

GOOD PRACTICE IN COMMUNICATION ANIMAL RESEARCH TO THE PUBLIC

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Key elements

1. The Science Communication
2. Public opinion and animal research
3. What are the challenges to improving public understanding of animal research and 3Rs
4. Transparency and openness on animal research in Eu and in Croatia
5. Crisis communication and public perception
6. Conclusions

The Science communication

- Science is, potentially, the best source for the evidence needed to answer to the benefits of human and veterinary biomedical research
- Public outreach has become an issue of growing importance for science
- Active communication between researchers and society is necessary for the scientific community's involvement in developing science- based policies.

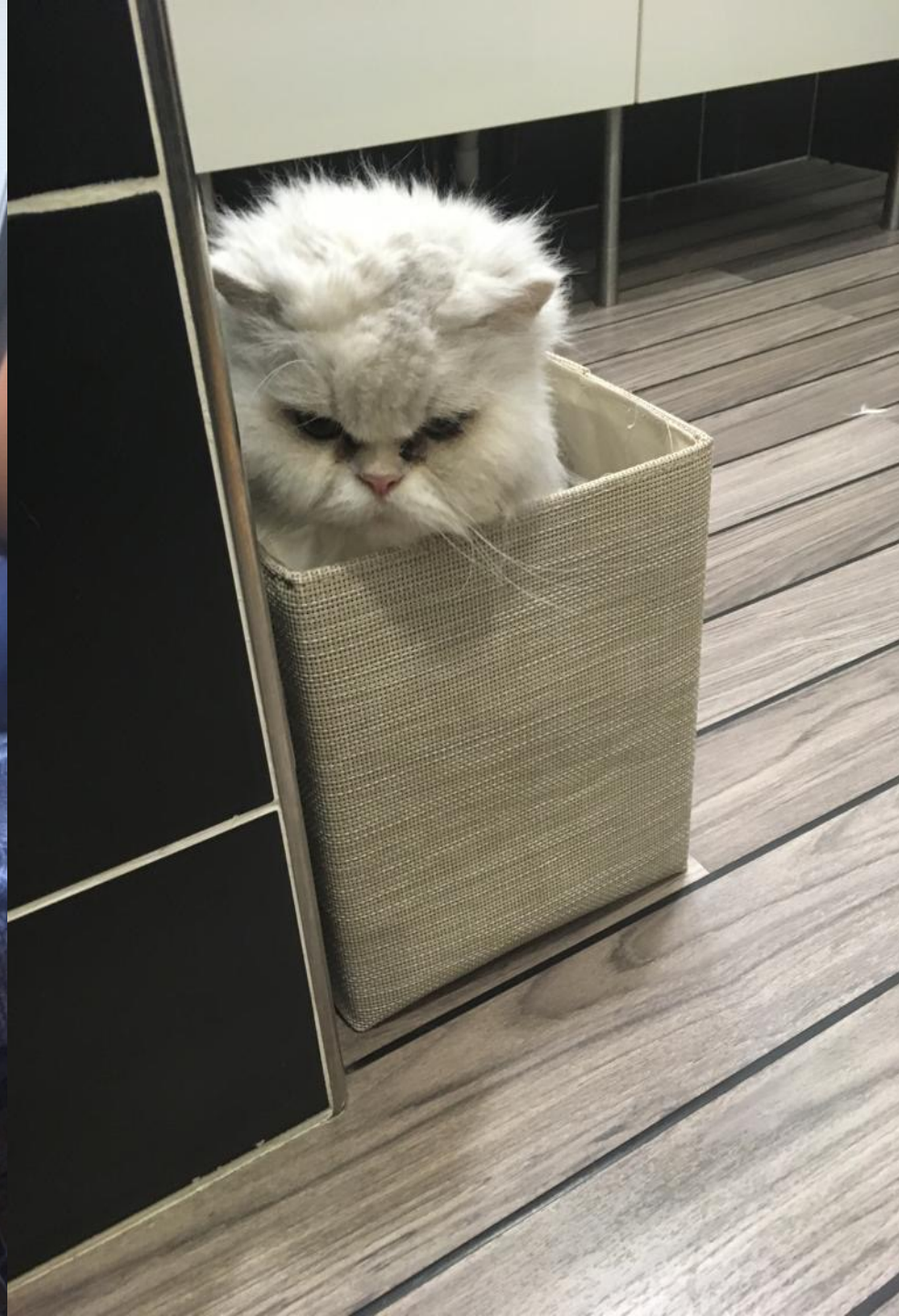
The science communication

- Many scientists and scientific institutions feel a need to inform the public about potentially dangerous misconceptions or to counter a continuing barrage of misinformation's from numerous.
- The current pandemic, climate crisis, and concerns over new technologies from artificial intelligence to genetic modification by CRISPR demand public accountability, clear discussion and the ability to disagree in public.

