

**Question for written answer E-012704/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Maltese bird hunting

Earlier this year I asked the Commission whether bird hunting in Malta is compatible with the Birds Directive (parliamentary question P-005868-15). The Commission answered that it remains committed to ensuring that the consequences of hunting derogations remain compatible with the Birds Directive. The Court of Justice of the European Union ruled, in Case C-76/08 Commission v Malta, that hunting derogations applied in the period 2004-2007 did not satisfy the requirements of the EU's Birds Directive.

In October 2014, the Commission sent a letter of formal notice, urging Malta to refrain from finch trapping.

Furthermore, following a Reasoned Opinion from the Commission regarding a derogation from the Birds Directive for bird trapping in Italy, that country has banned the practice since July of this year. In that Reasoned Opinion, the Commission reiterated how nets do not respect the selectivity requirement. A Maltese derogation for the trapping of song thrush and golden plover has been the subject of infringement proceedings but action has not progressed beyond the Reasoned Opinion stage since 2012, with no further formal action being taken.

Will the Commission now finally take Malta to the Court of Justice of the European Union for all these violations of the Birds Directive?