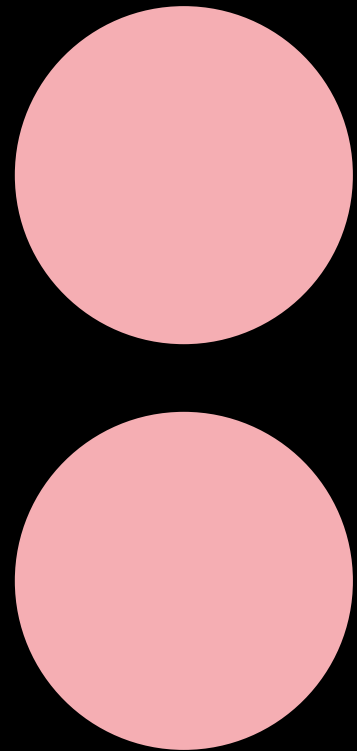


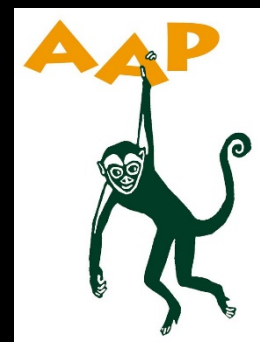
28 February 2020

Perceptions of Exotic Animals: Research for Eurogroup for Animals and AAP



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European report,
February 2020



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Introduction

Despite the wide and complex array of regulations aimed at the protection of wildlife and the trade of exotic species¹, the last decade has seen an increase in keeping ‘exotic animals’² as pets at home in Europe³.

To stop the growing trend of keeping exotic pets in EU countries, Eurogroup for Animals is working to promote the conservation of wildlife and animal welfare, while also raising awareness of the concerns related to the capture, trade and keeping of exotic pets. To clarify current legal complexities around which animals can legally be kept as pets, Eurogroup for Animals proposes the introduction of a comprehensive EU regulation in the form of an EU-wide ‘Positive List’⁴. This list would be a straightforward list of all exotic animals that may be kept as pets.

In order to get a better sense of the appetite for the introduction of a ‘Positive List’ across Europe, Savanta ComRes was commissioned by Eurogroup for Animals and Animal Advocacy and Protection (AAP) to conduct research among six European countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Poland and Finland). Findings from this research demonstrate a great awareness of the dangers and difficulties of keeping exotic animals as pets as well as a high level of support for the better regulation of the trade of exotic animals and keeping them as pets within the EU. The majority of respondents across all surveyed countries agree that the EU should have a greater role in regulating the trade of exotic animals as part of Common Market rules, indicating that the ‘Positive List’ would be well-received by EU citizens.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/info_welfare_en.htm

² By exotic animals we mean non-domesticated or animals that are non-native in the local environment such as monkeys, big cats and reptiles.

³ <https://www.eurogroupforanimals.org/wp-content/uploads/Eurogroup-for-Animals-Exotic-Pet-Report-FINAL.pdf>

⁴ <https://issuu.com/eurogroupforanimals/docs/positive-list-brochure>

Methodology

Savanta ComRes conducted an online quantitative survey in which respondents were interviewed about their perceptions of trading and keeping exotic animals as pets at home. We interviewed 6,137 adults in six European countries (France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Poland and Finland) aged 18+ online between 11th and 17th February 2020. Data were weighted to be representative of adults aged 18+ by age, gender and region in each of the six countries.

While the combined results cannot guarantee to be representative of the EU as a whole, these countries were chosen with an aim that they would be a good representation of the range of countries within the European Union (EU) in terms of geography, political history and culture.

Guidelines for the public use of survey results

Savanta ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council⁵ and abides by its rules. This commits us to the highest standards of transparency.

The BPC's rules state that all data and research findings made on the basis of surveys conducted by member organisations that enter the public domain must include reference to the following:

- The company conducting the research (Savanta ComRes)
- The client commissioning the survey
- Dates of interviewing
- Method of obtaining the interviews (e.g. in-person, post, telephone, internet)
- The universe effectively represented (all adults, voters etc.)
- The percentages upon which conclusions are based
- Size of the sample and geographic coverage.

Published references (such as a press release) should also show a web address where full data tables may be viewed, and they should also show the complete wording of questions upon which any data that has entered the public domain are based.

All press releases or other publications must be checked with Savanta ComRes before use. Savanta ComRes requires 48 hours to check a press release unless otherwise agreed.

⁵ www.britishpollingcouncil.org

Findings in detail

The vast majority (92%) of adults across all surveyed countries agree that capturing animals from the wild to be kept as pets is wrong. There also seems to be a widespread appetite for the better regulation of the trade of exotic animals as pets (92%) and for EU regulation of the trade of exotic animals as pets (88%).

