

**Question for written answer E-006883/2020  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Breach of the Birds Directive in Malta

On the 20 October 2020, Clint Camilleri, the Minister for Gozo in Malta, authorised the trapping of seven species of migratory bird (greenfinch, goldfinch, linnet, serin, chaffinch and siskin) for 'research purposes'. However, no recognised academic body has been appointed to conduct this research or design a research project with established scientific parameters. Instead, a 'research license' is being issued to any trapper who applies for it, with no specification of where the 'research' should take place. This is simply a way of circumventing EU law, and should be condemned.

The Court of Justice of the European Union already ruled in 2018 that Malta was in breach of the EU Birds Directive, which bans the trapping of live migratory birds throughout the EU.

In view of the repeated attempts by the Maltese Government to circumvent the Birds Directive by opening the bird trapping season:

1. Does the Commission consider this practice in Malta to be in breach of relevant EU law?
2. What effective action is being taken by the Commission to ensure Malta complies with its environmental obligations and stops this irresponsible destruction of biodiversity?