

Culture Ministry Proposes Animal Protection Bill

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Culture Ministry has proposed a bill to regulate the use of animals in entertainment, according to the government's official website for pending legislation.

The bill proposes prohibiting the use of punishment "that can endanger the animal's health or is so painful as to cause stress."

"Interaction between people and animals in creative spheres should be based on playing, the demonstration of the animal's beauty using humane methods of training," the bill says.

"Animals must be handled with due regard for the biological and individual characteristics of their species and with the use of methods that exclude the possibility of physical or psychological traumas, stress or considerable pain," the bill says. "Animals can only be used in creative spheres if it does not endanger their life or health."

Animals are widely used in circus shows and other performances in Russia, often in conditions that attract sharp criticism from animal rights experts. Forlorn-looking exotic animals accompanied by entrepreneurial owners who charge passers-by for having their photo taken with the animals are also a common sight on streets in Russia, where prosecutions for cruelty to animals are rare.

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