

**Question for written answer E-007061/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Protection of the term 'hide' in the EU

As things stand, Directive 94/11/EC is the only EU provision which lays down a definition of hide, regenerated leather fibres and coated leather, and it restricts the use of those terms to the footwear industry. This limited protection does nothing to safeguard the authenticity of many other hide-based products, such as furniture and clothing.

The failure to draw up a harmonised set of rules governing the authenticity of hides and the resulting lack of protection for hide-based products has led over time to the increasingly frequent misuse of the term 'hide'. More and more materials of synthetic or vegetable origin are being marketed by means of campaigns which make improper use of the terms 'hide' and 'leather', one example being 'vegan hide'. This improper use of the term 'hide' deprives high-quality products of value, deceives consumers, discriminates against operators in the sector and distorts competition in the EU internal market, in particular because the protection provided by national rules in force in some Member States (Italy, France, Belgium and Spain) on the authenticity of hide counts for nothing in Member States which have no equivalent provisions.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it not regard the protection of the authenticity of hides in the EU as inadequate?
2. What steps will it take to guarantee greater protection? Is it thinking of proposing a European regulation on the authenticity of leather?