

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000355/26
to the Commission
Moritz Körner (Renew)
(28 January 2026)

Subject: Oversight of EU funding of municipal stray dog management in Hungary

According to civil society organisations, municipal stray dog management in Hungary — including capture, impoundment and destruction — is often contracted to municipal owned companies or private service providers. The same reports have for years pointed to significant animal suffering and shortcomings in state supervision and documentation.

As EU funds under shared management can also be awarded to regional and local authorities as well as to delegated implementing bodies, the question arises as to whether the Commission effectively prevents the misuse of EU funds.

1. Can the Commission rule out the possibility that EU funds are being channelled directly or indirectly to municipal enterprises or private service providers in Hungary that are responsible for catching, impounding or killing stray dogs, and, if so, based on what specific controls?
2. What specific control procedures (e.g. system audits, on-the-spot checks, *ex-post* audits or random checks) does the Commission use to determine whether EU funds are used directly or indirectly for activities relating to stray dog management in Hungary?
3. Has the Commission evaluated any complaints, reports or audits concerning possible misuse of EU funds in connection with reported animal suffering resulting from stray dog management practices in Hungary in the past five years, and if not, why have no such audits been initiated despite such reports?

Submitted: 28.1.2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission
(17 March 2026)

Aligned with the Treaty on the EU, the Commission condemns all animal cruelty. The Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation on the welfare of dogs and cats ⁽¹⁾ setting standards for their management in shelters. A provisional agreement has been reached ⁽²⁾ and the regulation will soon be adopted by the European Parliament and the Council. Stray dog management remains within the responsibilities of a Member State.

The Commission remains committed to ensuring that EU funds are used in accordance with EU law. Under shared management, the Member State is responsible at first place for the management and control of programmes funded by the EU Funds.

1. Under the current and previous programming periods, the cohesion policy programmes for Hungary do not include stray dog management as eligible activities. Member States authorities are responsible for selecting operations for support while respecting all eligibility criteria. Regarding EU-funding under shared management, based on the requirements of the Common Provisions Regulation ⁽³⁾, a list of supported projects is publicly available on the website of the responsible Hungarian authority ⁽⁴⁾.
2. Stray dog management activities are not eligible in Hungary's programmes and any expenditures related to such activities have not been declared for reimbursement from EU funds. If verifications, audits or other controls reveal that EU Funds were used for ineligible activities, the corresponding expenditures will have to be recovered or replaced by eligible expenditure.
3. The Commission takes reports from civil society regarding the misuse of funds seriously. To date, the Commission has not received formal complaints showing evidence that EU funds were misused for stray dog management in Hungary.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52023PC0769>.

⁽²⁾ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2024_2029/plmrep/COMMITTEES/AGRI/LA/2026/01-12/1334329EN.pdf.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R1060> : Article 49(3).

⁽⁴⁾ <https://www.palyazat.gov.hu>.