

**Question for written answer E-001902/2022  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Atidzhe Alieva-Veli** (Renew)

Subject: 2022 state aid payments for the realisation of voluntary animal welfare commitments for pigs. Increase in the budget allocated.

The Bulgarian State has so far failed, in the period 2018-2022, to pay Bulgarian pig farmers a total of some BGN 23 436 337 for the animal welfare of pigs. The total amount due so far, including the payments for 2022, is BGN 59 207 801.

Over the implementing period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2021, pig farmers were paid on average BGN 82.5 per sow and BGN 21 to 22 per suckling pig sold. BGN 8.75 per head of animal for 'selection-control' sows. Pig farmers in Bulgaria consider this state aid to be highly inadequate, especially as it is granted to offset lost income.

Under the Opinion issued by the Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture and the European rules on state aid, an increase of up to 20% in the notified budget is allowed, and for the period 2018-2022 this is BGN 178 857 320.

1. Can the Commission confirm that it is possible to increase funding in this way?
2. Does the Commission know whether there are any obstacles to Bulgaria paying an additional BGN 35 771 464, without this being considered a breach of the terms of the scheme notified, bringing the overall budget to BGN 59 207 801 + BGN 35 771 464 = BGN 94 979 265 for 2022?