

A Nation of Dog Lovers: Ireland's Pet Ownership Edges Ahead of the Global Average

The Worldwide Independent Network of Market Research (WIN) has released new findings for International World Animal Day 2026, revealing that while more than half the world's population has a pet at home, Latin America stands apart as the region most likely to have pets, with dog and cat ownership split clearly along regional lines. Based on responses from 44,000 people across 44 countries, the research suggests that pet ownership is shaped as much by household composition as by geography, with families with children as the most likely of all to share their home with more than one species.

HEADLINES – IRELAND

Ireland sits just above the global norm for pet ownership

Almost six in ten Irish adults (59%) have a pet in their household, compared with 56% globally. The narrow three-point gap places Ireland within a broad international mainstream, but with a modest local uplift in the role pets play in everyday life.

Ireland's distinctiveness is dog-led, not universal across pet types

Dogs are the defining feature of Irish pet ownership: 41% of Irish adults have a dog, compared with 32% globally. Cat ownership is slightly lower in Ireland than globally - 26% versus 28% - while ownership of fish and other smaller pets broadly mirrors the global picture. Ireland's distinctiveness therefore lies in its preference for dogs, rather than in higher ownership across every type of pet.

Children transform the place of pets in Irish household life

Pet ownership rises from 53% among households without dependent children to 70% among those with dependent children - a substantial 17-point difference. Dog ownership also increases from 36% to 50%, while cat ownership rises from 23% to 31%, suggesting that pets of different kinds are woven particularly strongly into family life.

Dublin's pet ownership gap is driven especially by dogs

Pet ownership is considerably lower in Dublin, at 49%, than across the other regions, where it ranges from 62% to 65%. The divide is especially pronounced for dogs: 31% of Dublin adults have one, compared with 50% in the rest of Leinster and 47% in Connacht/Ulster. The research does not directly test the reasons, but the pattern is consistent with differing housing and household circumstances.

Ireland's multi-species households follow the global pattern

Among Irish pet-owning households, 26% keep two or more species, almost identical to the 27% global average. This suggests that while Ireland stands out for its enthusiasm for dogs, the tendency to combine different kinds of pets under one roof is part of a wider international pattern rather than a uniquely Irish behaviour.

Together, the findings portray Ireland as slightly more pet-owning than the global average and distinctly dog-loving. The strongest differences, however, are found within Ireland itself:

between households with and without children, and between Dublin and the rest of the country.

HEADLINES WORLD

Where Latin America tops the rankings: The regional divide

Globally, 56% of people have at least one pet at home, a share that stays broadly consistent across age groups from 18 to 64, ranging between 53% and 60%. The exception is the over-65s, the only age group where fewer than half own a pet, at 43%. This group is also the least likely to own a dog or a cat, or to have more than one pet in the household.

The 2026 Worldviews Survey (WVS) also points to a clear regional divide: at least half the population owns a pet in 33 of the 44 countries surveyed, with the Americas standing well apart at 72%, ahead of Europe (52%), APAC (48%), Africa (48%) and MENA (45%). At a country level, Latin America dominates, taking all five top spots: Mexico and Ecuador (86% each), Argentina (84%), Paraguay (80%) and Chile (74%). At the other end of the scale, three Asian countries report the lowest rates of pet ownership (Vietnam 20%, South Korea 25%, and Japan 28%), with Turkey and Finland (32% each) close behind.

Dogs lead globally, but cats reign in parts of MENA and Africa

Among pet owners globally, dogs are the most common companion: roughly one in three (32%) has a dog, closely followed by 28% who have a cat, and women are more likely than men to own cats.

Dog and cat ownership are fairly evenly matched in Europe (29% dog ownership vs. 27% cat ownership) and APAC (24% vs. 25%), whereas the Americas lean heavily towards dogs (53% vs. 34%). That lean is driven by Latin America: the top six countries for dog ownership are all in the region, and around seven in ten Argentinians, Mexicans, Paraguayans and Ecuadorians have a dog. The picture for cats looks quite different, led instead by Indonesia (51%), Morocco (47%), Malaysia (46%), Argentina (44%) and Latvia (42%), all above 40%.

