The Protocol on the protection and the welfare of animals annexed to the EC Treaty by the Treaty of Amsterdam states that the Community shall pay full regard to the welfare of animals in formulating Community policies on agriculture, transport, the internal market and research. It also stresses that religious rites, cultural traditions and regional heritage of Member States shall be respected.

Circuses would certainly be regarded as belonging to a long cultural tradition in some, if not the majority of Member States and the use of animals in these performances could be seen as part of this tradition.

The Commission is, moreover, of the opinion that there is currently no legal basis in Community law that would permit the introduction at Community level of a ban on all performing animals at circuses on animal welfare grounds.

Furthermore, in the absence of evidence that divergent national approaches were hindering the functioning of the internal market or other relevant Community objectives laid down in the EC Treaty, the Community's power to act on circuses is very limited. Therefore, the decision whether to ban animal performances at such events or to define under which welfare conditions they should be accepted remains a matter under the sole responsibility of the Member States.

Answer given by Mrs Diamantopoulou on behalf of the Commission

(16 September 2002)

In 2001, the Commission asked the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy simultaneously to:

- carry out all necessary checks, and
- suspend all advance payments to the Edunet project.

In addition, the Commission has forwarded the case to the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).
Following the Commission’s request, the Ministry of Labour suspended payments and, on 10 December 2001, submitted its inspection report on this project.

The covering letter to the report, signed by the Deputy Director, Mr D. Carnevale, sums up the Ministry’s position as follows:

Following examination of the report and annexes, there appears to be a confusion of project-related activities and activities outside the scope of the project, i.e. trade union activities.

The Provincial Labour Directorate in Rome nevertheless reserves the right to submit definitive information once it has completed its inspections by checking the certified expenditure charged to the project.

In the meantime, pending new information, the Managing Authority will maintain the suspension of payments to CST.

The Commission is therefore awaiting the financial certification of the closure of the Community initiatives (Adapt/Employment) and reserves the right, then, to evaluate the eligibility of the submitted expenditure.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION E-2346/02**

by Renato Brunetta (PPE-DE) to the Commission  
*(29 July 2002)*

**Subject:** Galileo Project

There seems to be some delay in the launch of Galileo (the European satellite-navigation system), despite mediation efforts by the Commission and the ESA.

The European industry must complete in-orbit validation of the satellite clocks by 2005, so as not to jeopardise the assignment of the frequencies which have already been allocated internationally to the European navigation system.

On 23 May 2002 the European Council gave the green light to the drawing up of a framework agreement designed to facilitate joint projects between the European Union and the ESA.

In view of the above facts, does the Commission not consider that structures which will enable the project to be properly run on a joint basis should be put in place as soon as possible?

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**Answer given by Mrs de Palacio on behalf of the Commission**  
*(3 September 2002)*

It is difficulties encountered in the European Space Agency (ESA) in finalising the programme statement on Galileo which have prevented the establishment of the joint undertaking.

As these difficulties are persisting, the Commission has proposed to the ESA executive that it obtain its Member States’ authorisation to set up the joint undertaking with the Community, represented by the Commission, without having to wait for an arrangement to be reached on the level of their contributions.

This would enable the joint undertaking to start operating with funding from the Community budget paid to it by the Commission.