



# Q1-Q3 analysis 2019-2020-2021

Shelter Animals Count is a collaborative nonprofit organization that is home to The National Database of sheltered animal statistics.

View data from more than 5,000 organizations  
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**Shelter Animals Count** is a collaborative industry-led nonprofit organization formed by a diverse group of stakeholders to create, share and steward The National Database of sheltered animal statistics, providing facts, and enabling insights that will save lives.

[WWW.SHELTERANIMALSCOUNT.ORG](http://WWW.SHELTERANIMALSCOUNT.ORG)

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This report shows comparative data on sheltered animals (canines and felines) from Q1-Q3 (January-September) for 2019, 2020, and 2021. The data is comprised of organizations that reported complete data to Shelter Animals Count for all 27 months. This report reflects data from 510 organizations.

Since there is no national requirement for reporting, all the data is self-reported and contains natural under and over sampling biases in both the geographic and organization type dimensions. In other words, some areas had a greater level of reporting than others.

In this report, we are looking at a three year span of data from 2019, 2020, and 2021. In many instances, we provide statistics comparing 2019 to 2021.

## DEFINITIONS

### Total Live Outcomes

Adoption, return to owner (RTO), return to field, transfer, and other live outcomes.

### Total Non-Live Outcomes

Died in care, lost in care, shelter euthanasia, and owner requested euthanasia.

### Total Outcomes

Includes all live and non-live outcomes.

### Total Intakes

Stray, relinquished by owner, owner-intended euthanasia, transfers in, seized or impounded, other intakes (born in care, etc.)

# HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY-SEPTEMBER, 2019, 2020, 2021 | 510 ORGANIZATIONS

1

The number of **pets in need of sheltering services** increased from 2020 to 2021 for relinquished by owner and stray intake types, but still remained lower than before the pandemic in 2019.

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2

Looking at intakes as a whole, **the % of intake type remained largely unchanged** over the past 3 years.

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3

The percent of **pets who are relinquished by owners** has remained constant at 25% over the past 3 years.

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4

The **live outcome rate continues to increase** each year.

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5

**Adoption as a percent of total outcomes** in 2021 was similar to 2020 (57%), and still a 4% increase compared to 2019, despite fewer animals entering shelters, even after returning to a “new normal.”

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6

The number of **pets being euthanized continues to decrease** in both number and as a percent of total outcomes.

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**SHELTER  
ANIMALS  
COUNT**

THE NATIONAL DATABASE

# ORGANIZATIONS

# 510

## ORGANIZATIONS

WITH COMPLETE DATA FROM  
JANUARY-SEPTEMBER IN  
2019, 2020, 2021

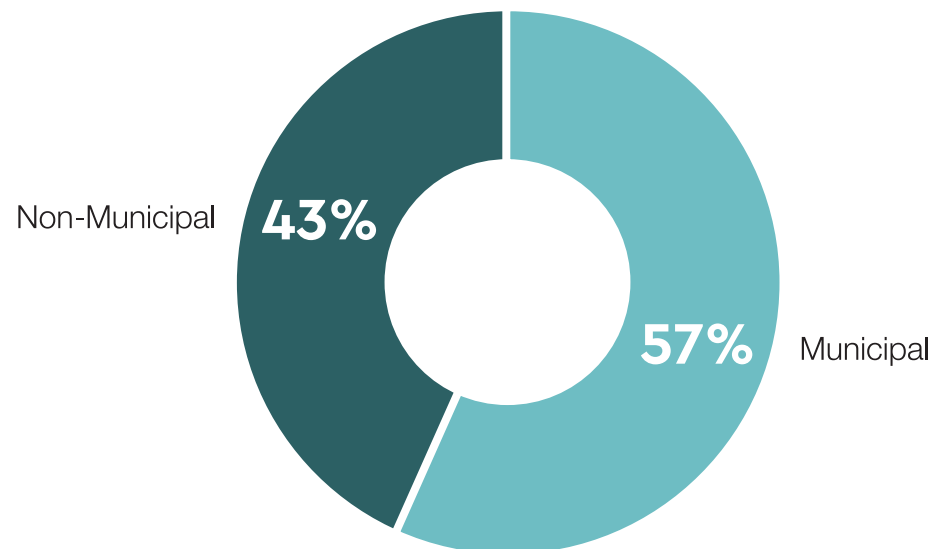
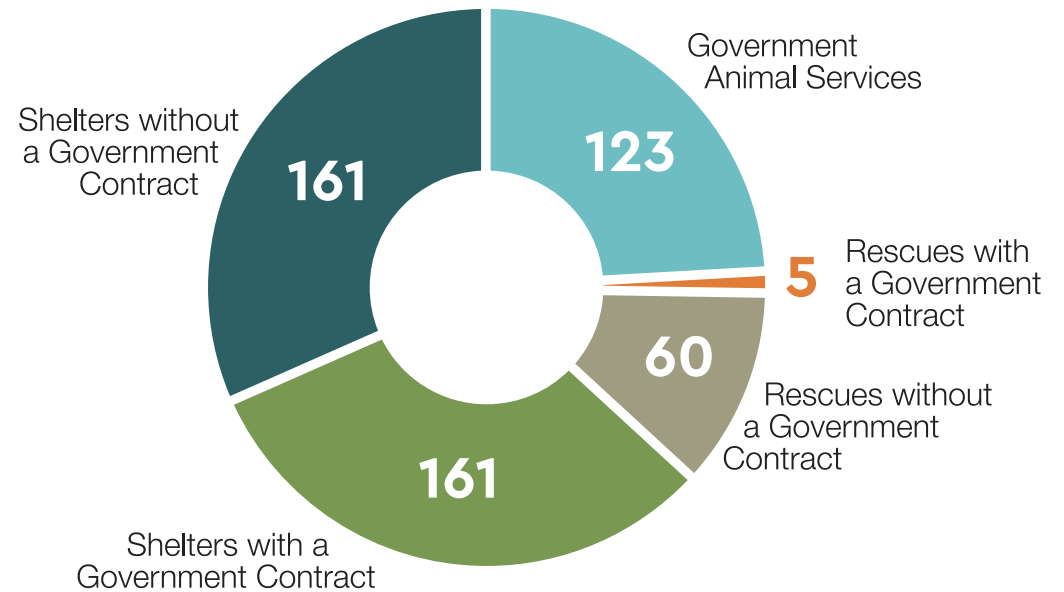


