

**Question for written answer E-005176/2016**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)**

Subject: Protectionist measures on the food market in the Czech Republic

In March 2015 I put a written question to the Commission drawing attention to the barriers put in place by Member States, including the Czech Republic, restricting the freedom of operation enjoyed by businesses from other countries. The Commission informed me at the time that it had engaged in administrative dialogue with the Czechs in order to ascertain the scope of the measures the authorities had taken and whether those measures were legal. Unfortunately, however, it would be difficult to argue that the Commission's action has been effective.

Businesses in Poland have reported that Czech importers of Polish products – and of meat in particular – are still struggling with unusually frequent and meticulous checks carried out by Czech inspectors, particularly the veterinary authorities. What is more, downright untruths are often peddled in the media, not just in the Czech Republic, but also in Slovakia. This problem has reached such proportions that some Czech importers are attempting to conceal the fact that the products concerned come from Poland, because local consumers, who are influenced by the media coverage, are losing faith in the high quality of food products being brought in from Poland.

The protectionist measures that the Czech inspection authorities are taking against importers of Polish foods are not in keeping with the principles of fair competition on the European internal market and represent unjustified non-tariff barriers that are in contravention of EU law. With this in mind, could the Commission please take more decisive action in this area?