The science communication

- However, the trust of the public in scientific processes needs to be earned and kept, which will require inclusive, self-reflecting, honest and inspiring science communication.
- How the science communication help bridge the gap between research and society?
- What about the animal research and the public?





The Independent Newspaper, on Friday 30th July 2004 titled Animal testing - the facts and the figures:

"There needs to be clearer communication for the public about how valuable it is. Many people have no idea what's going on because so few scientists are prepared to put their head above the parapet"

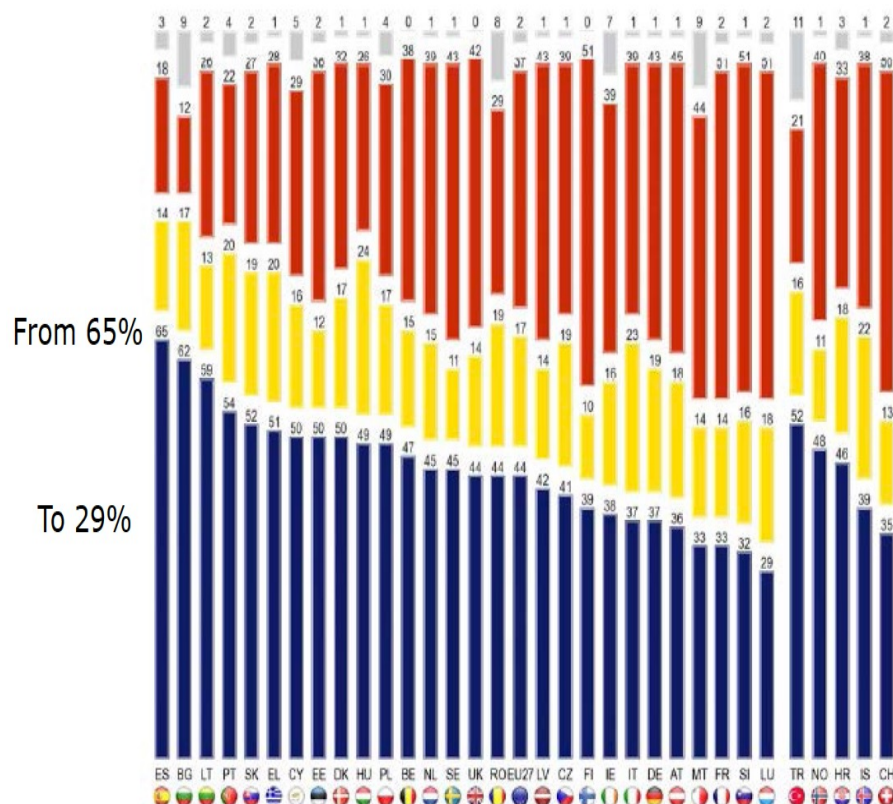
Lord Robert Winston

Public opinion and animal research

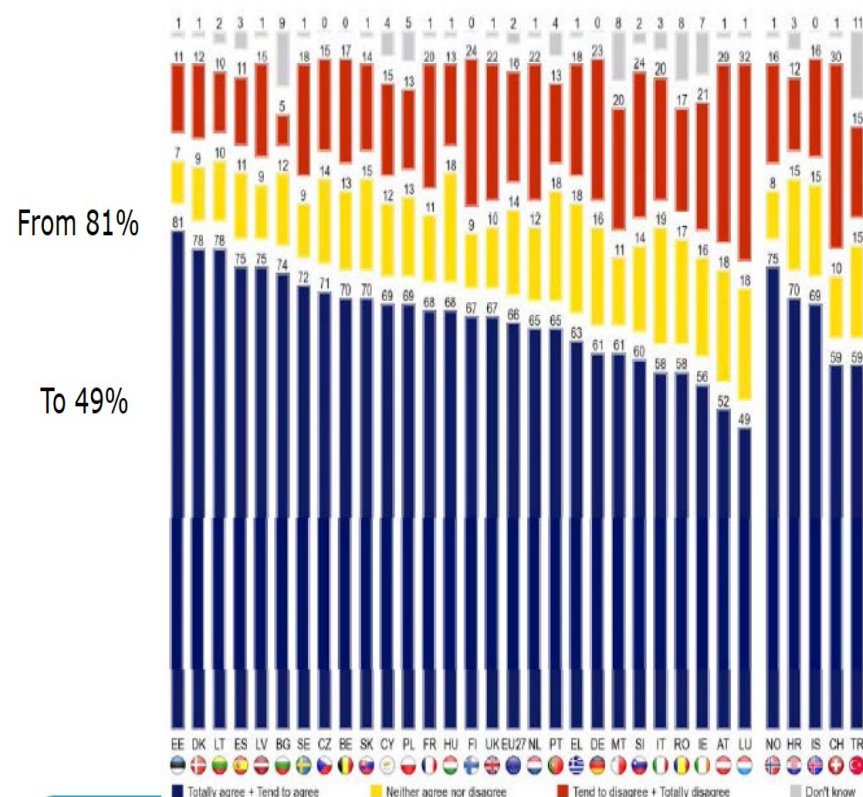
- Few specific surveys on public perceptions
- Mostly on university students, scientists, rarely on the general population : UK (2016) and France (2021)
- Some surveys related to science and technology (Eurobarometer 2015) or to Environment (2010)