FELINES

AND

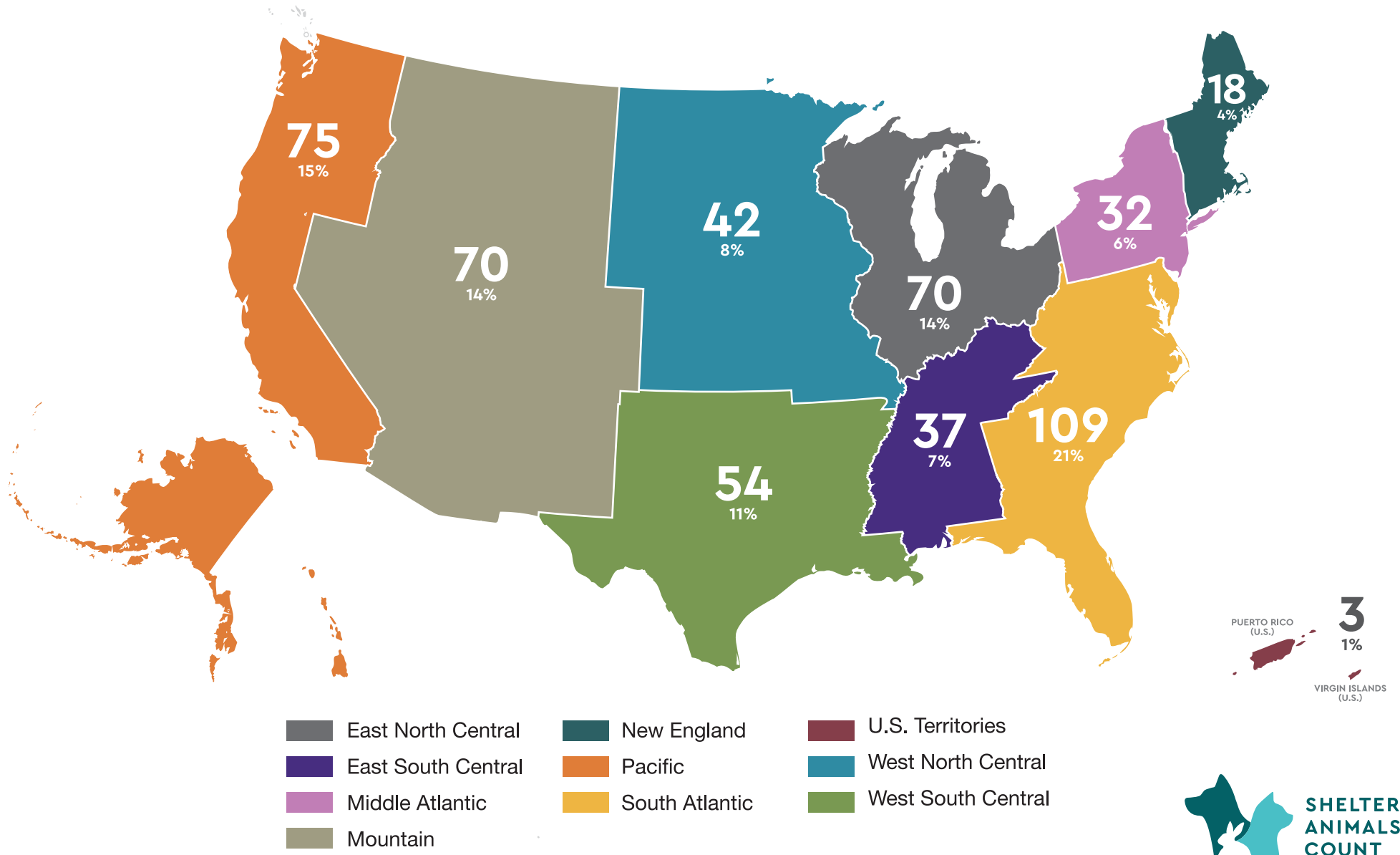


CANINES

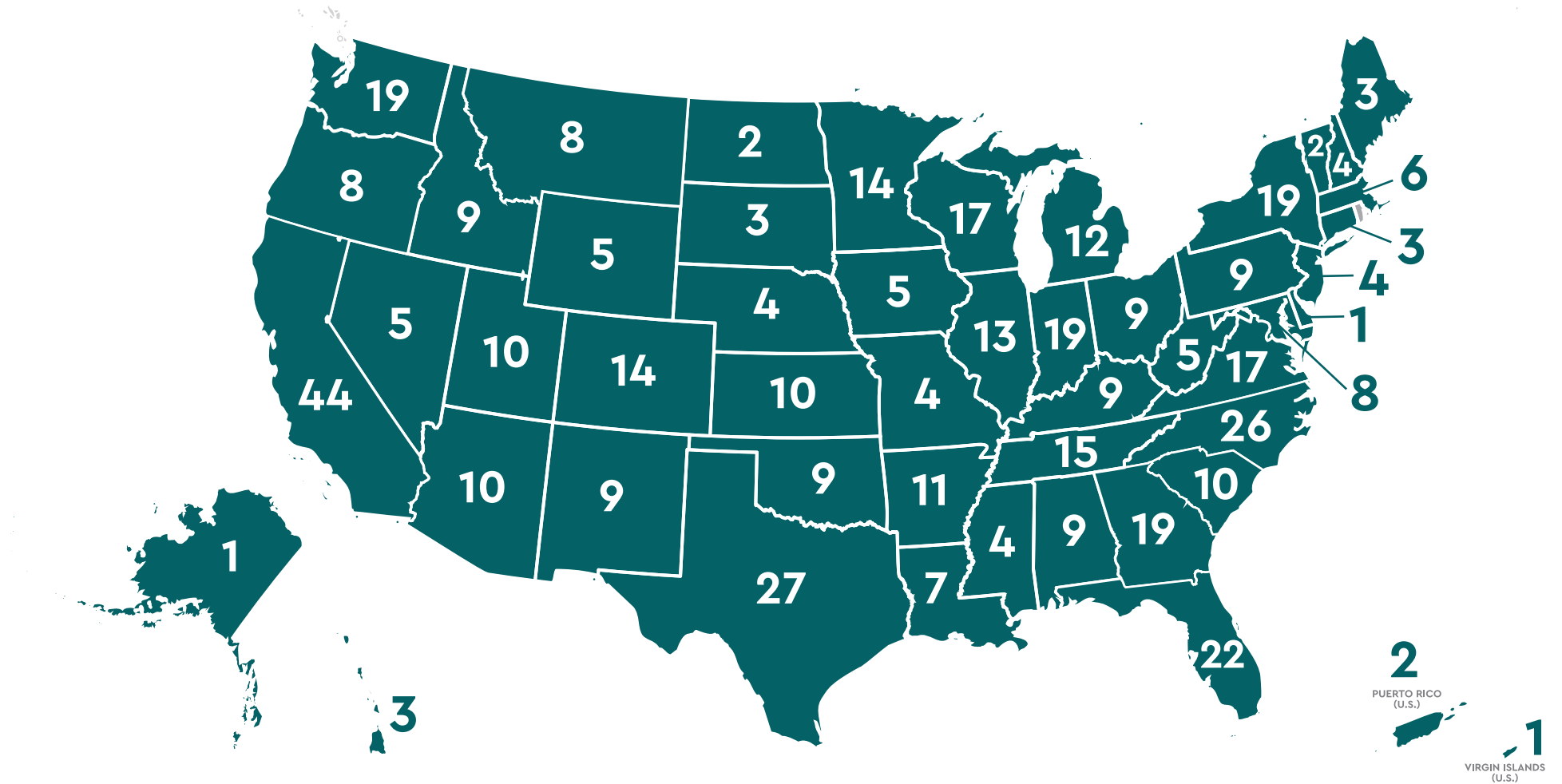


# ORGANIZATIONS BY REGION

Regions are defined by the US census bureau.  
Territories are defined as their own region as  
they are not included in the census bureau.



