

# Portugal bans use of wild circus animals

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Portugal has banned the use of wild animals in circuses by 2024 with a new law passed by parliament and applauded by animal rights groups.

Lions, tigers, elephants, camels and zebras are among the more than

1,000 [animals](#) banned under the new law covering around 40 species.

"Wild animals have no place in the circus. People should be able to enjoy themselves without animals suffering," Bianca Santos, vice president of the AZP local [animal rights](#) group told AFP.

Approved with support of both left-wing and right-wing lawmakers on Tuesday night, the law brings Portugal in line with a dozen other countries including half of Europe which have banned wild animals in circus acts.

"Parliament has finally realised that larger cages, stricter rules and more controls were not the solution for the problems of these animals, who were reduced to mere puppets, deprived of their dignity," said lawmaker Andre Silva from the PAN party.

Until 2024, circus owners will have to list their [wild animals](#) on a register created by the government so they can eventually be placed in wildlife shelters in Portugal or overseas.

Circus professionals who agree to hand over their animals before the end of the transition period could benefit from aid in changing their profession.

An association representing around 20 Portuguese circuses, which had opposed the new law, said in statement the development would "contribute to the disappearance of the business."

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