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[Press release](#) | 16.12.2021

European Commission rejects calls for EU-wide ban on the use of wild animals in circuses

Animal Welfare

Today, the European Commission declined to introduce a ban on the use of wild animals in circuses in the European Union, in response to an oral question posed by MEPs. MEPs' concerns include the risks associated with illegal wildlife trade, public health, and security. Opponents of the use of wildlife animals in circuses state that the practice has no educational or cultural value, while being detrimental to the welfare of wild animals. The Greens/EFA Group has long been calling for a ban on the use of wild animals in circuses.

Eleonora Evi MEP, Vice-President of the Intergroup on Animal Welfare of the European Parliament, comments:

"We are disappointed with the decision taken today by the European Commission following the Parliament's call for the introduction of an EU-wide ban on the use of wild animals in circuses. The Commission has ignored the appeal of over 1 million citizens who signed a petition to say no more to this unnecessary suffering, denying the alleged lack of EU competence on the matter.

"We are talking about animals that should live free in nature, not kept in conditions that ignore their ethological needs, constantly transported from one State to another in cramped cages and trained through physical punishment. The time has come to put an end to this barbarism, which has no place in the 21st century.

"The Commission has called on countries such as Italy, which currently have no ban on the use of wild animals in circuses, to introduce restrictions, bringing them into line with the majority of European countries where there are total or partial bans. We will continue to pursue an EU-wide ban until no animals have to suffer living in cages while performing for people's entertainment. The EU has the competence to act and the moral obligation to do so."

More:

Over 1 million EU citizens signed a petition demanding the European Commission bans the use of wild animals in circuses, which the [Commission acknowledged but declined](#).

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