# ORGANIZATIONS BY STATE

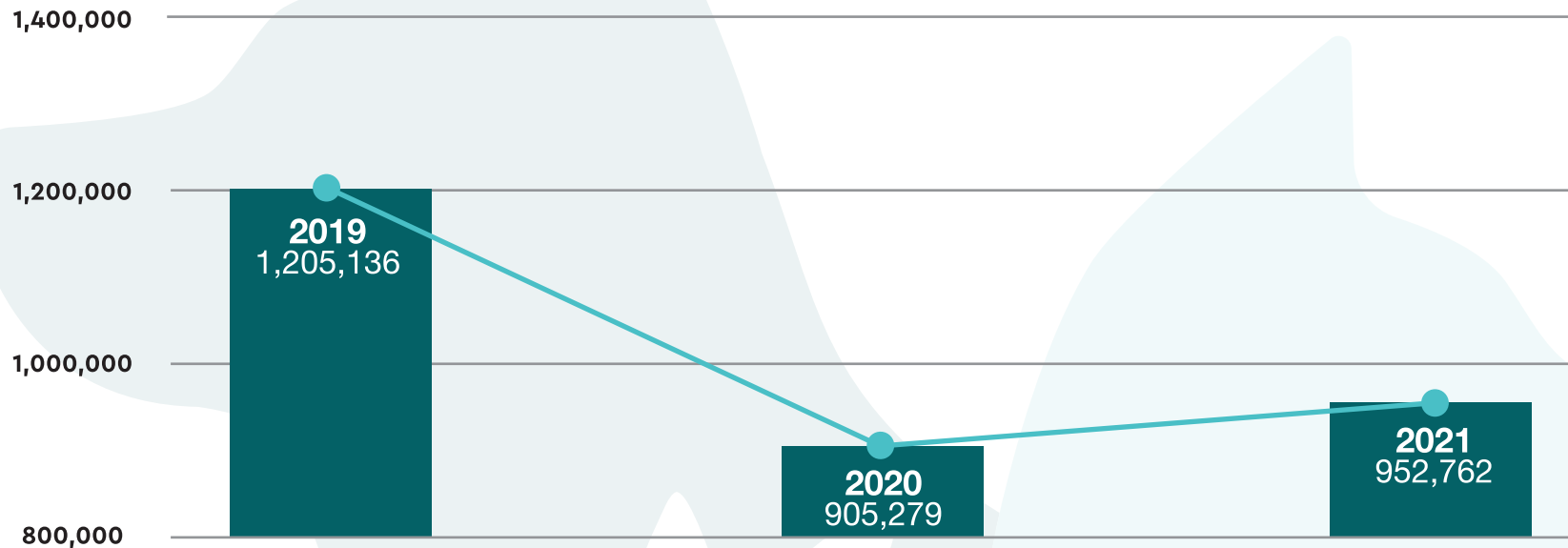





# TOTAL INTAKES

Stray, relinquished by owner, owner-intended euthanasia, transfers in, seized or impounded, other intakes (born in care, etc.)

Total number of animal intakes  
changed by **-21%**

From 2019 to 2021



	2019	2020	2021	CHANGE FROM 2019 TO 2021
	602,158	463,648	500,969	-17%
	602,978	441,731	451,793	-25%
	1,205,136	905,379	952,762	-21%



SHELTER  
ANIMALS  
COUNT

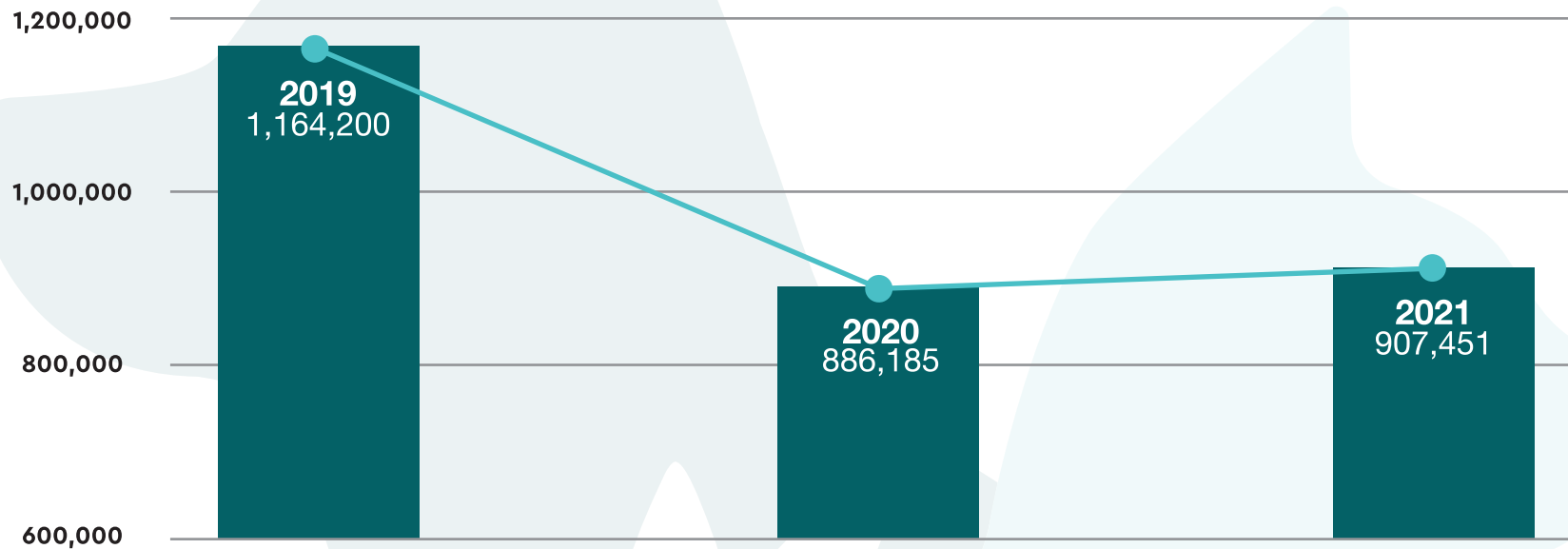
Report data source: 510 organizations with January-September 2019, 2020 & 2021 data in The National Database as of 11/17/2021.




# TOTAL OUTCOMES

Adoption, return to owner (RTO), return to field, transfer, and other live outcomes, died in care, lost in care, shelter euthanasia, and owner requested euthanasia.

Total number of animal outcomes changed by **-22%**

From 2019 to 2021



	2019	2020	2021	CHANGE FROM 2019 TO 2021
	564,796	438,889	465,248	-18%
	599,404	447,296	442,203	-26%
	1,164,200	886,185	907,451	-22%

Report data source: 510 organizations with January-September 2019, 2020 & 2021 data in The National Database as of 11/17/2021.



The decrease of **TOTAL OUTCOMES** is greater than the decrease of **TOTAL INTAKES**.

