

EARA News Digest 2022 - Week 25

Welcome to your Monday morning update, [from EARA](#), on the latest news in biomedical science, policy and openness on animal research.

Media



Belgium, France and Portugal assess their openness on animal research

Three European Transparency Agreements on Animal Research (TA) have published their annual evaluation reports, including examples of good communications from their signatories.

The [first-ever report](#) of the Belgium TA, surveying 13 biomedical institutions, showed that all but one have a publicly accessible statement on about animal research on their website.

Most also reported that they discuss the subject with their staff through talks or publications.

Kris Meurrens, of KU Leuven, and vice-president of the Belgian Council for Laboratory Animal Science. (BCLAS) said: “Having a transparency agreement and its commitments keeps us vigilant with respect to communication outside our facilities. The agreement triggers us to speak up

more about animal research.”

Portugal produced its second evaluation report, from 19 signatory institutions, showing encouraging improvement in its openness on communication.

The vast majority (84%) have a position statement about animal research on their website – last year only just over half (53%) the institutions reported they had a statement. While almost all publish news about scientific discoveries involving the use of animals.

Ana Isabel Moura Santos, of NOVA Medical School, said the agreement led to a ‘change of culture’ among institutions with scientists more prepared to talk about their work ‘in a simpler and clearer way’.

The first-ever evaluation report of the French Transparency Charter on the use of animals in research, completed by 38 signatory organisations, was also published last week.

The report authors said: “It is clear that the management and teams are fully committed to the process and are motivated to change the image of animal research, even if the paradigm shift is sometimes complicated and takes time.”

Media



Institutions open up on their work with animals - #BOARD22 day

Biomedical institutions from around the world shared their stories and experiences of being open with the public during EARA's Be Open About Animal Research Day (#BOARD22) last week.

EARA member the Netherlands Cancer Institute, presented an impressive video showing [its lab facilities](#), including interviews with staff and procedures with animals.

Ana Joao Rodrigues, a neuroscientist at EARA member the University of Minho, Portugal, spoke about [her experiences](#) of communicating with the public.

She said: "I like to end by saying that if we are alive today, this is in part due to the animal research that contributed to develop vaccines, medical advances and treatments."

Among other videos were [Anna Mitchell](#), of Oxford University; SEBBM in Spain with interviews from [16 researchers](#) on how they develop innovative strategies to apply the 3Rs in their studies; and [Jordana Lenon](#) at the STEM cell learning lab, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA.

Also on the day, on [Instagram live streams](#), EARA Twitter ambassadors interviewed scientists about their animal research. Tatjana Pirman, of the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia,

spoke on digestion and nutrition and Christina Kolla, a MSc student at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece, shared her work on breast cancer using mice.

There were many statements on Twitter from institutions and researchers, including [Wilbert Freiling](#), of Charles River; [Geraldine Fleurie](#), President of the Association of Primate Veterinarians; [Eirini Fragkiadaki](#), of the Hellenic Pasteur Institute, Greece, and Transnetyx, USA – all EARA member institutions.

[In its statement](#) Transnetyx said: “The work of the research community is noble and compassionate, and we encourage you to speak from your heart about what drives you to improve lives and how you do it.”

Policy

‘Moving beyond animal testing’ – event this week

Two different One Health events this week will look at different aspects of health and research involving animals.

At the [ONE conference](#), on Thursday, 23 June, there will be sessions focusing on *New Approach Methodologies: Moving Beyond Animal Testing*.

[The sessions](#) will ‘explore the opportunities provided by new approach methodologies to shift the current paradigm from regulatory chemical risk assessment based on *in vivo* animal testing’ to non-animal methods such as *in vitro* and *in*



silico testing and alternative animal models, such as zebrafish and roundworms - *Caenorhabditis elegans*.

There will be session contributions from the European Chemicals Agency, European Food Safety Authority, the European Medicines Agency and the Joint Research Centre.

On the same day, the Federation of European Academies of Medicine ([FEAM](#)) and InterAcademy Partnership ([IAP](#)) will host, *Combating zoonoses and addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR) on the planet with a One Health approach* ([in Paris and via Zoom](#)).

It will bring together high-level global experts to look at good practices across Europe on One Health preparedness and explore how the EU can help lead global action.

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