Eurobarometer Poll 2010

Scientists should be allowed to experiment on animals like dogs and monkeys, if this can help resolve human health problems. EB 2010



Scientists should be allowed to do research on animals like mice if it produces new information about human health problems



US Public Opinion

Do you agree or disagree with the humane use of animals in biomedical research?

Historically, support for animal research was in the **high 70s**.

In 2008, support dropped to **64 percent**.

In 2015, only **45 percent** say they support animal research.



Why is public support so low?

What the public sees

NATURE | NEWS



Italian court convicts lab-dog breeders

Three people found guilty of cruelty against animals bred for scientific research.

[Alison Abbott](#)

23 January 2015



German public

experimenting on monkeys. The
look at where Germany stands on



The reality behind the image...



University of Florida vet school students and veterinarians work to spay and neuter cats as part of Operation Cat Nip on Wednesday.

By **Cindy Swirko**

Published: Wednesday, August 10, 2011 at 6:11 p.m.

Hundreds of cats seized from a major High Springs hoarding case are being shuttled this week to the University of Florida veterinary college to be spayed or neutered, tested and treated in preparation for an adoption event this month.

M Blogs

Ur
da

Les animaux et nous

← Amériques: le cauchemar des chevaux en fin de carrière

L'amour au long cours, c'est possible! →

19 mars 2014, par Catherine Vincent

Chats torturés: la réalité derrière l'image

Certes, l'information provient du site du **Gircor**: une association de labos de recherche publique, grands instituts, entreprises du médicament et centres de recherche privés dont le but est de faire mieux connaître au public « *les raisons et les conditions* » dans lesquelles se pratique l'expérimentation animale. Certes, le Gircor tire lui-même cette information du site anglo-saxon **Speaking of Research**, dont le but est... exactement le même. Pas le genre de sites, donc, que fréquentent les anti-vivisectionnistes. J'invite pourtant ces derniers à s'arrêter quelques secondes sur cette image, tant elle témoigne des réactions irrationnelles que peuvent véhiculer, sur fond de désinformation, nos désormais incontournables réseaux sociaux.



What are the Challenges to improving public understanding of animal research?(EARA)

What are the Challenges to improving public understanding of 3Rs use?

Communication Challenges

- Centrally run
- Professional staff
- Effective campaigners



Turn fact into fiction



ANIMALS ARE NOT OURS
to eat, wear, experiment on, use for entertainment, or abuse in any other way.



Communication Challenge

- Challenge : Speed at Which Risk and Crisis Information Flows Through the Media
 - 20 years ago : 24 hours
 - 10 years ago: 4 hours
 - Today : 2-4 minutes

Challenge: Everybody is talking. Everybody
is listening.

You Tube

facebook

twitter



Legislative Challenges

The 'Stop Vivisection' European Citizens' Initiative

The Academy of Medical Sciences signed a pan-European statement opposing the 'Stop Vivisection' European Citizens' Initiative.

Ongoing




The 'Stop Vivisection' European Citizens' Initiative

In March 2015, the Academy of Medical Sciences supported a pan-European statement opposing the 'Stop Vivisection' European Citizens' Initiative and supporting the European Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes.


The Initiative, submitted to the European Commission on 4 March 2015, calls on the Commission to "abrogate directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes and to present a new proposal that does away with animal experimentation and instead makes compulsory the use - in biomedical and toxicological research - of data directly relevant for the human species"

Downloads

 Statement supporting EU Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes

[Download](#)



 Report of a meeting at the European Parliament on 'Understanding research using animals and the alternatives'



Legislative Challenges



Objectives

With the EU ban on cosmetics tests on animals came the promise of a Europe in which animals no longer suffer and die for the sake of cosmetics. That promise has been broken. Authorities still demand animal tests on ingredients used in cosmetics, which goes against the expectations and wishes of the public and the intention of legislators.

Yet, never have we had such powerful non-animal tools for assuring safety or such a golden opportunity to revolutionise human and environmental protection. The European Commission must uphold and strengthen the ban and transition to animal-free safety assessment.

We call on the European Commission to do the following:

1. Protect and strengthen the cosmetics animal testing ban.

Initiate legislative change to achieve consumer, worker, and environmental protection for all cosmetics ingredients without testing on animals for any purpose at any time.

2. Transform EU chemicals regulation.

Ensure human health and the environment are protected by managing chemicals without the addition of new animal testing requirements.