Q. An exotic animal is a species that is not naturally found in the country. Examples include monkeys, big cats and reptiles. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

NET % who say agree	Total	France	Germany	Spain	Italy	Poland	Finland
Authorities should be aware of people who own an exotic animal(s) and the type of animal(s) they own	93%	93%	93%	95%	96%	94%	89%
Capturing animals from the wild to be kept as pets is wrong	92%	90%	93%	92%	94%	92%	94%
The trade of exotic as pets should be better regulated	92%	91%	94%	95%	89%	90%	91%
The trade of exotic animals as pets should be regulated by the European Union because of the free movement of goods in the Common Market	88%	82%	90%	96%	82%	88%	88%
Exotic animals should not be allowed to be kept as pets	87%	87%	86%	89%	86%	86%	86%
Exotic pets pose a risk to our native wildlife	74%	68%	58%	87%	84%	72%	71%
Exotic animals are easy to keep as pets	12%	16%	10%	13%	13%	11%	8%
Exotic animals are safe to have at home	11%	13%	10%	11%	12%	11%	10%

Base: All respondents (n=6,137), All respondents in France (n=1,037), in Germany (n=1,008), in Spain (n=1,031), in Italy (n=1,007), in Poland (n=1,049), in Finland (n=1,005)
Bolded % = most frequently selected option in each country

NET % who say disagree	Total	France	Germany	Spain	Italy	Poland	Finland
Authorities should be aware of people who own an exotic animal(s) they own	5%	5%	6%	4%	3%	4%	8%
Capturing animals from the wild to be kept as pets is wrong	6%	8%	5%	7%	5%	6%	5%
The trade of exotic animals as pets should be better regulated	6%	6%	5%	4%	8%	9%	5%
The trade of exotic animals as pets should be regulated by the European Union because of the free movement of goods in the Common Market	9%	12%	7%	3%	13%	9%	8%
Exotic animals should not be allowed to be kept as pets	10%	10%	12%	8%	10%	11%	11%
Exotic pets pose a risk to our native wildlife	19%	21%	32%	10%	10%	20%	19%
Exotic animals are easy to keep as pets	83%	77%	88%	81%	80%	83%	87%
Exotic animals are safe to have at home	85%	84%	87%	86%	82%	84%	87%

Base: All respondents (n=6,137), All respondents in France (n=1,037), in Germany (n=1,008), in Spain (n=1,031), in Italy (n=1,007), in Poland (n=1,049), in Finland (n=1,005)
Bolded % = most frequently selected option in each country,

- Close to all (96%) **Spanish** adults agree that **the trade of exotic animals as pets should be regulated by the European Union because of the free movement of goods in the Common Market**. Agreement with this statement is the lowest in **France** and **Italy** (82% each).
- Over nine in ten **Spanish** (95%) and **German** (94%) adults agree that **the trade of exotic animals as pets should be better regulated**. Around nine in ten across all surveyed countries are in support of this (89% Italy, 90% Poland, 91% Finland and 91% France).
- **Spaniards** (89%), followed by adults in **France** (87%), are also the most likely to agree that **exotic animals should not be allowed to be kept as pets**.
- Additionally, at least nine in ten (90%-94%) adults across all surveyed countries agree that **capturing animals from the wild to be kept as pets is wrong**, with **Italians** (94%), **Finns** (94%) and **Germans** (93%) the most likely to think that.
- **Italians**, followed by **Spaniards**, are also the most likely to agree that **authorities should be aware of people who own an exotic animal(s) and the type of animal(s) they own** (96% and 95% respectively) or that **exotic animals pose a risk to their native wildlife** (84% and 87% respectively).
- Level of agreement seems to increase with age across most statements tested about advocating regulation of the trade and keeping of exotic animals at home.
 - For example, nine in ten (92%) **55+ year-olds** agree that **the trade of exotic animals as pets should be regulated by the European Union because of the free movement of goods in the Common Market**, compared to four in five (80%) **18-34 year-olds** who say the same.
 - The only exception to this, is agreement with the statements: **exotic animals are safe to keep as pets**, and **exotic animals are safe to have at home**, with almost one in five **18-34 year-olds** (19% and 18% respectively) agreeing with these statements, compared to less than one in ten **55+ year-olds** (7% each).

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

- Level of support across all surveyed countries is high for the better regulation of capturing, trading or keeping exotic animals as pets at home.
- The majority of adults from all countries agree that the EU should regulate the trade of exotic animals because of the free movement of goods in the Common Market. Agreement is also high with authorities recording people who own exotic animal(s) and the type of animal(s) they own.
- While agreement with each statement suggesting increased regulation is high across all six countries, Spanish adults seem to be particularly receptive of these ideas, perhaps due to the already existing stricter regulations in the country⁶.
- Older adults aged 55+ are more likely than people aged 54 and under to be advocating for regulation of the trade and keeping of exotic animals at home, however, levels of agreement remain high among all age groups. On the other hand, those aged 18-34 seem to be more open to the idea of keeping exotic pets than people aged 35 and above.

Recommendations

- Use findings to demonstrate overall high level of support across all surveyed countries for the better regulation of trading and keeping exotic pets.
- Target communications to younger age groups, particularly those aged 18-34 about the capture and trade of exotic animals and the dangers and difficulties associated with keeping them as pets at home.

⁶ <https://www.eurogroupforanimals.org/wp-content/uploads/Eurogroup-for-Animals-Exotic-Pet-Report-FINAL.pdf>

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