

EN
E-000477/2014
Answer given by Mr Borg
on behalf of the Commission
(28.4.2014)

The Commission is aware of the study “Are wild animals suited to a travelling circus life?” conducted by researchers from Bristol University¹.

The Commission is informed that Member States have different policies regarding the keeping of wild animals in circuses. However, the Commission is of the opinion that the correct application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality requires that the banning of wild animals kept in circuses for purposes of animal welfare is not a subject matter that should be decided upon at the European Union law level but rather should be left to the Member States concerned.

In view of the above, the Commission does not intend to make legislative proposals aimed at banning the use of wild animals in circuses and other similar enterprises for reasons of animal welfare.

The principle animal health conditions for the movement of animals kept in circuses are laid down in Council Directive 92/65/EEC² and are detailed in Commission Regulation (EC) No 1739/2005³.

¹ Iossa, G; Soulsbury, CD; Harris, S, 2009, Animal Welfare, Volume 18, Number 2, May 2009, pp. 129-140.

² Council Directive 92/65/EEC of 13 July 1992 laying down animal health requirements governing trade in and imports into the Community of animals, semen, ova and embryos not subject to animal health requirements laid down in specific Community rules referred to in Annex A (I) to Directive 90/425/EEC (OJ L 268, 14.9.1992, p. 54)

³ Commission Regulation (EC) No 1739/2005 of 21 October 2005 laying down animal health requirements for the movement of circus animals between Member States (OJ L 279, 22.10.2005, p. 47)