

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001332/26
to the Commission
Friedrich Pürner (NI)
(31 March 2026)**

Subject: Animal welfare and use of EU funds in connection with the treatment of stray dogs in Romania

A number of animal welfare organisations ⁽¹⁾ and people on the ground are reporting serious abuse in animal shelters in Romania, which are effectively serving as killing stations. It has been suggested that EU funding could be indirectly contributing to financing the catching and killing of stray dogs.

Conditions in some of these so-called animal shelters are appalling and unhygienic, and the dogs kept there are suffering significantly.

1. Does the Commission intend to introduce guidelines or mandatory criteria to ensure that EU funding is not used for the killing of animals?
2. What action is the Commission taking to ensure respect for animal welfare in EU-financed programmes, particularly in light of Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which requires that the welfare requirements of animals, as ‘sentient beings’, are fully taken into account?
3. How, precisely, does the Commission verify the use of EU funds at national and local level, and what mechanisms are in place to detect and sanction misuse or any use at odds with animal welfare principles?

Submitted: 31.3.2026

**Question for written answer E-001380/26
to the Commission
Daniel Freund (Verts/ALE)
(7 April 2026)**

Subject: Animal welfare concerns regarding dog shelters in Romania and the use of EU funds

For many years, animal rights activists have raised concerns about the treatment of stray dogs in municipal shelters in Romania. At the same time, Romania receives EU funding linked to tourism, infrastructure and rabies, as well as from the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

In this context:

1. What information does the Commission have regarding the treatment of stray dogs and the operation of municipal dog shelters in Romania, including about allegations of inhumane practices?
2. How does the Commission ensure that EU funds allocated to Romania are not used, directly or indirectly, for activities that may violate EU animal welfare principles, including Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?
3. In the light of these concerns, is the Commission planning to introduce safeguards or conditionalities to ensure that EU funds cannot be linked to practices that undermine EU animal welfare standards?

Submitted: 7.4.2026

**Joint answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(28 May 2026)**

Commission proposal for an EU Regulation on dog and cat welfare and traceability ⁽¹⁾ sets minimum standards for breeding, housing, and care in establishments, including shelters, but does not ban euthanasia to prevent shelter overpopulation.

As WOAHA ⁽²⁾ members, Member States are bound to its standards which require euthanasia to be performed in humane manner and not as the sole population control measure, but part of a broader management program. Member States may also impose stricter national rules.

¹ <https://www.tierschutzbund.de/en/about-us/news/press/notification/neutering-instead-of-killing-romani-stray-dogs-in-focus/>.

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

The regulation was adopted by the Council of the European Union on 22 May 2026 and is expected to be published in the Official Journal in autumn 2026.

⁽²⁾ World Organisation for Animal Health.

Cohesion funds ⁽³⁾ are implemented in line with shared management principles between the Commission and national authorities who are responsible for selecting and implementing projects in line with applicable regulations as well as with horizontal and specific conditions.

Their appropriate application is subject to controls and audits, including by Commission audit services. The programme implementation is also regularly discussed in monitoring committees with representatives of social and economic partners.

There are no interventions related to stray dogs programmed in the Romanian Cohesion policy funds. The Commission has found no evidence that funding was used for the management of stray dogs in Romania.

Stray dogs are outside CAP ⁽⁴⁾ support. There were no interventions related to stray dogs programmed in the 2014-2022 RDP ⁽⁵⁾ and neither under the current CAP. Support to rural development, including through Leader ⁽⁶⁾, has a potentially wide scope of actions to improve quality of living in rural areas.

The list of eligible activities is defined by the Member State and decided by local communities. While not explicitly approved by the Commission, all eligible activities must align with EU and national standards, including animal welfare.

⁽³⁾ Cohesion funds include the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

⁽⁴⁾ Common Agricultural Policy.

⁽⁵⁾ Rural Development Plan.

⁽⁶⁾ Leader — community led local development, implemented in shared management with Romania — https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/networking/leader_en.