

Animals used in science, testing and education

Eurogroup is opposed to the use of animals in science, testing and education which causes animals pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm. Our definition of ‘animal’ includes foetal, embryonic and larval forms.

Our primary goal is to end the use of animals for science, testing and educational purposes, by replacing them with humane alternatives. We strive for a paradigm shift in society, politics and academia towards a humane, modern and animal-free research and regulatory approach. We are convinced that much greater effort can and must be made to develop, accept, implement and promote experimental and test methods and approaches that either replace or avoid animal use.

There is significant evidence and increasing concern within society over the scientific limitations, predictive value and effectiveness of many animal ‘models’ and tests. Further development and use of more reliable, advanced non-animal technologies has the potential to facilitate better quality, faster, cheaper and more humane science. Eurogroup promotes and encourages the development and use of *in silico*, *in vitro* and animal-free methods in science, testing and education.

Animals used in experiments can experience pain and distress, which may be severe. The way that animals are bred, transported, housed and handled can often also cause suffering. Until full replacement of animal experiments is achieved, and as long as animals are still used in science and testing and for educational purposes, Eurogroup promotes measures that will help reduce the number of animals used, and ensure that they experience the minimum suffering, and that their welfare is improved at each stage of their lives.

Given the serious ethical and animal welfare concerns, as long as animals are used for scientific purposes, all science, testing and education involving animals must be subject to a strict, transparent and publicly accountable system of regulation, control and inspection. This should include critical, independent review of the justification for animal use, with rigorous assessment of how well the 3Rs (replacement, reduction and refinement) have been applied. The process should also incorporate review by an effective ethics committee which involves a broad range of perspectives on animal use.

Eurogroup works to achieve its aims by raising awareness, campaigning and working with decision makers. Eurogroup actively participates in the drafting, review and revision of legislation relating to the use of animals in science, testing and education, and scrutinises the transposition and implementation of relevant directives and regulations.