This means more animals are coming in than going out.

**TOTAL  
INTAKES**  
FROM 2019-2021



**21%**



↓ 17%



↓ 25%

**TOTAL  
OUTCOMES**  
FROM 2019-2021



**22%**



↓ 18%



↓ 26%



**SHELTER  
ANIMALS  
COUNT**

**+4.21%**

LIVE OUTCOME RATE  
FROM 2019-2021

**2021 — 87.70%**

**2020 — 87.63%**

**2019 — 83.49%**

# TOTAL OUTCOMES

Adoption, return to owner (RTO), return to field, transfer, and other live outcomes, died in care, lost in care, shelter euthanasia, and owner requested euthanasia.

	LIVE OUTCOMES	OTHER OUTCOMES	TOTAL OUTCOMES
2019	971,996	192,204	1,164,200
2020	776,600	109,585	886,185
2021	795,836	111,615	907,451

# CANINES

Intake vs. Total Outcome

↓ 25%

fewer dogs entered animal shelters in 2021 compared to 2019

2019	2020	2021
602,978	441,731	451,793

Total outcomes for dogs decreased

↓ 26%

from 2019 to 2021

2019	2020	2021
599,404	447,296	442,203

Report data source:

510 organizations with January-September 2019, 2020 & 2021 data in The National Database as of 11/17/2021.

# FELINES

Intake vs. Total Outcome

↓ **17%**

fewer cats entered  
animal shelters in 2021  
compared to 2019

2019	2020	2021
602,158	463,648	500,969

Total outcomes for  
cats decreased

↓ **18%**

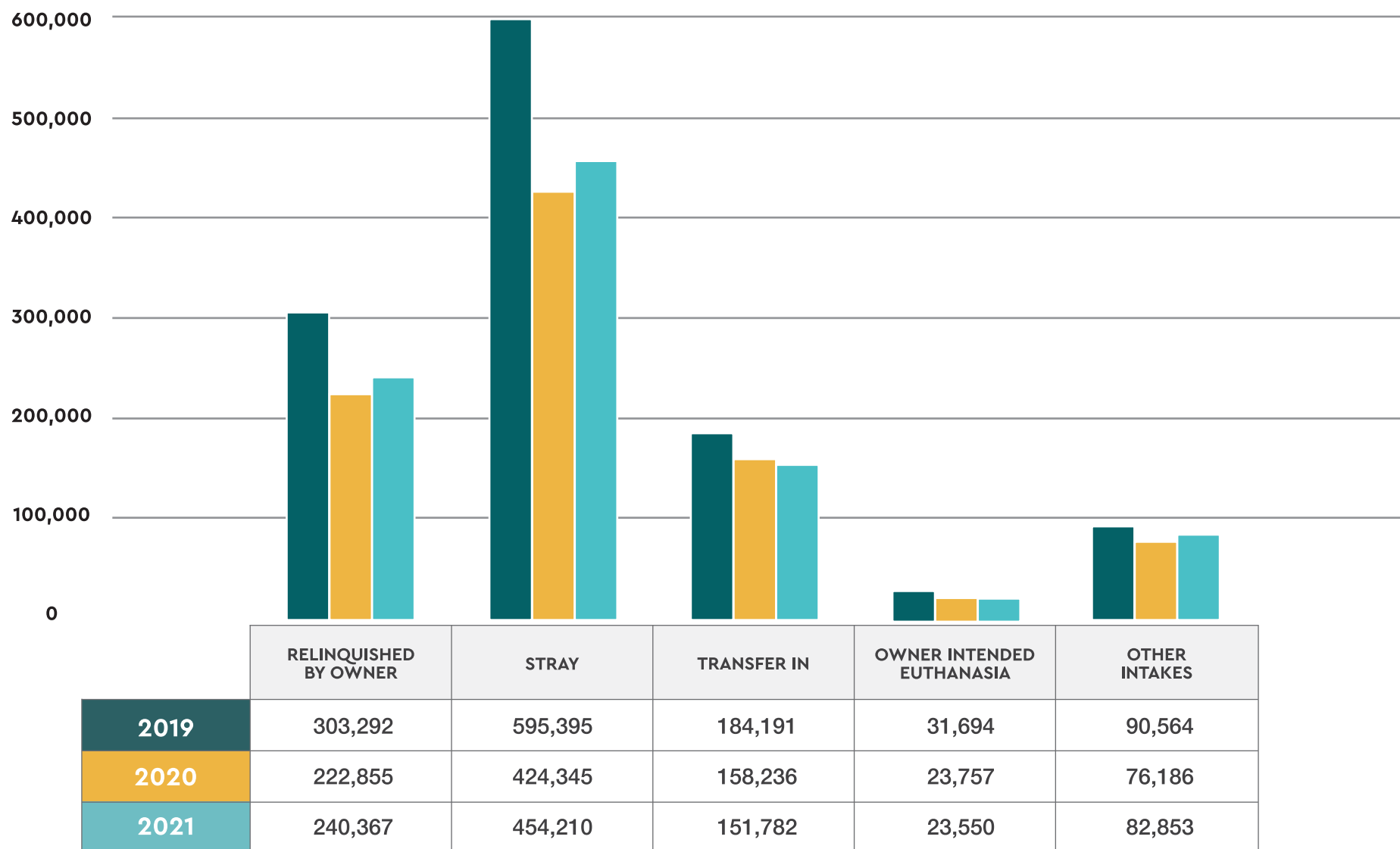
from 2019 to 2021

2019	2020	2021
564,796	438,889	465,248

Report data source:  
510 organizations with January-September 2019, 2020 & 2021  
data in The National Database as of 11/17/2021.

