

**Question for oral answer O-000016/2022  
to the Commission**

Rule 136

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Subject: An EU Commissioner for Animal Welfare

Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union recognises animals as sentient beings. As responses to Eurobarometer surveys have shown, European citizens care about animals, and they would like to see their welfare improved through clear legislation, effective policies and the commitment of adequate resources.

EU legislation on animal welfare has been developed since 1974, but the approach of the EU institutions has been inconsistent, which has contributed to the problem of poor enforcement on various fronts.

The EU commissioner responsible for animal welfare should gain more influence and powers within the EU institutions on this topic, whose importance has been clearly acknowledged by this Commission.

Over 160 000 EU citizens and more than 170 MEPs from all political groups have already joined the #EUforAnimals campaign to demand that animal welfare be given greater importance by making

responsibility for it explicit in the name of the relevant Commission directorate-general and the job title of the competent commissioner.

As such, the commissioner would be given the responsibility for 'Health, Food Safety and Animal Welfare', which would greatly support both the legislative progress and proper enforcement.

This would be a significant political decision leading to more accountability for animal welfare in the EU institutions and hence increase the consistency, effectiveness and impact of policymaking in this field.

One of the immediate effects of the proposal would be the establishment of a dedicated directorate on animal welfare within the Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE), thus adequately recognising its particular relevance.

Is the Commission planning to respond positively to this proposal? If so, what procedures have been initiated in order to implement it?

Submitted: 28.4.2022

Lapses: 29.7.2022