

**Priority question for written answer P-004053/2026
to the Commission**
Rule 144
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Subject: Individual CITES certificates for historical musical instruments containing ivory

Provisions in Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 permitted worked ivory specimens that were acquired more than 50 years ago to be traded without a certificate under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). That automatic exemption was abolished, as of 19 January 2022, by Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/2280. Trade in such items, including historical musical instruments, now requires an individual certificate under Article 8(3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97. The Commission's guidance, however, states that it is highly unlikely that trade in pre-1947 antiques or pre-1975 musical instruments contributes to poaching or illegal trade. According to the guidance, an instrument dating from before 1975 may be traded only if it is, or until recently was, actually used by a musician.

1. How does the Commission justify requiring an individual certificate for items whose risk it itself assesses as very low, and is it considering a simplified procedure, for example one based solely on proof of the item's age and worked state?
2. How should historical instruments that are not used for playing, such as collection pieces awaiting restoration, be assessed?
3. How does the Commission ensure that Member States apply a uniform approach when issuing these certificates?

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