

**Question for written answer P-006616/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Paul Brannen (S&D)

Subject: Finch trapping in Malta

I have recently been informed about the re-emergence of bird trapping in Malta, this time in the form of the reopening of finch trapping by means of a law passed by the Maltese Government. This development not only contravenes sectoral EU legislation (i.e. the Birds and Habitats Directives) but also runs against Malta's legal commitments agreed upon during its EU accession negotiations completed in 2003.

Moreover, the reopening of finch trapping risks setting a dangerous precedent as regards breaches of wider animal protection legislation in the EU. From a practical point of view, the loosening of hunting rules, primarily by increasing the number of traps allowed or reducing the duration of hunting curfews, poses a significant and unjustifiable risk to otherwise protected species of birds.

Can the Commission indicate what action it has already taken, or intends to take, to ensure the enforcement of relevant bird protection legislation in Malta?