

**Question for written answer E-000395/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Aurélia Beigneux (ID)

Subject: Ban on the live castration of piglets

France issued a decree in February 2020 to ban the live castration (without anaesthesia) of piglets as of 1 January 2022. This is a step forward in animal welfare, as this practice causes the animals unbearable pain and extreme stress.

However, a decree issued on 17 November 2021 offers breeders ways to circumvent this rule, allowing them to continue castrating piglets either surgically with anaesthesia and pain-killers or by the injection of a vaccine that prevents the testes from producing testosterone. In any case, these alternatives push up costs for breeders.

Although the EU encourages the sector to review methods, it still authorises the castration without anaesthesia of piglets up to seven days old. Several other countries have now also banned this practice, including Norway, Switzerland and Germany.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission consider live castration to be a source of animal suffering?
2. Given the considerable progress made in this area in the EU, will it draw up a joint action plan with the Member States?