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PRESS RELEASE

Lost cat? In summer, twice as many pets go missing as in winter

Free lost and found pet platform Ik ben vermist relaunched, with neighbourhood alerts and posters in four languages

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Diepenbeek, 6 October 2026. When a pet goes missing, it is best to start searching straight away and close to home. That is the lesson from eight years of reports (since 2018) on Ik ben vermist, the free Belgian platform for lost and found pets. The platform has just been completely rebuilt: posting a report no longer needs an account, takes two minutes, and neighbours are alerted automatically.

Cats, summer and Antwerp

Of the 550 reports on ikbenvermist.be since 2018, 85 percent concern cats. Dogs account for 11 percent, birds for 4 percent. The seasonal effect is striking: from May to August there are on average more than twice as many reports as in January and February. July and August together account for a quarter of all reports. The province of Antwerp has the most reports (28 percent), followed by Limburg and Flemish Brabant.

"In summer, windows and doors are open, cats stay out longer and many people are travelling, so animals end up with a sitter or in unfamiliar surroundings," says Christophe Vanleeuw of Ik ben vermist. "A frightened cat often hides just a few metres from home. Anyone who searches their own surroundings thoroughly right away and warns the neighbours often finds their pet sooner."

Almost all animals for which this is known were microchipped (97 percent). "A chip only works if your details at DogID or CatID are correct," says Vanleeuw. "An old mobile number is the main reason a found animal cannot go home straight away."

Report in two minutes, the neighbourhood helps search

On ikbenvermist.be you report a lost, found or spotted animal for free and without an account. The site immediately creates a printable poster with a QR code and ready-made images for Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp. Residents can set up a free neighbourhood alert: they receive an e-mail as soon as an animal goes missing or is found nearby. Found and lost reports in the same area are automatically shown side by side, so that someone who finds an animal quickly reaches the right owner. The site works in Dutch, French, English and German and offers tips on what to do when you lose or find an animal.

Ik ben vermist is an initiative of Huskii, a Belgian web agency that builds, hosts and keeps the platform online free of charge.

Tips for a missing pet

1. Start by searching your own home and its surroundings thoroughly, including neighbours' cupboards, garages and garden sheds.

2. Search in the early morning and at dusk, with a torch.
3. Report your animal on ikbenvermist.be straight away and put the poster up in the neighbourhood.
4. Call the vets nearby and check your details at DogID or CatID.

More information and contact

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