WRITTEN QUESTION E-2310/02
by Patricia McKenna (Verts/ALE) to the Commission
(25 July 2002)

Subject: Lack of regulation and legislation in Ireland concerning wild animals and circuses

It has come to my attention that there is a complete lack of regulation and legislation in Ireland concerning wild animals and circuses. When asked in May 2002 if the Irish Department of Environment would include circuses in the ambit of the EU Zoo Directive (Council Directive 1999/22/EC(1)), the Department prevaricated, and the impression was given that the Directive had not yet been implemented. No one was able to provide information about it, although it was indicated that it would almost certainly exclude wild animals in circuses because of the lack of experts in the field.

Given that Ireland was obliged to implement this Directive by April 2002, what is the Commission’s opinion on the fact that this has not happened?

How does the Commission intend to censure Ireland in the light of this failure?

Answer given by Mrs Wallström on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2002)

The objectives of Council Directive 1999/22/EC of 29 March 1999 relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos(1) are to protect wild fauna and to conserve biodiversity by providing for the adoption of measures by Member States for the licencing and inspection of zoos in the Community, thereby strengthening the role of zoos in the conservation of biodiversity. The Directive in question does not however specify requirements for circuses. These are matters for Member States to determine.

The Commission monitors the transposition by Member States of the above Directive and has already intervened with a letter under Article 226 of the EC Treaty to Member States which have not yet notified the Commission of the transposition of the Directive. Such a letter was sent to Ireland on 6 June 2002.

After taking note of the observations concerning the transposition submitted by Member States as a reply to the above letter, the Commission may, if necessary, deliver a Reasoned Opinion under Article 226 of the EC Treaty. It may also deliver a Reasoned Opinion if those observations fail to reach the Commission within the deadline given.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2312/02
by Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE-DE) to the Commission
(25 July 2002)

Subject: Risk of legionella infection for tourists

It is estimated that this year again some 800 to 1,400 tourists from the European Union will become infected with the legionella bacterium, which causes Legionnaires’ disease. Since summer 2000 I have been questioning the Commission on this subject. In February 2001, together with Mrs Corbey, Mrs Plooij and Mr De Roo I wrote to the President of the Commission, Mr Prodi, on the inadequate functioning of the epidemiological monitoring network and the lack of any satisfactory action from the Commission. In the answer from the Commission we received in April 2001, it agreed to review the network in the coming months and to take the necessary measures to inform EU citizens as effectively as possible. It now seems,