3. Modernise science in the EU.

Commit to a legislative proposal plotting a roadmap to phase-out all animal testing in the EU before the end of the current legislative term.

Web address of this initiative in the European Commission's register

<https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative/initiatives/details/2021/000006> 

Support this initiative proposed by European Union citizens

Select your country of nationality:

Please select nationality



Conservative Challenges



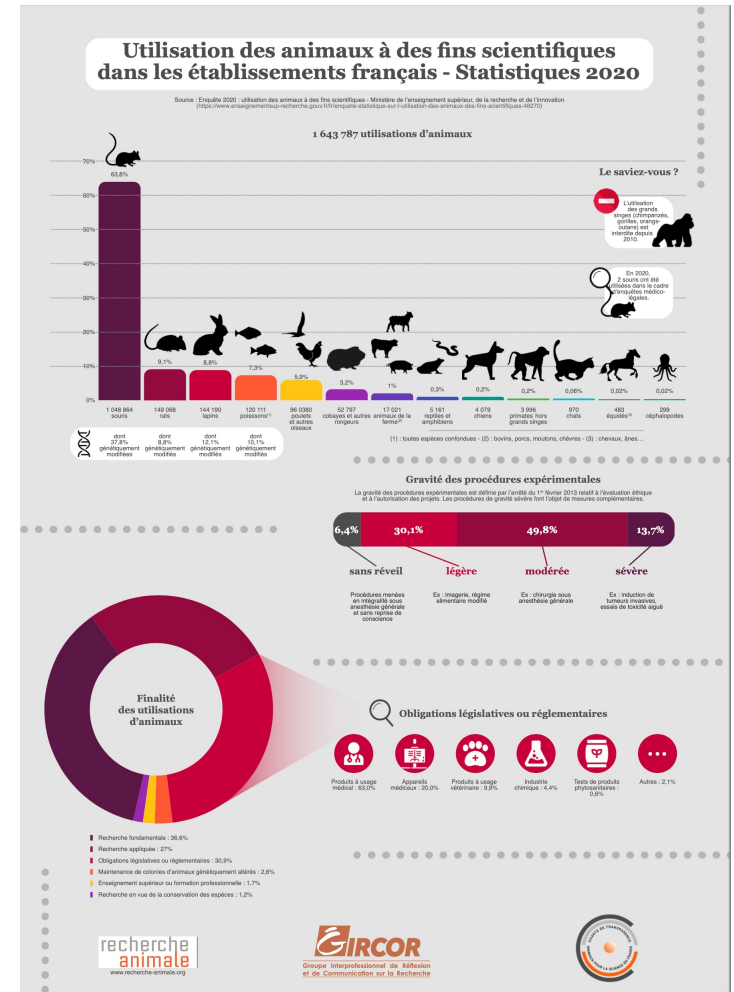
What are the Opportunities to improve public understanding of animal research and non-animal alternatives?

Improving openness and transparency in the EU

1. November 2017 the EU Commission published its Review of Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes
2. Section 3 of the report addresses the issue of ***Improved Transparency*** and how the Directive has introduced elements aimed at improving transparency
3. The Commission reports that there has been some progression transparency, but suggests that further progress is needed, in particular:
 - Publication of statistical information on animal use
 - Non-technical project summaries (NTS)

