

**Question for written answer E-002155/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Franz Obermayr (ENF)

Subject: Halal certification

There was a controversy in Austria recently surrounding halal-certified products. An Austrian supermarket chain removed halal-certified food from its shelves following an outcry from consumers. Business involving halal certification nevertheless appears to be flourishing: the Austrian standards institute recently began work that led to the drafting of a domestic standard, ONR 142000. Efforts are also being made to introduce a European CEN standard for halal products (CEN/TC 425).

A CEN working party had already been set up in 2012 (CEN/BT WG 212). Its religious advisers included the European Council for Fatwa and Research (ECFR). The ECFR was founded and is chaired by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. Al-Qaradawi was denied entry to the United Kingdom in 2008 and similarly barred from entering France in 2012.

In one consultation, the ECFR opposed any stunning of animals before slaughter on the grounds that: 'Many Scientifics [sic!] researchers favor [the] traditional Islamic method as prescribed by Prophet Muhammad considering it is best most humane'.

- What information does the Commission have on the drafting of a European halal certification standard CEN 425/TC, currently marked 'disbanded' on the CEN homepage?
- What view does the Commission take of the involvement of radical members of the Muslim Brotherhood in CEN advisory bodies?
- Will the Commission work to ensure that any future European standards comply with Community legislation, in particular as regards animal protection?