

**Question for written answer E-000170/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Katri Kulmuni (Renew)

Subject: Hunting of wolves for population management purposes

Wolves can be hunted for population management purposes in Sweden and Estonia, but not in Finland. Hunting for population management purposes would also give wolves a fear of humans and help keep wolves away from human settlements. At present, the process for obtaining individual hunting permits is regarded as slow and cumbersome. The situation of the wolf population also varies around the country and regulation based on a nationwide assessment may have been perceived as unfair locally.

For example, according to a report by the Finnish Hunters' Association, wolf sightings in rural areas of Finland have increased. This has an impact not only on how safe people feel and the keeping of animals outdoors, but also on hunting as a pursuit. The risk of hunting dogs being killed by wolves is making people less keen to go hunting as a hobby, meaning it is more difficult to manage the elk population.

According to the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union, it is possible under the Habitats Directive to hunt wolves for population management purposes, subject to certain conditions. Regulation concerning wolves should be brought more into line with the current population numbers. In a parliamentary communication (EK 41/2022), the Finnish Parliament has also taken the position that, for the whole of Finland, the wolf should be moved from Annex IV (strictly protected species) of the Habitats Directive to Annex V (protected species).

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission consider the differences among the Nordic and Baltic countries when it comes to the hunting of wolves for population management to be problematic, and is it possible to enhance the rules to make it easier to start hunting wolves for population management purposes in the Member States?
2. Is it possible that, also for Finland in general, the wolf could be moved from Annex IV of the Habitats Directive to Annex V, which already covers wolves in the reindeer-herding area of Northern Finland, and, for example, in Estonia?

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