



News

EU: Number of animals used for scientific purposes in the EU drops

The European Commission has released the seventh of its reports on the number of animals used in the EU for experimental and other scientific purposes. The number of animals submitted by the 27 Member States relates to the year 2011 (with data from France for 2010) and totals just under 11.5 million, i.e., more than half a million less than reported for 2008. The most commonly used species were mice (61%), rats (14%), and cold-blooded animals (12.5%). As in all reports since 1999, no “Great Apes” were used in experiments in the EU in 2011.

The use of fish and rabbits increased by about 310,000 and 25,000, respectively, in comparison to 2008, while the use of rats decreased by more than 500,000 and the use of mice decreased by almost 123,000. The number of “other birds” and guinea-pigs dropped by 85,000 and 49,000, respectively. There is a clear decrease in the use of prosimians and non-human primates. The most notable proportional reduction is in the use of prosimians (1178) which represents a decrease of 94%. The total number of new world monkeys is down from 904 in 2008 to 700 in 2011 (22.5%), and use of old world monkeys decreased from 7404 to 5312 (28%).

Most animals used in the EU in 2011 originated from EU breeding centers. However larger numbers of cats, dogs, ferrets, and old world monkeys were from non-EU breeding centers.

By far the most animals were used for biological studies of fundamental nature (46.1%), an increase in total number of almost 716,000 animals, especially mice and fish, in comparison to 2008. Research and development in the fields of human medicine, veterinary medicine, and dentistry accounted for 18.8% of animal use and decreased in comparison to 2008 by almost 576,000 animals. Production and quality control of products and devices in human medicine, veterinary medicine and dentistry required 14% of the total number of animals (192,000 fewer than in 2008 although in this area the use of rabbits increased by more than 81,000 animals), while toxicological and other safety evaluation represented 8.75% of the total number of animals and decreased by about 37,000 animals.

Regarding the types of toxicological tests and safety evaluations performed, the proportion of animals used for acute and sub-acute tests has increased over the last four reports from 36% to 47.5%, representing 8,400 animals since the previous report, and the use of animals for reproductive toxicity testing has increased since 2008 by almost 19,000 animals.

Of note, of the animals used for toxicological or other safety evaluations, the percentage of animals used for the toxicological evaluation of cosmetics and toiletries was only 0.24%, i.e., less than 2500 animals.

This report was the last required by Directive 86/609/EEC. The submission and publication of data under the new Directive 2010/63/EU has been revised.

Adapted from COM(2013)859 (final)
December 5, 2013

EU: Citizens call for mandatory training on scientific research ethics

The Special Eurobarometer 401 found that more than half of EU citizens are interested in developments in the field of science and technology and would like a public dialogue regarding decisions in this field. Two in three respondents felt that scientists working at universities or government laboratories were best qualified to explain the impact of scientific and technological developments on society.

More than eight of ten people agreed that all researchers should receive mandatory training on scientific research ethics, including animal welfare and use. The same proportion also agreed that young scientists should take an oath to respect both ethical principles and relevant legislation, with over half in total agreement on this.

The Special Eurobarometer 401 “Responsible Research and Innovation, Science and Technology” was requested by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication. The field work was conducted in April and May 2013 and the responses of more than 27,000 EU citizens were evaluated.

Full report and summary: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_419_400_en.htm

EU: Two EURL ECVAM recommendations for alternative methods

The European Union Reference Laboratory for Alternatives to Animal Testing (EURL ECVAM) published a Recommendation on the Direct Peptide Reactivity Assay (DPRA) for skin sensitization on December 12, 2013. The information that DPRA can provide on the sensitization potential of substances will likely be used in combination with other information sources and test methods within integrated testing strategies.

EURL ECVAM further published a Recommendation on the Cell Transformation Assay (CTA) for carcinogenicity testing using the Bhas 42 cell line on December 17, 2013. After the CTA using primary hamster cells, this variant using the Bhas 42 cell line is the second CTA to achieve a Recommendation. The document concludes that the Bhas 42 CTA can provide important information on the carcinogenicity potential of substances when used within integrated approaches for assessment and testing.

