

**Question for written answer E-012143/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)

Subject: When will the rearing of pigs indoors end?

The Commission is in the process of finalising a new version of the Best Available Techniques (BAT) Reference Document on protection of the environment in the intensive rearing of poultry or pigs. It seems likely that this document will state that 'fully slatted floors' are the 'best available technique' for pig rearing. They are in fact the worst.

In the fully slatted floor system the whole of the surface area on which the pigs live is constructed from perforated flooring which allows their excrement to fall down through it. This system increases the amount of liquid manure produced to a point where it exceeds the soil's capacity to absorb it through manure spreading, with disastrous results: water pollution, growth of green algae, destruction of ecosystems and the creation of 'dead zones'.

The aim of the fully slatted floor system – a key tool in intensive rearing – is to increase the number of pigs reared on any one enclosed surface area by reducing the labour needed. This is a practice that is damaging to the pigs' comfort and makes compliance with the 2008 EU Pig Welfare Directive impossible. What is more, the technique has been banned in several European countries (Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, etc.).

Will the Commission, too, ban this practice?