

EN
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Answer given by Mr Potočník
on behalf of the Commission
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The Zoos Directive (Council Directive 1999/22/EC)¹ was adopted with the objective of promoting wild animal species protection and conservation by strengthening the role of zoos in the conservation of biodiversity. This is to be achieved by Member States adopting measures for the licensing and inspection of zoos in order to ensure that zoos respect the foreseen conservation and protection measures including appropriate accommodation of the animals. The Commission is examining all well founded and substantiated evidence that is brought to its attention in regard to failures of transposition or implementation of the Directive and, if necessary, legal action will be taken against the Member State not respecting the rules. Circuses are specifically excluded from the scope of the Zoos Directive, and are not covered by any other EU legislation. Therefore, the welfare of circus animals remains the responsibility of the Member States.

The Commission is preparing a communication on the second EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2011-2015. The enforcement of EU rules on animal protection is an essential part of this ongoing reflection.

¹ Council Directive of 29 March 1999 relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos. 1999/22/EC. (OJ L 94, 9.4.1999)