

**Question for written answer E-002480/2023
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Annika Bruna (ID)

Subject: Ending the routine tail-docking of pigs

Pig farms that routinely dock the tails of pigs, i.e. cut off a portion of their tails, are in the majority in France (95%) and throughout the European Union (75%). The ban on tail-docking is therefore not being respected.

According to the French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (INRAE), however, this mutilation causes 'chronic pain similar to that reported by humans after amputation'. It is used on industrial farms where pigs bite one another because of their close proximity, poor nutrition, boredom and frustration.

In theory, tail-docking is regulated by the European Directive laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs. The Directive states in particular that such removal must not be routine: it must be carried out only where there is evidence that injuries to sows' teats or to other pigs' ears or tails have occurred. The text also points out that other measures must be taken to prevent tail-biting before carrying out these procedures.

Is the Commission prepared to better regulate living conditions in industrial pig farms – by increasing pen sizes, improving watering and lighting systems, and providing chewing material – with a view to ensuring that tail-docking is in fact used only in exceptional cases?

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