpo<sup>15</sup> on 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> December, on breed club's possibilities to improve comprehensive dog breeding. Marja Blomqvist, a member of the Breeder Committee, gave a presentation with Eva Bensky at the Kennel Consulting course on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February on the subject *Finnish Kennel Club's new contractual basis*. Pertti Korhonen, chair of the Breeder Committee, opened the course and resolved it at the end of the weekend with a summary on all conversations and lectures given at the event.

Breeder Committee and Scientific Committee organised two courses by the title *Dog Breeding Today*. The course is based on the Finnish Kennel Clubs General Breeding Strategy. Breeders can update their knowledge at the course of current topics related to breeding. *Dog Breeding Today* courses are indented to offer the breeders a forum where they can share their experiences and thoughts with other breeders as well as ask experts in different fields some questions. The first course was held on 23<sup>rd</sup>–24<sup>th</sup> of April and the second one as a one-day course in Swedish<sup>16</sup> in Mariehamn on 5<sup>th</sup> March. Members of the Breeder Committee, Merja Blomqvist and Anu Suikkanen, gave lectures at the course held in Turku. Chair Pertti Korhonen opened and resolved the course.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.koiramessut.fi/en>

<sup>15</sup> KoiraExpo is a seminar event hosted by the Finnish Kennel Club. The event is an educational event with several lectures on different topics, and is meant for kennel districts, breed clubs and all members of the Finnish Kennel Club.

<sup>16</sup> Finland is a country with two official languages, Finnish and Swedish. As such, also the Finnish Kennel Club is bilingual and provides its members with information in both languages.



APPENDIX 3 REGISTRATIONS, EXAMINATIONS AND OWNERSHIP DECLARATIONS

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Registrations	45,891	50,059	53,047	50,805	51,399	50,002	49,743	46,904	46,426	46,919	46,237
HD results	10,350	10,693	11,316	11,855	12,277	12,199	12,182	12,226	12,157	12,455	12,985
ED results	6,858	7,632	8,154	8,695	9,452	9,678	9,857	10,028	10,212	10,411	11,097
Spondylosis					142	194	337	991	2,001	3,257	2,541
Interverbal disc disease (IDD)	11	17	30	41	33	48	51	89	215	197	250
Vertebral Anomaly							(2)	227	1,139	1,886	2,949
Lumbosacral Transitional Vertebra								402	2,077	3,203	4,283
Eye examinations	16,361	18,269	20,674	22,208	23,220	23,084	23,302	22,578	22,349	22,842	21,821
Patella examinations	4,822	5,815	6,599	7,413	7,880	8,190	10,059	10,472	9,998	10,193	9,805
Heart examinations	944	1,314	1,981	2,335	2,675	3,281	3,483	3,511	3,624	3,434	3,518
Veterinary certificates	601	717	728	839	938	1,167	1,251	1,299	1,271	1,302	1,290
Liver examinations	162	196	178	145	155	123	87	90	72	105	44
Syringomyelia									71	70	89
<b>Examinations in total</b>	<b>40,109</b>	<b>44,656</b>	<b>49,660</b>	<b>53,531</b>	<b>56,772</b>	<b>57,964</b>	<b>60,609</b>	<b>61,913</b>	<b>65,186</b>	<b>69,355</b>	<b>69,382</b>
Identification markings in total		39,543	43,980	60,062	52,342	52,528	50,675	46,698	46,765	46,089	46,044
Ownership declarations		48,471	46,597	53,536	62,624	63,240	59,482	57,421	55,756	57,588	58,408
Kennel names granted by the FCI		802	690	955	829	835	801	714	783	676	586