Question for written answer E-003761/2019
to the Commission
Rule 138
Pascal Durand (Renew)

Subject: Bear shows in Europe

The French Minister for Ecological Transition, Élisabeth Borne, banned the bear Micha, used in travelling shows across France, from being shown to the public given his state of health.

Such travelling shows can still be seen in some cities in Europe. The bears, which are protected animals, are forced to perform tricks, such as balancing on balls, riding motorbikes or interacting with the public. These tricks are usually the result of cruel training methods. As a consequence, some animals suffer from behavioural problems and chronic mental distress.

Moreover, these performances constitute a danger to public safety. During such performances, spectators are often asked to come closer to the bears, to touch them and to feed them, even though they are only restrained by a leash.

Many European countries have already banned the use of all wild animals in circuses and travelling shows. Bulgaria expressly prohibited shows involving bears in 2002. A number of non-governmental organisations are calling for an end to performing bear shows.

In light of the above, would the Commission consider prohibiting such activities throughout the European Union?