

**Question for written answer E-004567/2015  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)**

Subject: Ban on rearing caged hens - improved food labelling

Conventional caged hen rearing has been banned in the European Union since 1 January 2012.

Certain Member States, such as Austria, had already made this move several years earlier. To ensure that competition in the single market is not distorted, the EU ban must also be implemented effectively.

What is the situation in Member States? On the basis of the information supplied and the inspection reports, can the Commission confirm that hens are no longer reared in prohibited cage facilities? What control and sanction mechanisms has the Commission introduced to ensure that EU law is upheld?

Another key factor is the production of cheap egg products from liquid or dry egg, used especially in processed products; a lot, therefore, reaches the European market through imports from third countries.

What measures will the Commission take for the benefit of European consumers and producers to prevent egg products originating from hens reared in cages that are banned in the EU from coming into the European market through the back door in the form of imports from third countries?

A legal requirement to label the origin and rearing method of egg products and other foodstuffs containing egg could offer transparency and protection here. What are the Commission's plans for legally-required labelling in order to offer a level of protection for European consumers and producers?