# INTAKES BY TYPE

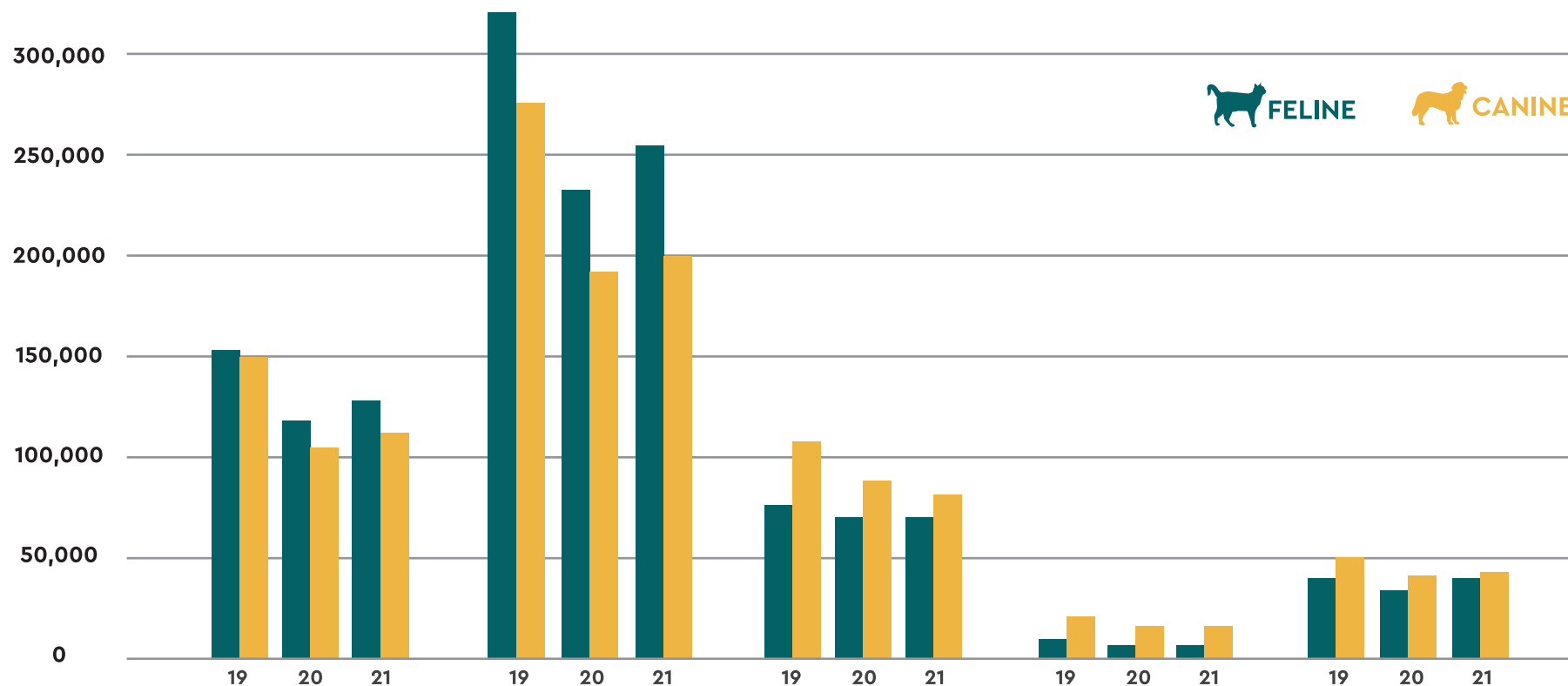
## TOTAL NUMBER OF INTAKES BY CATEGORY





Report data source: 510 organizations with January-September 2019, 2020 & 2021 data in The National Database as of 11/17/2021.

# INTAKES BY TYPE & SPECIES

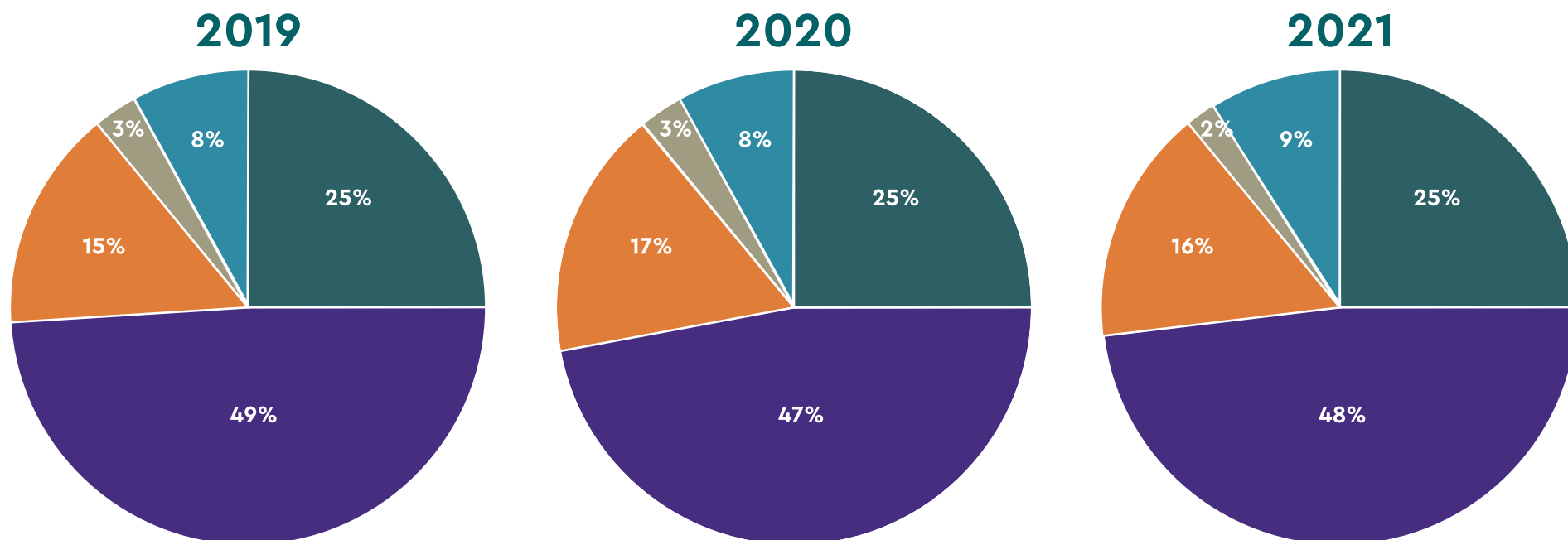
TOTAL NUMBER OF INTAKES BY CATEGORY & SPECIES



	RELINQUISHED BY OWNER	STRAY	TRANSFER IN	OWNER INTENDED EUTHANASIA	OTHER INTAKES
	19 153,546	320,778	76,385	10,667	40,782
	20 118,453	233,010	70,530	7,078	34,577
	21 129,008	254,575	69,928	7,271	40,187
	19 149,746	274,617	107,806	21,027	49,782
	20 104,402	191,335	87,706	16,679	41,609
	21 111,359	199,635	81,854	16,279	42,666

