

**Question for written answer E-002065/2023/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Formal response to the European Citizens' Initiative 'Fur Free Europe' and deliberations on the animal welfare legislation review

The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) 'Fur Free Europe'¹, which proposes banning the production of animals exclusively or mainly for their fur and the sale of animal fur or by-products in the EU, reached 1 502 319 validated signatures² in just 10 months, becoming the third most supported ECI to date.

At the Council's Agriculture and Fisheries meeting in June 2021, Austria and the Netherlands presented an information note³ urging the Commission to put forward a harmonised end to the activity, which obtained the support of 12 Member States.

Given that:

Numerous studies⁴ show that it is not possible to preserve individual animal welfare in the keeping of mink, fox and raccoon dogs.

These wild species could be excluded from the animal welfare legislation review if the Commission recognises this new scientific evidence.

Public opinion polls⁵ around the EU have systematically proven citizens' opposition to this activity, mainly because of animal welfare reasons.

To date, 14 EU Member States have banned⁶ the breeding of these wild animals, rooting out both the zoonotic and biodiversity loss risks and associated publicly funded prevention costs and the environmental and ethical concerns.

Is the Commission considering potential scenarios for EU strategic autonomy-oriented re-industrialisation plans for mink farms?

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¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_1753.

² https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative/initiatives/details/2022/000002_en.

³ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10111-2021-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁴ https://media.4paws.org/9/a/5/3/9a53f13d0cbcd29ab7d2dc671f2dc4fa68a14d74/202303_efa_The_case_against_fur_factory_farming_Report.pdf.

⁵ <https://www.furfreealliance.com/public-opinion>.

⁶ <https://www.furfreealliance.com/fur-bans>.