Question for written answer E-001027/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Help for the crisis-stricken European pork sector

The functioning of the European pork sector depends primarily on fluctuations in the price of slaughter pigs on world markets, and the EU's export performance is no less significant.

One of the EU's main target markets for exports used to be Russia. The Russian market effectively closed last February as a result of African swine fever. The high level of demand globally meant that this was not a problem initially, and most of the pork destined for the Russian market found its way to eastern markets. However, in the second half of the year, the announcement of the Russian embargo in August brought forward the usual seasonal price fall from the autumn. The low prices meant that more and more pork went into storage (particularly in Western Europe), leading to a steady decline in the situation in the EU. This was exacerbated last October when the Russian embargo on bacon and pig's offal was introduced. Producers' prices are being forced down by the overproduction crisis. The market price for slaughter pigs in Hungary was HUF 418.92/kg (EUR 1.28/kg) in the first week of January. This was 7.55% lower than in the previous year.

The same problem is affecting Danish, Irish, Belgian, French, Polish, Romanian, Estonian and Austrian pig farmers.

1. What action does the Commission plan to take to stabilise the pork market and compensate producers?

2. Why does the Commission not introduce a private storage subsidy for pork?

3. Has there been any outcome in the negotiations with Russia which would enable the agricultural embargo to be lifted as soon as possible?