# INTAKES BY TYPE

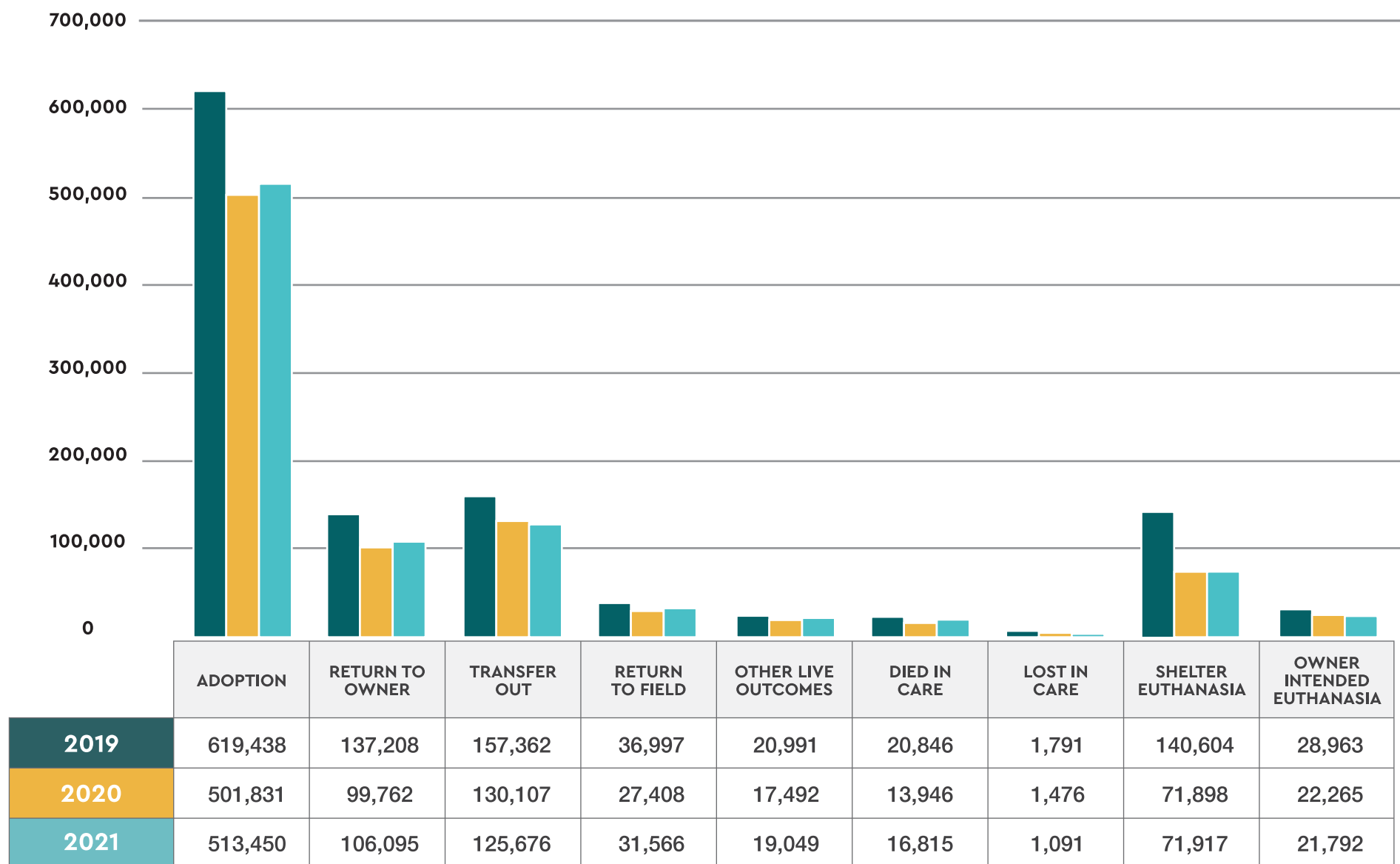
% OF CATEGORIES OF TOTAL INTAKES



	RELINQUISHED BY OWNER	STRAY	TRANSFER IN	OWNER INTENDED EUTHANASIA	OTHER INTAKES
2019	303,292	595,395	184,191	31,694	90,564
2020	222,855	424,345	158,236	23,757	76,186
2021	240,367	454,210	151,782	23,550	82,853

