

**Question for written answer E-004656/2012  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Struan Stevenson (ECR)**

Subject: Cross-border adoption of stray dogs

The recent explosion and abuse of stray dog populations in many Member States, particularly Greece and Romania, has been well documented. As a result, many Europeans now adopt rescued animals rather than buying pet dogs from a shop or a breeder.

Adoption of rescued animals is completely legal, but there is no EU legislation covering cross-border adoption. The Pet Passport scheme and Regulation (EC) No 998/2003 only cover pet animals which are accompanying their owners or are not intended to be sold or transferred to another owner. Previously, the Commission has stated that when a change in the ownership of the animal occurs, the animal can no longer be considered a 'pet animal' and therefore the movement falls outside of the Regulation's scope and is covered by the requirements of Council Directive 92/65/EEC.

Directive 92/65/EEC applies only to traders, who are required to have nationally issued health certificates in order to transfer animals. But to obtain such a certificate, it is necessary to produce a trader's Tax Identification Number (TIN). As animal welfare charities are not traders, they cannot produce a TIN. Consequently, they are prevented from re-homing vulnerable dogs in other Member States. Sadly, many dogs perish because they cannot travel to the home that has been found for them.

1. Is the Commission taking steps to resolve this issue in order to help Member States maintain the highest standards of animal welfare and combat the severe health risks caused by flourishing stray dog populations?
2. Many charitable organisations are concerned that Commission officials are hesitant to resolve the issue as they face strong lobbying from dog breeders. Comprehensive legislation is therefore the only solution. Will this issue be dealt with in any upcoming EU-wide legislation?