Priority question for written answer P-002279/2023
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Violence against companion animals in Bulgaria

We have recently heard of another cruel crime against dogs, involving municipal officials whose duties include caring for animals. Their crime is not an isolated incident, but a systematic practice. Reports suggest that the officials in question repeatedly drugged, abused and wrongfully exported dogs from a shelter to neighbouring municipalities, where they were left to die.

The competent authorities have already initiated pre-trial proceedings. However, it is unacceptable for crimes like this to occur in a country that has criminalised cruelty against vertebrates and is one of the first EU countries to have set up a police service specialising in animal control and welfare. Moreover, crimes of violence against animals are becoming more frequent.

Dogs and cats are the most frequently kept pets, but there is no specific EU legislation protecting them, meaning they often fall victim to negligence, abandonment and murder.

Given this:

1. When does the Commission intend to propose comprehensive EU legislation on the welfare of companion animals?
2. What measures to improve their welfare currently exist, and what measures is the Commission planning?
3. Does the Commission have information about the resources used for the construction and maintenance of the shelter and whether they were used lawfully, particularly if EU funding was used?

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