1. Why proactively communicate animal use statistics?

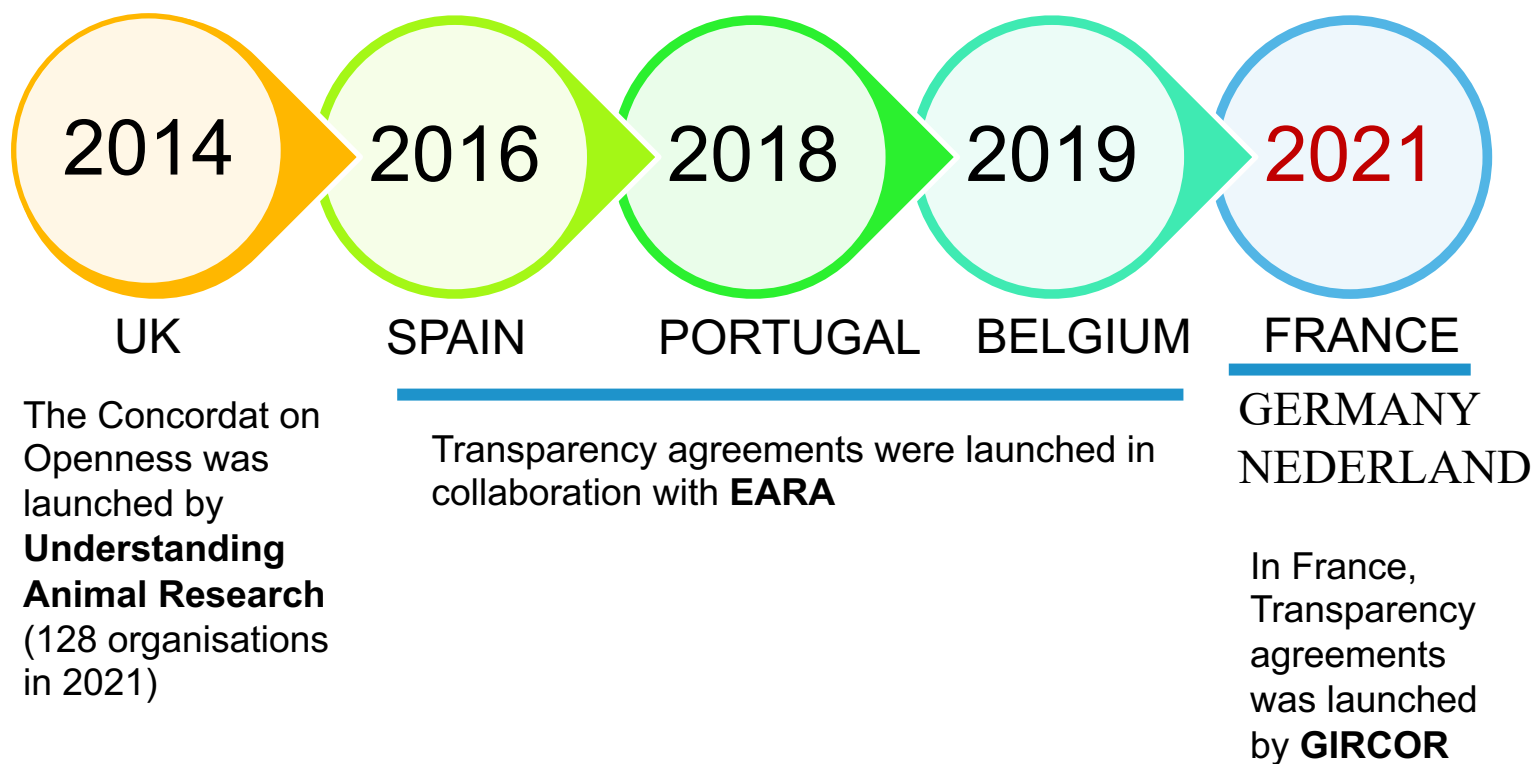
1. Annual statistical reports are an annual opportunity to inform the media and the public about the use of animals in research and the regulatory framework that governs animal welfare.
2. It allows scientists and regulators to **place the numbers used**, and any fluctuations, in their **scientific context** at a media briefing.



2. Non – technical project summaries (NTS)

- Non-technical project summaries provide information on the objectives and benefits of any research project, the numbers and types of animals to be used, predicted harm, and compliance with the 3Rs.
- Arising from EU directive 2010/63 they are widely seen as a positive development in improving transparency to the public.

3. Transparency Agreements on Animal Research across Europe



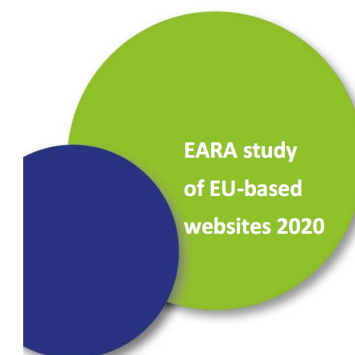
The commitments within the transparency agreements

1. We will *be clear about when, how and why* the biomedical research sector uses animals in research
2. We will *enhance our communications* with the media and the public about our research using animals
3. We will *be proactive* in providing opportunities *for the public* to find out about research using animals and the regulations that govern it
4. We will *report* on progress annually and *share* our experiences

EARA institutional website Survey, which was supported by the Commission and facilitated by the Member States (2020)

More than half the institutions assessed have a recognisable statement acknowledging the use of animals, or a commitment to the welfare of research animals.	59%
More than three quarters of the websites provide more information , such as the species of animal used and/or the type of research animals are used in.	77%
More than half the websites have animal research as a prominent feature, e.g. through high hit rates in the search bar of the website, or easy navigation from the homepage.	56%
Under half the websites assessed display at least one image of an animal used in research.	42%
More than two thirds of the websites contain an example of research using animals conducted at that institution, such as a case study or accessible publication.	68%
Fewer than a third of websites contain extensive information , such as statistics on animal use, frequently asked questions, or a general high volume of public-facing information.	31%

