

The world loves pets, but no region embraces them quite like Latin America

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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.

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."

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.

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