DPRA Recommendation:
<http://bit.ly/1goqpyg>
Bhas 42 Recommendation:
<http://bit.ly/1dBAi8N>



GER: Animal Protection Research Prize for BASF research group

On December 2, the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture awarded the Animal Protection Research Prize to the research group around Dr Robert Landsiedel, Dr Susanne N. Kollé, and Dr Caroline Bauch, Experimental Toxicology and Ecology at BASF SE, for their scientific contributions to the field of alternatives to animal experiments. The group has successfully developed seven alternative methods for toxicological tests and strategies to evaluate chemicals in the areas skin sensitization, eye irritation, skin irritation, and skin corrosion. These methods and strategies allow the determination of local toxicity of chemicals without animal experiments.

The prize is awarded yearly for work which significantly reduces or replaces animal experiments. It is endowed with € 15,000 and is awarded in cooperation with the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment.

Adapted from BMELV
Press release no. 299
December 2, 2013

GER: Experimental animal numbers surpass 3 million

The number of animals used for scientific purposes in Germany increased in 2012 by about 170,000 in comparison to 2011 to over 3,080,000. The number of mice used increased by 207,000 to over 2,243,000, i.e., 73% of the total. After mice, rats (418,000), fish (166,000), rabbits (97,000), and pigs (16,000) were the most commonly used species. The increased number of genetically modified mice (180,000 more than in 2011) was even greater than the increase in the total number of animals used for experimental purposes. Animal sacrifice for the removal of tissue also increased by almost 55,000 to 893,000 (these animals are included in the total). Fundamental research required 37% of animals used for scientific purposes; 62,000 animals were used for education and training purposes.

Full report: <http://bit.ly/1eKePMY>

INT: "Global Guide to Animal Protection" released

The "Global Guide to Animal Protection" is the result of a collaboration between the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics, a world-wide association of academics from all disciplines, and the University of Illinois Press. Raising awareness of human indifference and cruelty toward animals, book includes more than 180 introductory articles that survey the extent of worldwide human exploitation of animals from a variety of perspectives. In addition to entries on often disturbing examples of human

cruelty toward animals, the book provides inspiring accounts of attempts by courageous individuals – including Jane Goodall, Shirley McGreal, Birute Mary Galdikas, Richard D. Ryder, and Roger Fouts – to challenge and change exploitative practices. As concern for animals and their welfare grows, this volume will be an indispensable aid to general readers, activists, scholars, and students interested in developing a keener awareness of cruelty to animals and considering avenues for reform. Also included is a special foreword by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, urging readers to seek justice and protection for all creatures, humans and animals alike.

The volume is edited by Oxford theologian Professor Andrew Linzey. Linzey is a member of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Oxford and director of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics.

Adapted from Oxford Centre for Animal
Ethics press release
December 30, 2013

INT: WC9 call for abstracts open

We are cordially inviting you to participate in the 9th World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences which will be held in Prague, Czech Republic, on August 24-28, 2014. The world congress provides an exceptional forum to underline the importance of both the ethical issues of animal experimentation and the 3Rs approach to the life sciences in the 21st century.

Since the new generation of scientists is committed to the 3R principles, during the last decade these principles have been accepted globally and in Europe they have been implemented in the policy on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes. The world congress will provide you with an opportunity to share your scientific results and experience in use and welfare of experimental animals, to expand your knowledge on 3Rs policies in different parts of the world, and to get updated on innovative tools for educating young scientists in the 3Rs.

Czech society has always relied on humane traditions and responsiveness to maintain sustainability of the environment including the animals, which is captured by the motto of WC9 "Humane Science in the 21st Century".

We are looking forward to share new ideas with you in August next year in Prague.

