

**Question for written answer E-000979/2020
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Sylwia Spurek (S&D)

Subject: Animal welfare in the starter and growth stages of foie gras production

A report by the Cambridge University Animal Welfare Information Service entitled 'The welfare of ducks during foie gras production' states that while the report's primary aim was to highlight the welfare problems in the last stage of foie gras production, namely when ducks are force-fed, welfare problems were also identified in the first two stages: starter and growth. These include the early, frequent and rapid development of footpad dermatitis, hock burns and breast blisters, fear of humans and high sensitivity to the environment, and lack of access to open water for bathing or at least full immersion of the head.

1. Is the Commission aware of the existence of such problems in the farming of ducks and geese used in foie gras production?
2. How does the Commission intend to respond to such problems, which are described in detail in the Cambridge report?