Argentina is a case worth noting. While it is not the top-ranked country for pet ownership overall, it is the only country to rank among the top five for both dog and cat ownership, highlighting the strong coexistence of the two species within households.

Beyond cats and dogs, Indonesia has the highest rate of fish ownership (19%), while Slovakia stands out for two otherwise niche categories: turtles (4%) and mice or hamsters (5%). In the Netherlands, 15% report having "other pets", mostly rabbits, guinea pigs and hens, while in Pakistan the figure is 16%, led by livestock animals such as cows and goats.

Families with children are more likely to build furry, feathered and finned households – or a combination of them!

Though the vast majority of pet-owning households worldwide (73%) have only one species, three in ten have more than one species living under the same roof. This share is fairly stable across age groups from 18 to 64 (roughly 26%-29%) and falls among the over-65s (22%); women are more likely than men to have more than one species (28% women vs. 25% men). By region, the Americas have the highest share of multi-species households (32%), followed by APAC (26%) and Europe (25%).

Households with children are more likely to have pets than any other household type, whether two-parent (60%) or single-parent (64%). They are also the most likely to have more than one species – 31% of two-parent households and 30% of single-parent households do so, compared with just 23% of couples without children and couples with children not living at home.

Richard Colwell, President of WIN International Association, said:

"Pet ownership tells us something about how people build companionship and family life around the world. It's striking that Latin America stands so far apart in the sheer number of households with pets. And the finding that households with children are the most likely to have pets, and to have more than one, speaks to something universal: pets are increasingly part of how families define themselves, not a luxury reserved for specific groups of people. As pet ownership keeps growing worldwide, these regional and demographic differences will matter well beyond market research, from consumer goods to urban planning and public health."

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

About the research

The findings are based on approximately 44,000 interviews conducted across 44 countries as part of the WIN Worldviews Survey 2026, exploring pet ownership in the household: what proportion of the population lives with animals, which types of pets are most common, and how many different species live under the same roof.

About WIN:

The Worldwide Independent Network of Market Research (WIN) is a global network conducting market research and opinion polls in every continent.

Our assets

- Thought leadership: access to a group of the most prominent experts and business entrepreneurs in Market Research, Polling and Consultancy
- Flexibility: tailor-made global and local solutions to meet clients' needs
- Innovation: access to the latest strategic consultancy, tool development and branded solutions
- Local experts: access to a network of experts that truly understand the local culture, market and business needs.
- Trust: highest quality of talented members in all countries covered

Over the years, WIN has demonstrated wide competences and ability to conduct multi-country surveys following the highest standards requested by the market. The accumulated expertise of the Association is formidable: among others, researched themes are gender equality and young people, communication and media research, and brand studies.