Abstract submission deadline: April 1, 2014

More information: <http://www.wc9prague.org/>

Dagmar Jírová and Horst Spielmann
Co-chairs of WC9
December 4, 2013

NL: International course in Laboratory Animal Science

A two week intensive course in Laboratory Animal Science will be organized at the Department of Animals in Science & Society, Utrecht University, The Netherlands, on June 30 - July 11, 2014. This course has been offered since 1993. The objective of this course is to present basic facts and principles that are essential for the humane use and care of laboratory animals and for the quality of research. The contents of the course are in line with the recommendations of the Federation of European Laboratory Animal Science Associations (FELASA) regarding the training of the young scientist whose research involves the use of vertebrate animals. The course may also be of interest for those who intend to set up a similar course in their own country. For this purpose, during the course the acquisition of teaching materials can be discussed with the course committee.

More information and application forms:
e-mail: las@uu.nl
Internet: <http://www.uu.nl/lascourse>

SUI: 3R Research Foundation calls for project applications

The 3R Research Foundation Switzerland supports research projects aimed at developing alternative experimental methods to animal experimentation. Projects must be based in Switzerland; in exceptional cases applications from researchers working outside Switzerland may be considered if they show links with an institution or researcher in Switzerland. Funding is granted to projects to research new methods or develop accepted methods up to validation and which offer practical alternatives to current animal experimentation in line with the 3R's principles: Reduce, Refine and Replace. Preference is given to projects or subprojects which are part of an overall research program with clearly defined aims which can be realized within 3 years.

Submission deadline: February 15, 2014

More information: <http://www.forschung3r.ch/en/guidelines/outline.html>

SUI: Experimental animal numbers decline

The number of animals used for experimental purposes in Switzerland in 2012 was 8.4% lower than in 2011, totaling about 606,000 animals. Of these, 378,000 were mice, 102,000 rats, 69,000 birds, and 24,000 fish. 277 primates were used for fundamental research and in the category discovery, development, and quality control. 55% of animals were used in fundamental research. The severity of animal experiments is classified into 4 categories, from 0 to 3. In 2012, 78% of the animal experiments

were categorized as severity level 0 or 1; 20.1% as severity level 2, and 1.9% as severity level 3.

Full report: <http://tv-statistik.ch/de/statistik/index.php>

UK: Competition for feasibility studies to advance non-animal technologies

£ 4 million of funding is to be invested into feasibility studies to advance the development and application of non-animal technologies. The competition is funded jointly by the Technology Strategy Board (TSB), the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs), Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL).

Building on the output of workshops held by the TSB and the NC3Rs in 2013, a key aim of the funding is to harness the commercial potential of technologies in this area. The TSB and the NC3Rs are to hold a series of networking events in December and January throughout the UK to highlight the scope of the competition and facilitate consortia building.

The competition is open to companies in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, chemical, agrochemical, personal care, and contract research industries with support from businesses in manufacturing, ICT, and informatics.

Projects must be business-led and collaborative, and academic partners can claim no more than 50% of the project costs. Projects should have a duration of 12 to 18 months, and range in size up to £ 250,000.

This competition opens on February 3, 2014. All applicants must first register via the website by noon on March 19, 2014. The deadline for applications is noon on March 26, 2014.

More information: <http://bit.ly/1bSsDSK>

NC3Rs press release
November 15, 2013

UK: Lush Prize 2013 awarded

In its second year, the Lush Prize had a more than 40% increase in nominations from science projects. Twelve winners of the 2013 Lush Prize Awards shared prize money of £ 250,000, plus one Special Award.

Lobbying Prize

The International Council on Animal Protection in OECD Programmes (ICAPO)

For their successful work with the OECD, now a world leader in the promotion of non-animal methods, approaches and policies. Award: £ 40,000

The Swedish Fund for Research Without Animal Experiments

For their work with Swedish regulators to replace animal testing. Award: £ 10,000



Public Awareness Prize

PETA, Laboratory Investigations Department, USA

For their high-profile campaigns against organisations that test on animals and that provide support services for animal testing.