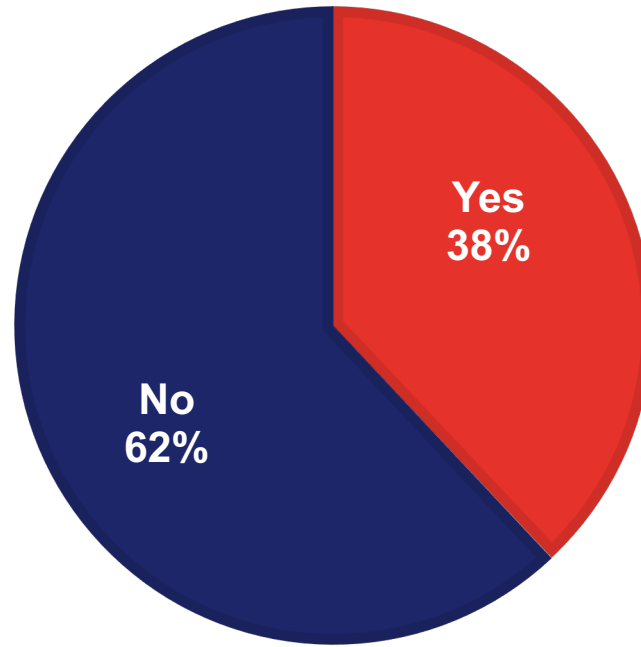
Table 1: Summary of category assessments across the EU & UK



Transparency and Openness on Animal Research in Croatia

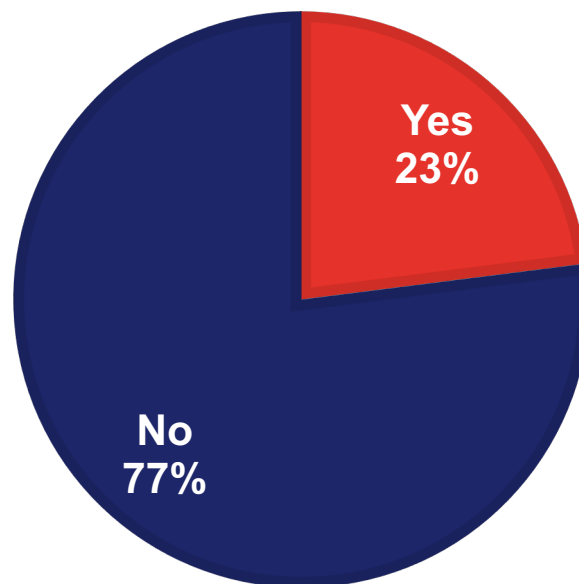
Position/policy statement: Does the website contain an institutional position on the use of animals in research?

POLICY STATEMENT - CROATIA



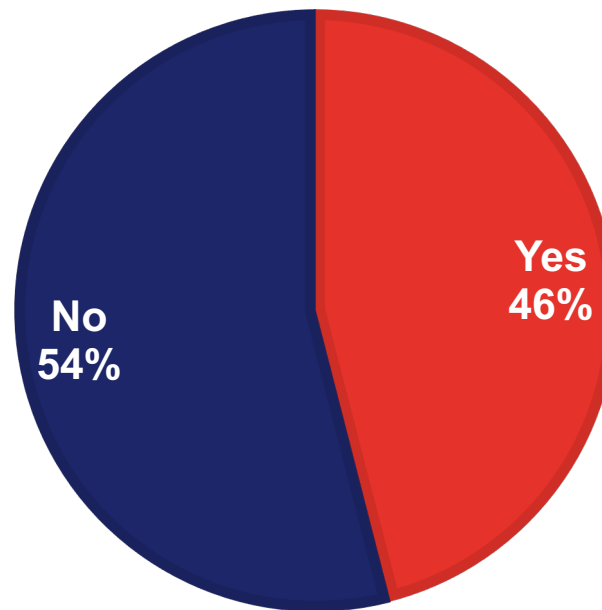
Extensive information: Does the website provide information, addressing commonly-asked questions, and specific information about the institution's animal research programs?

EXTENSIVE INFORMATION - CROATIA



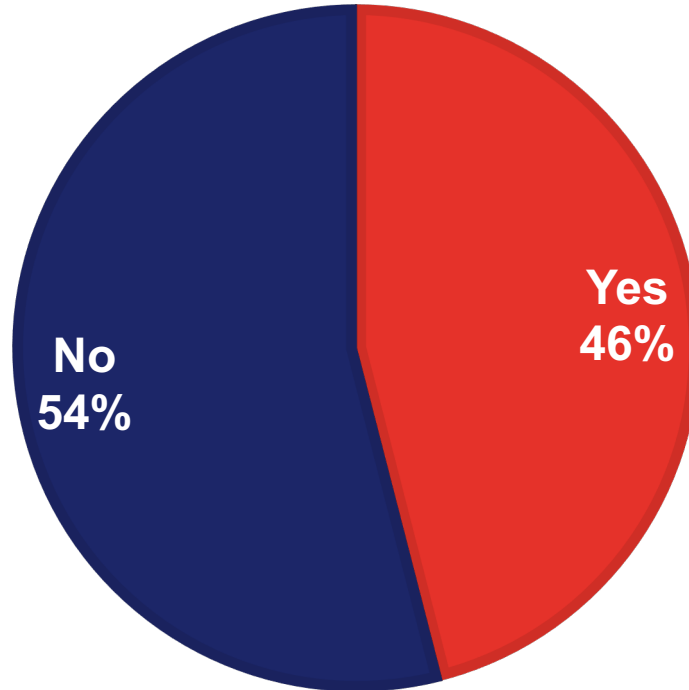
Images/videos: Does the website have a
images of animals, or any videos showing
animals in its research?

