

**Question for written answer E-009106/2012  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)**

Subject: Use of EU funds to build an animal shelter in Galicia

The council of Pontevedra in Galicia is planning to set up a collection service for abandoned animals covering several municipalities that together have a combined population of almost one million inhabitants. Under an agreement that will restrict some of the competences of the municipalities, the collection service will be run in conjunction with an animal shelter that has a planned maximum capacity of 500 animals.

It is difficult for the animal shelter – which was financed by the PRODER scheme – to maintain an occupation rate of below 100 % given that thousands of animals – from dogs and cats to a growing number of exotic species – are abandoned every year across the province. Since the Lisbon Treaty, Member States have had a moral duty towards all living creatures, given that at that time, certain features of animals that had previously not been taken into account were recognised for the first time. For this reason, it seems paradoxical that EU funds have been used to complete what might be the largest animal shelter in southern Europe. Euthanasia of abandoned animals will prevail at this shelter given that there is no plan to promote a network of associations or run a public awareness campaign in the municipalities that decide to enter into this agreement on the collection of living creatures. Facilities built with EU funds should not be converted into extermination centres for healthy animals. Instead, schemes and initiatives that prioritise animal welfare and human health, and which are based on promoting adoption and other methods such as neutering in order to control the problem of animal abandonment, should be encouraged.

- Is the Commission aware that EU funds have been used to build an animal shelter in the province of Pontevedra? If so, how much EU funding has the shelter received? If not, why does the council of Pontevedra claim to have received such funding from the EU institutions?
- Does the Commission believe that it is appropriate to support the extermination of healthy pets instead of promoting alternative, kinder methods of dealing with abandoned animals?
- Given that animal welfare is a principle of EU policy, does the Commission believe that new measures to improve the welfare of domestic animals, especially those which have been abandoned, should be adopted?