Methodology Sheet

	Country	Company Name	Methodology	Sample	Coverage	Fieldwork Dates
1	Argentina	Voices Research & Consultancy	CAWI	1007	NATIONAL	2-15 Jan '26
2	Australia	Luma Research	CAWI	549	NATIONAL	29-30 Jan '26
3	Brazil	Market Analysis Brazil	CAWI	1000	INTERNET POP	9-16 Jan '26
4	Canada	LEGER	CAWI	1000	NATIONAL	12-25 Dec '25
5	Chile	Activa Research	CAWI	1095	NATIONAL	8-13 Jan '26
6	China	WisdomAsia	Online Panel	1000	URBAN	14-19 Jan '26
7	Colombia	Centro Nacional de Consultoría	CATI	500	NATIONAL	6-12 February 2026
8	Côte d'Ivoire	EMC	CATI	502	NATIONAL	24-30 Jan '26
9	Croatia	Institute for market and media research, Mediana Fides	CAWI	591	NATIONAL	8-12 Jan '26
10	Denmark	Opinion Denmark A/S	CAWI	1007	NATIONAL	13-21 Jan '26
11	Ecuador	Centro de Estudios Y Datos - CEDATOS	CAPI	1104	NATIONAL	28-31 Jan '26
12	Finland	Taloustutkimus Oy	Online Panel	1093	NATIONAL	31 Dec '25 – 7 Jan '26
13	France	OpinionWay	Online Panel	1007	NATIONAL	16-19 Jan '26
14	Georgia	GORBI Eurasia LTD	F2F	2050	NATIONAL	31 Jan – 13 Feb 2026
15	Germany	Produkt+Markt	CAWI	1000	NATIONAL	19 Dec '25 – 6 Jan '26
16	Greece	Alternative Research Solutions	CAWI	502	NATIONAL	3 Dec '25– 12 Jan '26
17	Hong Kong	Consumer Search Group (CSG)	Online Panel	500	TERRITORY WIDE	9-15 Jan '26
18	India	DataPrompt International Pvt. Ltd.	Online	1000	NATIONAL	29 Dec '25 - 21 Jan '26
19	Indonesia	DEKA	Online	987	INTERNET POP	16-31 Jan '26
20	Republic of Ireland	RED C Research & Marketing Ltd	CAWI	1013	NATIONAL	8-13 Jan '26
21	Italy	SWG S.p.a	CAWI	1002	NATIONAL	7-12 Jan '26
22	Japan	Nippon Research Center, LTD.	CAWI	1100	NATIONAL	22-27 Jan '26
23	Latvia	Marketing and Public Opinion Research Centre SKDS	CAWI	1005	NATIONAL	17-19 Jan '26
24	Malaysia	Central Force International	CAWI	1001	INTERNET POP	27 Nov '25 – 3 Dec '25
25	Mexico	Brand Investigation S.A.de C.V	Online	1000	NATIONAL	7-12 Jan '26
26	Morocco	Integrate Consulting	Online	500	NATIONAL	8-9 Jan '26
27	The Netherlands	Motivaction International B.V.	CAWI	1005	NATIONAL	6-20 Jan '26
28	Norway	Opinion AS	CAWI	1029	NATIONAL	13-19 Jan '26
29	Pakistan	Gallup Pakistan	CATI	1000	NATIONAL	6 Dec '25 -14 Jan '26

30	Paraguay	ICA Consultoría Estratégica	CATI	501	NATIONAL	2 Dec '25- 29 Jan '26
31	Peru	Datum Internacional	P2P	1202	NATIONAL	16-10 Jan '26
32	Philippines	The Philippine Survey and Research Center (PSRC)	PAPI	1000	NATIONAL	9-26 Jan '26
33	Poland	Mareco Polska	CAWI	530	NATIONAL	8-14 Dec '25
34	Serbia	Institute for market and media research, Mediana Adria	CAWI	522	NATIONAL	8-15 Jan '26
35	Slovak Republic	Go4insight	CAWI	1000	NATIONAL	16-26 Jan '26
36	Slovenia	Institute for market and media research, Mediana	CAWI	1018	NATIONAL	8-9 Jan '26
37	South Korea	Gallup Korea	CAWI	1200	NATIONAL	21-28 Jan '26
38	Spain	Instituto DYM	CAWI	1000	NATIONAL	15-18 Jan '26
39	Sweden	Demoskop AB	CAWI	1012	NATIONAL/ INTERNET POP	19 Dec '25 – 23 Jan '26
40	Thailand	INFOSEARCH LIMITED	F2F	500	NATIONAL	16 Dec '25– 15 Jan '26
41	Turkey	BAREM Research	CATI	725	TR Urban	30 Jan – 4 Feb '26
42	United Kingdom	ORB International	Online	1194	NATIONAL	12-22 Dec '25
43	USA	LEGER	CAWI	1000	NATIONAL	12-25 Dec '25
44	Venezuela	Centro Nacional de Consultoría	CATI	302	NATIONAL	1-5 Feb '26
45	Vietnam	DXL Research & Consulting	F2F	900	URBAN	12-28 Dec '25