IMAGES/VIDEOS - CROATIA

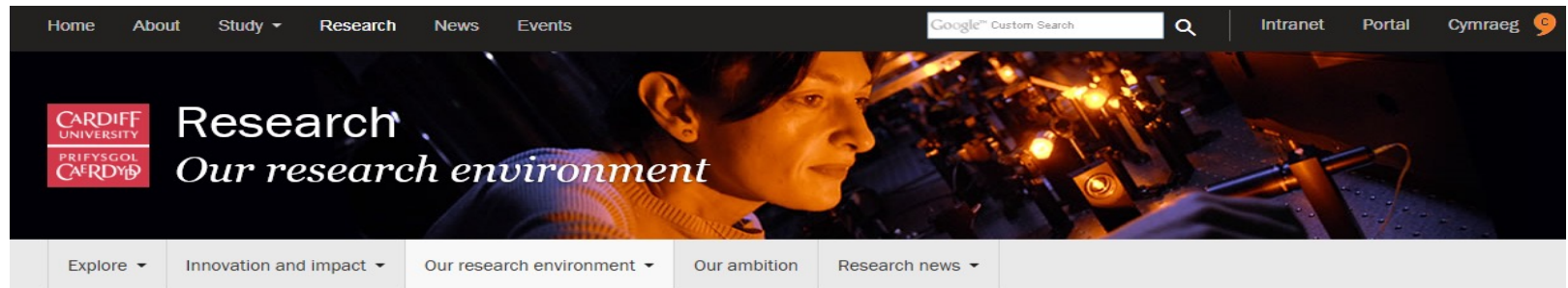


How **prominent** is animal research on the website

PROMINENCE - CROATIA



A step-change in available information



Our research environment

Supporting researchers

Working collaboratively

Integrity and ethics

Good practice and quality

Research ethics

Clinical research

Animal research

Our animal care and welfare standards

Reduce, refine, replace

Public engagement

Summaries of research

Frequently asked questions

Funding and awards

Animal research



We are committed to providing open and transparent information about our research involving animals and our standards of animal care and welfare.

We have signed the [Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK](#).

We use cells grown in a lab, computer models and human tissues for some of our biomedical research. However, in certain cases, animals provide the only way for us to develop our scientific knowledge and produce treatments and cures for many serious conditions. Research using animals has saved and improved the lives of millions of people and animals.

Replacement, reduction and refinement

Consideration of the 3Rs is the basis of everything we do related to animal research.

[Find out more about the 3Rs](#)

Related links

[The Home Office - Science Research and Statistics](#)

[National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research](#)

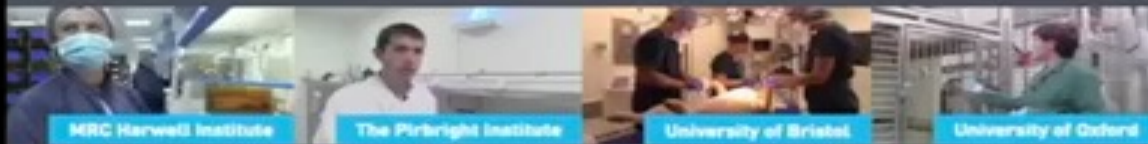
[Understanding Animal Research](#)

[Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments \(FRAME\)](#)

[The Institute of Animal Technology](#)

[Laboratory Animal Science Association](#)

[RSPCA - Research Animal Science](#)



**360° LABORATORY
ANIMAL TOURS TOUR**
LOCATIONS:
**MRC HARWELL
INSTITUTE**
**THE PIRBRIGHT
INSTITUTE**
UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Crisis Communication and Public Perception of Risk in the Era of Social Media

Crisis Communication Templates

- **CCO template (Compassion, Conviction, Optimism)**
 - when people are stressed or upset, they want to know that you care before they care what you know
- **27/9/3 template**
 - when people are stressed or upset, they have difficulty processing information. Therefore, KISS (keep it simple and short)
- **1N = 3P template**
 - When people are stressed or upset, negative information receives much greater weight and attention than positive information

Mayor Giuliani, 9/11

“The number of casualties is more than any of us can bear ultimately.

And I believe we will become stronger.

Stronger economically, politically, and most importantly, emotionally.”

