

**Question for written answer E-001903/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Atidzhe Alieva-Veli (Renew)

Subject: Prolongation of state aid for the realisation of voluntary animal welfare commitments for pigs – 2023-2029

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 was paid for 'selection-control' sows. Pig farmers in Bulgaria consider this state aid to be highly inadequate.

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. In view of the commitments already made and implemented by Bulgarian pig farmers, can the calculation and rates of compensation for the upcoming programming period, 2023-2029, be adjusted to reflect the inflation indices for electricity and feed prices and the losses arising from the increased area allocated per animal, without the need to provide prior state aid notification?
2. Could balanced levels of state aid contributions be established, year on year?