

FVE Position on Use of Animals in Travelling Circuses

28 March 2017
European Parliament

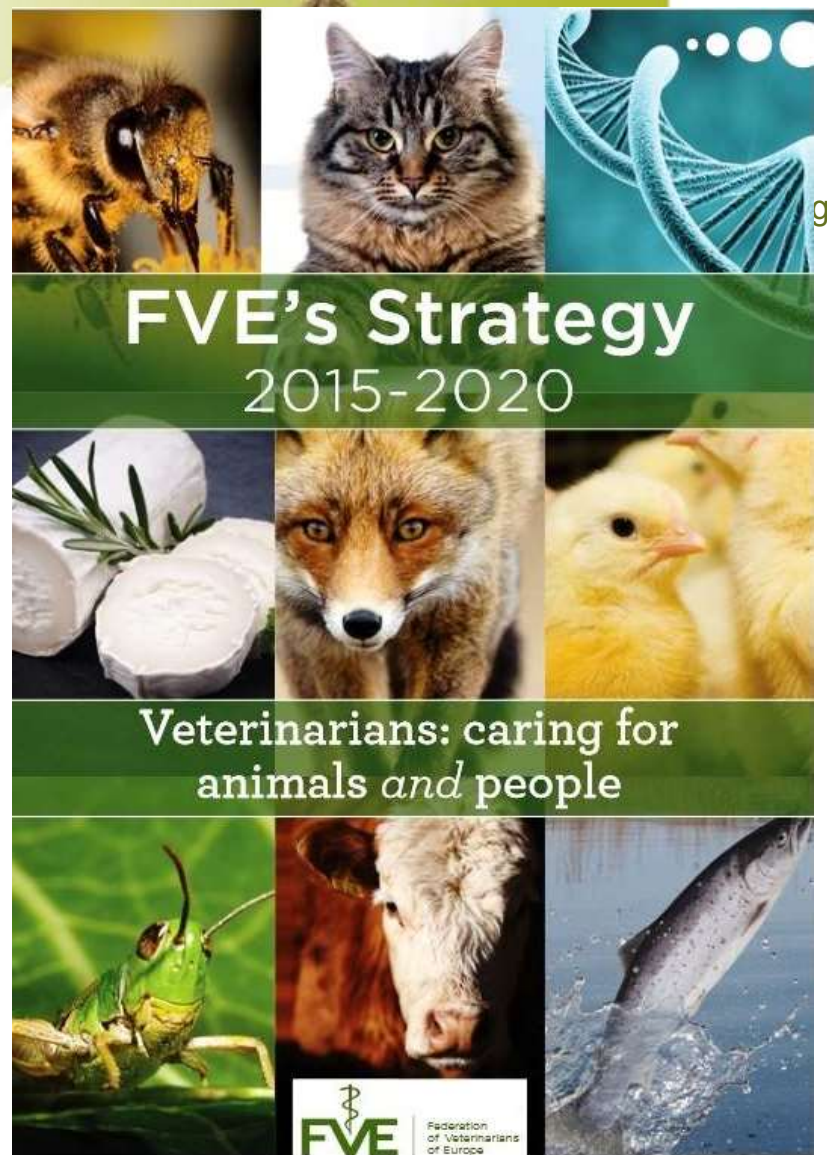


Federation of
Veterinarians of Europe



FVE's mission

The European veterinary profession, embodied by FVE, strives to **enhance animal health, animal welfare, public health and protect the environment** by promoting the veterinary profession.



FVE's Strategy
2015-2020

Veterinarians: caring for animals *and* people

FVE | Federation of Veterinarians of Europe

46 national associations
38 European countries



FEDERATION OF VETERINARIANS OF EUROPE
FVE/UEE/pos/007
Adopted 6 June 2015

FVE position on the use of animals in travelling circuses

The use of any animal species (including birds, reptiles, and domesticated species) in any entertainment, travelling or otherwise, should be submitted to scientific and ethological consideration.

The use of wild mammals, especially elephants, big cats (lions and tigers) in travelling circuses¹ reflects a traditional, but outdated, view of wild animals. These animals have the same genetic makeup as their counterparts in the wild and retain their natural instinctive behavioural drives and needs. The needs of non-domesticated, wild mammals cannot be met within a travelling circus, especially in terms of housing and being able to express normal behaviour.

There is little or no educational, conservational, research or economic benefit derived from the use of wild mammals in travelling circuses that might justify their use. In addition to the welfare considerations, the use of wild mammals in circuses can represent serious animal health and public health and safety risks². These wild mammals³ can cause physical injury to the public and their keepers and zoonotic disease transmission⁴. Public polls⁵ show that an overwhelming majority of the public backs a ban on wild animals performing in circuses.

Many European countries, such as Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia, Poland, the Netherlands and Malta, have already prohibited the use of all (wild) animals in circuses. Other countries are currently examining a prohibition e.g. The UK, or have severely restricted the number of species permitted in travelling circuses, e.g. Denmark, Ireland, Hungary, Portugal, Norway, Slovakia and Sweden.

FVE, aiming to "promote animal health, animal welfare and public health across Europe" therefore recommends all European and national competent authorities to **prohibit the use of wild mammals in travelling circuses** across Europe since there is by no means the possibility that their physiological, mental and social requirements can adequately be met. Suitable learnt provisions, re-housing opportunities and in some cases in last resort euthanasia need to be worked out with the circus owners.

¹ The FVE considers travelling circuses to be travelling companies of entertainers which raise rodents to deliver performances to the public for the purposes of entertainment.
² Wildlife, Circus Acts, and Emerging Zoonotic Spore Control
<http://www.fve.europa.eu/press/2015/06/27/20150627>
³ "Elephants in circuses: analysis of injuries, policy and law" by Animals and Society Institute 3, available at: <http://www.animalsandsociety.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ASIS-2015-06-27-01.pdf>
⁴ Escapes of elephants and tigers occur all in Paris, France Sept 2013 a run-away circus tigers a man, in Sweden.
⁵ May 2013 a run away elephant runs a house and family in the nearby accidents with tigers.
⁶ Public polls: UK 2010-2013, Malta 2012, Netherlands 2010, Germany 2010, Germany 2011



Animal Defenders International

the use of wild mammals, in travelling circuses should be prohibited across Europe.

Adopted FVE General Assembly in 2015





Motivation:

- The **needs** of non-domesticated, wild mammals **can seldom be met** in traveling circuses
- **Little or no educational, conservational or research benefit**
- In addition to the animal welfare considerations, the use of wild animals in circuses may pose **health risks for animals and people.**





More-over:

- Public polls show that an overwhelming majority of the public supports a ban on wild animals in travelling circuses;
- Many European countries/cities have prohibited the use of (wild) animals in circuses, others are considering such a ban;
- As veterinarians we support this



www.fve.org

SUMMARY

- Keeping animals comes with the responsibility to care for the animals;
- The needs of the animal have to be assured;
- A failure can only be accepted if duly justified by overriding reasons

**For wild animals in travelling circuses,
the needs of the animals cannot be met and
there are no valid arguments to justify that.**



3 days of non-stop circus
Artists from all over the world

Location: Leuven

Date: 12/05 to 14/05

<http://www.cirklcircus.be/en>

