

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000966/17  
to the Commission  
Anja Hazekamp (GUE/NGL)  
(10 February 2017)**

*Subject:* Mistreatment of galgos and podencos in Spain

Each year, 50 000 galgos and podencos are physically and mentally exhausted by cruel training methods and hunting races in Spain. These hunting dogs are then cast aside, left to their fate or cruelly put to death.

In 2011, the Commission stated, with reference to the mistreatment of galgos, that it would carry out a study of the welfare of dogs and cats. In addition, as part of the EU animal welfare strategy, 'possible actions for the protection of dogs with due regard to the principles of conferral and subsidiarity as laid down in the EU treaties might be considered' <sup>(1)</sup>.

However, the Commission's study of the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial activities did not propose any way of stopping the mistreatment of galgos in Europe <sup>(2)</sup>.

1. Does the Commission regard the breeding of galgos and podencos, as well as hunting with them and trading in them, as commercial activities?
2. If so, why were no specific ways of improving the welfare of galgos proposed in the abovementioned study?
3. How, and within what time frame, will the Commission urge Spain to take action against the mistreatment of galgos?

**Answer given by Mr Andriukaitis on behalf of the Commission  
(22 March 2017)**

As the Commission pointed out in its answers to written questions E-002848/2016, E-005544/2016, E-006758/2016, E-007387/2016 and E-000163/2017, the Commission mandated the study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices in the context of the Commission's statement annexed to Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 <sup>(3)</sup>, which lays down animal health requirements applicable to the cross-border movement of dogs and cats accompanying their owner.

The study is therefore not as such a follow-up to the 2010 Council Conclusions on the welfare of dogs and cats <sup>(4)</sup> and was not carried out in reference to the mistreatment of galgos.

As mentioned in the Commission's statement, the objective of the study was to identify possible human or animal health risks arising from commercial practices, but not to propose ways of improving the welfare of dogs, since this matter is under the sole responsibility of the Member States.

With this regard, the study provides a useful analysis of the situation of the dog and cat sector in the selected Member States, targeting the breeding, keeping and distribution, and highlights the need for proper enforcement of existing EU and national laws.

The Commission has made significant efforts to improve the enforcement of EU rules in relation to animal welfare during transport, but cannot assist Member States nor intervene in the enforcement of national welfare rules, such as those governing the breeding and keeping of dogs.

---

<sup>(1)</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2011-009212&language=NL>

<sup>(2)</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/aw\\_eu-strategy\\_study\\_dogs-cats-commercial-practices\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/aw_eu-strategy_study_dogs-cats-commercial-practices_en.pdf)

<sup>(3)</sup> Regulation (EU) No 576/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on the non-commercial movement of pet animals and repealing Regulation (EC) No 998/2003, OJ L 178, 28.6.2013, p. 1-26.

<sup>(4)</sup> [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/agricult/118076.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/agricult/118076.pdf)