

**Question for written answer E-002969/2022
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Nathalie Colin-Oesterlé (PPE)

Subject: Cancer risk linked to exposure to nitrates and nitrates in processed meats

In an opinion published on 12 July 2022, the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety (ANSES) confirmed that exposure to nitrates and nitrates used as preservatives in processed meats increases the risk of bowel cancer.

The agency's analysis of scientific studies on the topic backs up the classification made by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). In 2015, the IARC, which is part of the World Health Organisation (WHO), classified processed meat, and charcuterie in particular, as carcinogenic.

However, in 2017, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) found that the existing safe levels for nitrites and nitrates intentionally added to meat and other foods were sufficiently protective for consumers.

1. Will research comparable to what ANSES has done be carried out at EU level?
2. With regard to Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, what steps will the Commission take to tackle this major public health issue?