

**Question for written answer E-000372/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Florent Marcellesi (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Beef and sheep meat exports to Iran

On 20 November 2017, the Commission announced that following a targeted mission to the country led by Commissioner Hogan together with an agri-food producer delegation, Iran will now be importing chilled beef and sheep meat from the EU¹.

As Iran has a 98-99 % Muslim population, exporting meat to the country will require halal certification, meaning that there will be an increase in animals that are slaughtered without prior stunning in EU abattoirs to supply this export market. Veterinarian organisations have taken a position and expressed concern at the steep rise in the number of animals slaughtered without stunning in the EU^{2, 3}, and the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe defines this practice as 'unacceptable under any circumstances' due to the suffering it inflicts⁴. For this very reason, Flanders and Wallonia recently introduced compulsory reversible electrical stunning for all sheep and cattle^{5, 6}, including those slaughtered in accordance with specific religious traditions. The new rules are set to come into effect in 2018 and 2019 respectively.

Is the Commission planning to negotiate reversible electrical stunning for sheep and cattle slaughtered in the EU whose meat is destined for halal export markets?

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/progress-eu-beef-and-sheep-meat-exports-iran_en

² <https://www.vettimes.co.uk/news/bva-concern-at-sharp-rise-in-slaughter-without-stunning/>

³ <https://avatmaorgblog.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/report-slaughter-of-animals-without-prior-stunning.pdf>

⁴ http://www.fve.org/news/position_papers/animal_welfare/fve_02_104_slaughter_prior_stunning.pdf

⁵ <http://www.gaia.be/en/news/historic-agreement-flanders-ban-slaughter-without-stunning>

⁶ <http://www.gaia.be/en/news/wallonia-takes-historic-step-towards-ban-slaughter-without-stunning>