- CCO template (Compassion, Conviction, Optimism)
- 27/9/3 template



‘Don’t go to Wuhan, don’t leave Wuhan’: Coronavirus could mutate and spread further, China officials warn

Some 440 cases confirmed so far as disease reported in Thailand, Japan, South Korea and United States

Samuel Osborne | @SamuelOsborne93 | 54 minutes ago |



China warns virus could mutate and spread as death toll rises

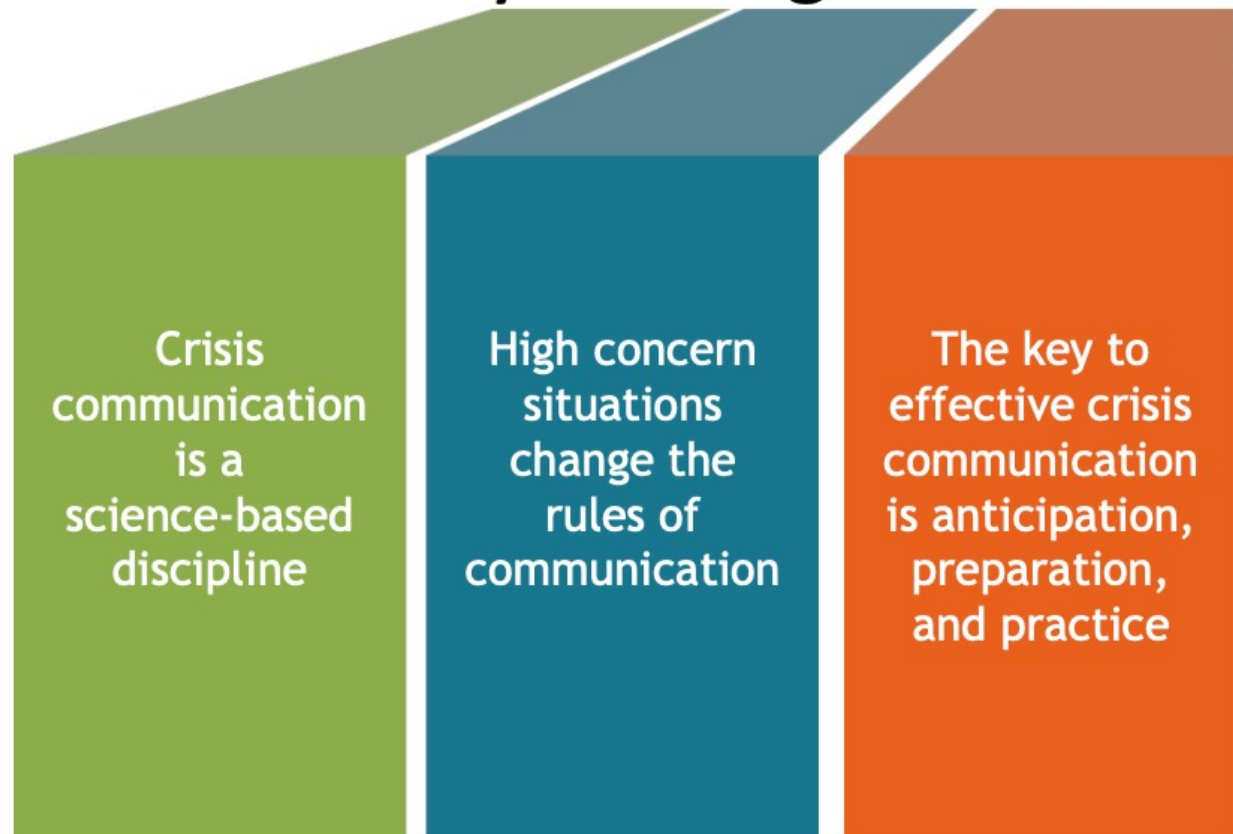
Updated / Wednesday, 22 Jan 2020 11:45



“Evidence has shown that the disease has been transmitted through the respiratory tract and there is the possibility of viral mutation” —National Health Commission Vice Minister Li Bin

Risk communication : the exchange of information about risk

Crisis Communication Best Practices: Three Key Messages



The Communication about Animal Research References

1. A Researchers' Guide to Communications : Understanding Animal Research, 2009
2. Good Practice In Animal Experimentation Communication: The Swiss Universities Conference of Public Relations and Information Officers (SUPRIO), 2018
3. Communications Handbook: EARA, 2019
4. Communication About Animal Research with the public, ILAR, 2019
5. EARA study of EU-based websites 2020
6. Good Practice in Communicating Animal Research at Universities, LERU, 2020 (Note from the League of European Research Universities)

Conclusions

- A well-prepared communication plan, informative website and a proactive *Animal Research Communication Group* will lead to a better understanding by the general public about **animal research and non-animal alternatives**
- *Transparency and openness*, instead of secrecy, has shown to increase public trust in research involving animals
- Regulate *exchange and discussion between universities and research institutes*, and different stakeholders could guide and facilities communication activities in the different situations

Message to takeaway

It's Time to talk



Thank you