# OUTCOMES BY TYPE

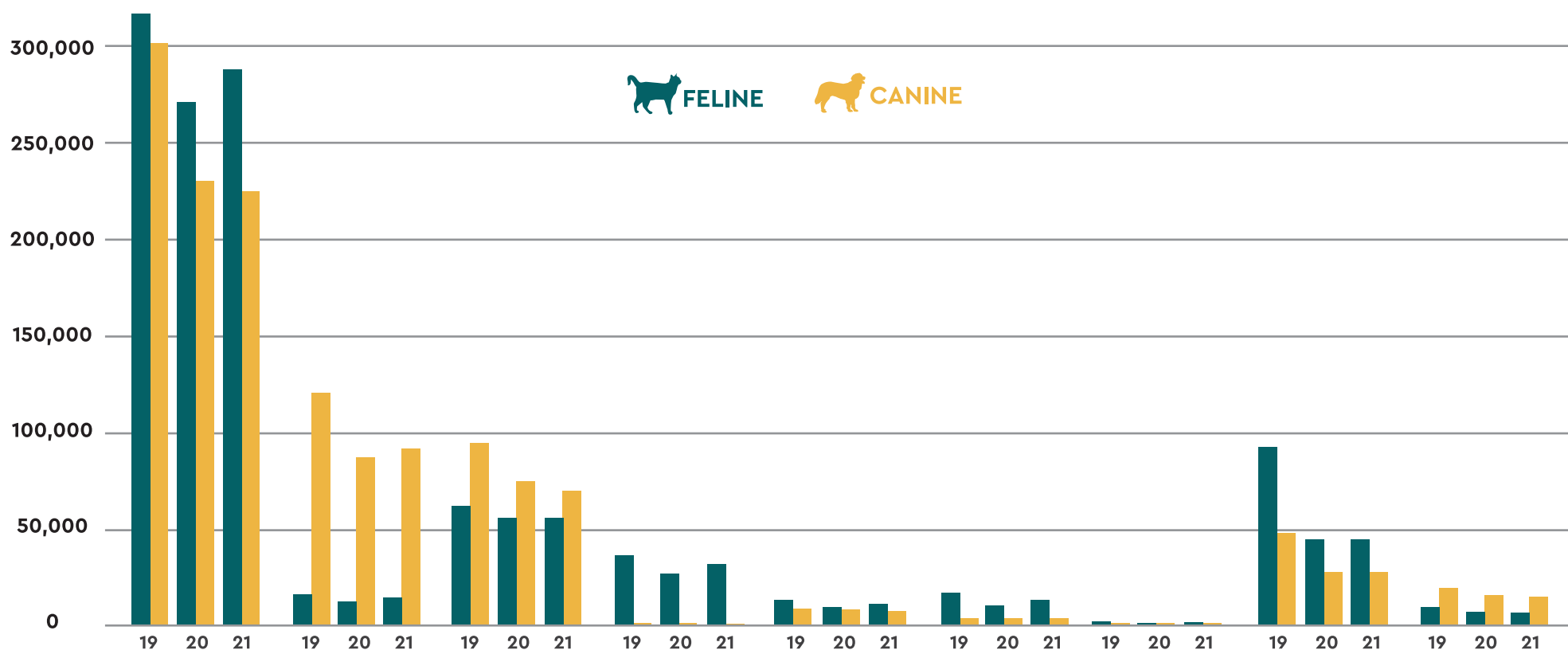
TOTAL NUMBER OF OUTCOMES BY CATEGORY





# OUTCOMES BY TYPE & SPECIES

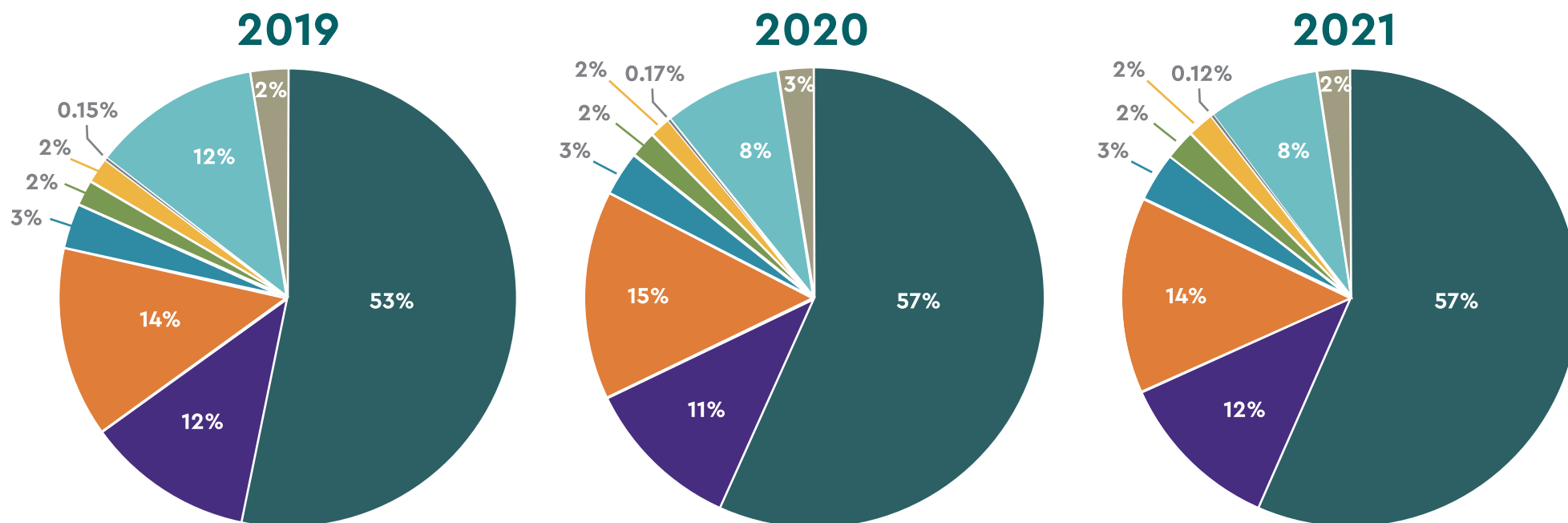
TOTAL NUMBER OF SPECIES OUTCOMES BY CATEGORY



	ADOPTION	RETURN TO OWNER	TRANSFER OUT	RETURN TO FIELD	OTHER LIVE OUTCOMES	DIED IN CARE	LOST IN CARE	SHELTER EUTHANASIA	OWNER INTENDED EUTHANASIA
19	317,577	15,896	62,394	36,416	12,784	16,402	1,205	92,512	9,610
20	271,094	12,267	55,337	26,966	9,886	10,807	995	44,861	6,676
21	288,059	13,893	55,636	31,350	11,499	13,284	701	44,137	6,689
19	301,861	121,312	94,968	581	8,207	4,444	586	48,092	19,353
20	230,737	87,495	74,770	442	7,606	3,139	481	27,037	15,589
21	225,391	92,202	70,040	216	7,550	3,531	390	27,780	15,103

# OUTCOMES BY TYPE

% OF CATEGORIES OF TOTAL OUTCOMES



	ADOPTION	RETURN TO OWNER	TRANSFER OUT	RETURN TO FIELD	OTHER LIVE OUTCOMES	DIED IN CARE	LOST IN CARE	SHELTER EUTHANASIA	OWNER INTENDED EUTHANASIA
2019	619,438	137,208	157,362	36,997	20,991	20,846	1,791	140,604	28,963
2020	501,831	99,762	130,107	27,408	17,492	13,946	1,476	71,898	22,265
2021	513,450	106,095	125,676	31,566	19,049	16,815	1,091	71,917	21,792



**DATA TABLES:** Take a deeper dive into the data by region, species, and organization type.

## TOTAL INTAKES BY CATEGORY

### Stray Intakes as a % of Total Intake

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	53.27%	50.26%	50.82%	-2.45%
Canine	45.54%	43.31%	44.19%	-1.35%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>49.40%</b>	<b>46.87%</b>	<b>47.67%</b>	<b>-1.73%</b>

### Transfer Intakes as a % of Total Intake

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	12.69%	15.21%	13.96%	1.27%
Canine	17.88%	19.86%	18.12%	0.24%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>15.28%</b>	<b>17.48%</b>	<b>15.93%</b>	<b>0.65%</b>

### Owner Surrender Intakes as a % of Total Intake

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	25.50%	25.55%	25.75%	0.25%
Canine	24.83%	23.63%	24.65%	-0.18%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>25.17%</b>	<b>24.61%</b>	<b>25.23%</b>	<b>0.06%</b>

### Other Intakes as a % of Total Intake

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	6.77%	7.46%	8.02%	1.25%
Canine	8.26%	9.42%	9.44%	1.18%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>7.51%</b>	<b>8.41%</b>	<b>8.70%</b>	<b>1.19%</b>

### Owner Requested Euthanasia Intakes as a % of Total Intake

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	1.77%	1.53%	1.45%	-0.32%
Canine	3.49%	3.78%	3.60%	0.11%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>2.63%</b>	<b>2.62%</b>	<b>2.47%</b>	<b>-0.16%</b>

### Total Intakes by Species

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	602,158	463,648	500,969	-16.80%
Canine	602,978	441,731	451,793	-25.07%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>1,205,136</b>	<b>905,379</b>	<b>952,762</b>	<b>-20.94%</b>

## TOTAL INTAKES BY REGION & ORG TYPE

Total Intake by Region				
	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
East North Central	114,404	94,269	99,748	-12.81%
East South Central	80,316	65,828	69,627	-13.31%
Middle Atlantic	48,691	39,890	37,731	-22.51%
Mountain	181,640	139,577	153,349	-15.58%
New England	19,120	12,985	14,844	-22.36%
Pacific	279,420	172,866	171,051	-38.78%
South Atlantic	250,056	193,703	216,675	-13.35%
U.S. Territory	5,432	3,190	4,160	-23.42%
West North Central	66,468	61,877	63,854	-3.93%
West South Central	159,589	121,194	121,723	-23.73%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,205,136</b>	<b>905,379</b>	<b>952,762</b>	<b>-20.94%</b>

Intake by Region as a % of Total Intake				
	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
East North Central	9.49%	10.41%	10.47%	0.98%
East South Central	6.66%	7.27%	7.31%	0.64%
Middle Atlantic	4.04%	4.41%	3.96%	-0.08%
Mountain	15.07%	15.42%	16.10%	1.02%
New England	1.59%	1.43%	1.56%	-0.03%
Pacific	23.19%	19.09%	17.95%	-5.23%
South Atlantic	20.75%	21.39%	22.74%	1.99%
U.S. Territory	0.45%	0.35%	0.44%	-0.01%
West North Central	5.52%	6.83%	6.70%	1.19%
West South Central	13.24%	13.39%	12.78%	-0.47%

Total Intake by Org Type				
	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Government Animal Services	469,325	298,241	329,206	-29.86%
Rescue with a Government Contract	13,495	15,142	14,951	10.79%
Rescue without a Government Contract	45,797	53,499	47,681	4.11%
Shelter with a Government Contract	390,287	315,379	333,117	-14.65%
Shelter without a Government Contract	286,232	223,118	227,807	-20.41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,205,136</b>	<b>905,379</b>	<b>952,762</b>	<b>-20.94%</b>