Award: £ 25,000

SAFE (Save Animals from Exploitation) New Zealand

For publicising the use of animal-testing in national drugs regulation and helping consumers to buy cruelty-free products.

Award: £ 25,000

Science Prize

QSAR and Molecular Modelling Group, Liverpool John Moores University, UK

For their work developing computational alternatives to animal testing to predict the effects of chemicals. Award: £ 25,000

The Lung & Particles Research Group, Cardiff University, UK

For their work developing non-animal replacement models of the human respiratory system for inhalation toxicology applications. Award: £ 25,000

Training Prize

XCellR8, UK

For providing training in ethically sound and scientifically advanced human cell culture research technologies. Award: £ 25,000

Dr Anna Maria Bassi's Research Team, LARF, Italy

For the development and delivery of training courses in animal-free cell culture research in accordance with EU regulation.

Award: £ 25,000

Young Researcher Award

Simona Martinotti, Italy

For her research with Dr Ranzato into wound healing using drug strategies based on natural products and traditional medicines.

Award: £ 12,500

Alice Limonciel, Austria

For her research into the improvement of in-vitro models for testing toxicity effects on human kidneys. Award: £ 12,500

Lydia Aschauer, Austria

For her research on improving predictions of human responses to chemicals through understanding molecular mechanisms.

Award: £ 12,500

Katja Reinhard, Germany

For her research into visual impairment and blindness using human retinal tissue in vitro. Award: £ 12,500

Special Award

A special prize was added to celebrate the European ban on the use of animals in the testing of products for cosmetics purposes in 2013.

Research & Toxicology Department, Humane Society International/Europe

Emily McIvor, Policy Director

Adapted from <http://www.lushprize.org>
November 13, 2013

USA: Appointment of Dr Warren Casey as Director of NICEATM

For the past year Dr Warren Casey served as Acting Director of the NTP Interagency Center for the Evaluation of Alternative Toxicological Methods (NICEATM) within the Division of the National Toxicology Program at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. It's my pleasure to announce that Warren has agreed to serve as the next permanent Director of NICEATM. I congratulate Warren on an outstanding first year, and look forward to many more successful years of service to NICEATM, ICCVAM, and ICATM.

John Bucher, PhD
Associate Director, National Toxicology
Program Director
Iccvam-all Digest, Vol 87, Issue 1
January 7, 2014

USA: EPA releases chemical screening data on 1,800 chemicals

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the release of chemical screening data accessible through the new interactive Chemical Safety for Sustainability or iCSS Dashboard. The iCSS Dashboard provides access to data from innovative screening technologies for chemicals that are found in industrial and consumer products, food additives, and drugs.

As part of this data release, EPA is announcing the ToxCast Data Challenges, a series of challenges inviting the science and technology community to work with the data and provide solutions for how the new chemical screening data can be used to predict potential health effects. Challenge winners will receive awards for their innovative research ideas.

The data were gathered through advanced techniques, including robotics and high-throughput screening, as part of an ongoing federal collaboration to improve chemical screening. The collaboration, Toxicity Testing in the 21st Century (Tox21), is comprised of EPA, the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences/National Toxicology Program, National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, and the Food and Drug Administration.

Only a fraction of chemicals in use in the United States have been adequately assessed for potential risk. This information is useful for prioritizing chemicals for potential risk as well as predicting if chemical exposures could lead to adverse health effects. More information:

iCSS dashboard: <http://actor.epa.gov/dashboard/>

Tox21: <http://epa.gov/ncct/Tox21/>

EPA Chemical Safety Research: <http://www.epa.gov/research/chemicalscience/>

ToxCast Data Challenges: <http://epa.gov/ncct/challenges.html>

Adapted from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Weekly Digest Bulletin
December 17, 2013