Total Feline Intake by Org Type				
	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Government Animal Services	218,955	135,229	156,421	-28.56%
Rescue with a Government Contract	5,676	6,222	6,981	22.99%
Rescue without a Government Contract	21,086	25,728	25,083	18.96%
Shelter with a Government Contract	203,895	171,761	182,772	-10.36%
Shelter without a Government Contract	152,546	124,708	129,712	-14.97%
<b>Total</b>	<b>602,158</b>	<b>463,648</b>	<b>500,969</b>	<b>-16.80%</b>

Total Canine Intake by Org Type				
	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Government Animal Services	250,370	163,012	172,785	-30.99%
Rescue with a Government Contract	7,819	8,920	7,970	1.93%
Rescue without a Government Contract	24,711	27,771	22,598	-8.55%
Shelter with a Government Contract	186,392	143,618	150,345	-19.34%
Shelter without a Government Contract	133,686	98,410	98,095	-26.62%
<b>Total</b>	<b>602,978</b>	<b>441,731</b>	<b>451,793</b>	<b>-25.07%</b>

## TOTAL OUTCOMES BY CATEGORY

### Adoption Outcomes as a % of Total Outcome

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	56.23%	61.77%	61.92%	5.69%
Canine	50.36%	51.58%	50.97%	0.61%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>53.21%</b>	<b>56.63%</b>	<b>56.58%</b>	<b>3.37%</b>

### Transfer Out Outcomes as a % of Total Outcome

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	11.05%	12.61%	11.96%	0.91%
Canine	15.84%	16.72%	15.84%	0.00%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>13.52%</b>	<b>14.68%</b>	<b>13.85%</b>	<b>0.33%</b>

### RTO Outcomes as a % of Total Outcome

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	2.81%	2.80%	2.99%	0.18%
Canine	20.24%	19.56%	20.85%	0.61%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>11.79%</b>	<b>11.26%</b>	<b>11.69%</b>	<b>-0.10%</b>

### Field Return Outcomes as a % of Total Outcome

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	6.45%	6.14%	6.74%	0.29%
Canine	0.10%	0.10%	0.05%	-0.05%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>3.18%</b>	<b>3.09%</b>	<b>3.48%</b>	<b>0.30%</b>

### Other Live Outcomes as a % of Total Outcome

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	2.26%	2.25%	2.47%	0.21%
Canine	1.37%	1.70%	1.71%	0.34%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>1.80%</b>	<b>1.97%</b>	<b>2.10%</b>	<b>0.30%</b>

### Shelter Euthanasia Outcomes as a % of Total Outcome

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	16.38%	10.22%	9.49%	-6.89%
Canine	8.02%	6.04%	6.28%	-1.74%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>12.08%</b>	<b>8.11%</b>	<b>7.93%</b>	<b>-4.15%</b>

### Owner Requested Euthanasia Outcomes as a % of Total Outcome

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	1.70%	1.52%	1.44%	-0.26%
Canine	3.23%	3.49%	3.42%	0.19%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>2.49%</b>	<b>2.51%</b>	<b>2.40%</b>	<b>-0.09%</b>

### Lost in Care Outcomes as a % of Total Outcome

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	0.21%	0.23%	0.15%	-0.06%
Canine	0.10%	0.11%	0.09%	-0.01%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>0.15%</b>	<b>0.17%</b>	<b>0.12%</b>	<b>-0.03%</b>

### Died in Care Outcomes as a % of Total Outcome

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	2.90%	2.46%	2.86%	-0.04%
Canine	0.74%	0.70%	0.80%	0.06%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>1.79%</b>	<b>1.57%</b>	<b>1.85%</b>	<b>0.06%</b>

### Total Outcomes by Species

	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Feline	564,796	438,889	465,248	-17.63%
Canine	599,404	447,296	442,203	-26.23%
<b>Feline &amp; Canine</b>	<b>1,164,200</b>	<b>886,185</b>	<b>907,451</b>	<b>-22.05%</b>

## TRANSFERS

Transfer In by Org Type				
	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Government Animal Services	5,722	4,121	5,771	0.86%
Rescue with a Government Contract	9,924	11,613	10,224	3.02%
Rescue without a Government Contract	26,754	27,045	24,715	-7.62%
Shelter with a Government Contract	40,172	38,794	35,408	-11.86%
Shelter without a Government Contract	101,619	76,663	75,664	-25.54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>184,191</b>	<b>158,236</b>	<b>151,782</b>	<b>-17.60%</b>

Transfer Out by Org Type				
	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Government Animal Services	80,536	63,953	60,609	-24.74%
Rescue with a Government Contract	8,030	10,590	9,780	21.79%
Rescue without a Government Contract	10,223	7,357	7,324	-28.36%
Shelter with a Government Contract	40,921	33,872	34,158	-16.53%
Shelter without a Government Contract	17,652	14,335	13,805	-21.79%
<b>Total</b>	<b>157,362</b>	<b>130,107</b>	<b>125,676</b>	<b>-20.14%</b>

## SHELTER EUTHANASIA

Shelter Euthanasia as % of Total Outcome by Org Type				
	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021
Government Animal Services	14.67%	9.91%	9.28%	-5.39%
Rescue with a Government Contract	8.06%	6.27%	7.34%	-0.71%
Rescue without a Government Contract	1.36%	1.17%	1.40%	0.04%
Shelter with a Government Contract	10.48%	8.27%	8.12%	-2.35%
Shelter without a Government Contract	5.66%	4.44%	4.54%	-1.12%
<b>Total Shelter Euthanasia</b>	<b>10.78%</b>	<b>7.50%</b>	<b>7.34%</b>	<b>-3.43%</b>

Shelter Euthanasia, Total								
	2019		2020		2021		Grand Total	
	Shelter Euthanasia	Total Outcomes	Shelter Euthanasia	Total Outcomes	Shelter Euthanasia	Total Outcomes	Shelter Euthanasia	Total Outcomes
Government Animal Services	78,382	455,934	32,395	294,607	31,599	308,991	142,376	1,059,532
Rescue with a Government Contract	1,146	13,075	1,009	15,072	1,138	14,356	3,293	42,503
Rescue without a Government Contract	598	43,366	592	49,859	649	45,597	1,839	138,822
Shelter with a Government Contract	43,889	375,072	27,712	307,410	27,983	316,507	99,584	998,989
Shelter without a Government Contract	16,589	276,753	10,190	219,237	10,548	222,000	37,327	717,990
<b>Total Shelter Euthanasia</b>	<b>140,604</b>	<b>1,164,200</b>	<b>71,898</b>	<b>886,185</b>	<b>71,917</b>	<b>907,451</b>	<b>284,419</b>	<b>2,957,836</b>



**SHELTER  
ANIMALS  
COUNT**

THE NATIONAL DATABASE

**[WWW.SHELTERANIMALSCOUNT.ORG](http://WWW.SHELTERANIMALSCOUNT.ORG)**

Shelter Animals Count  
931 Monroe Dr NE  
Ste A102 #109  
Atlanta, GA 30308