



Plenary sitting

B9-0426/2021

8.9.2021

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on plans and actions to accelerate a transition to innovation without the use of animals in research, regulatory testing and education
(2021/2784(RSP))

Hilde Vautmans

on behalf of the Renew Group

European Parliament resolution on plans and actions to accelerate a transition to innovation without the use of animals in research, regulatory testing and education (2021/2784(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 13 and 114 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - having regard to Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes¹,
 - having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products²,
 - having regard to its resolution of 3 May 2018 on a global ban to end animal testing for cosmetics³,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Directive 2010/63/EU sets out the ultimate goal of fully replacing ‘procedures on live animals [...] as soon as it is scientifically possible to do so’ and underlines that the use of animals for such purposes should only be considered where non-animal methods are unavailable;
- B. whereas the EU could play a leading role in the phasing out of animals used in science by increasing its efforts and developing viable alternatives;
- C. whereas although Directive 2010/63/EU obliges the Member States and the Commission to be fully transparent on the use of animals in science, there is still a lack of transparency;
- D. whereas in 2017, the use of animals for scientific purposes was reported 9.58 million times; whereas the main purpose was research (69 %), followed by regulatory use to satisfy legislative requirements (23 %) and routine production (5 %); whereas among the tests carried out for regulatory purposes, the majority involved medical products for humans (61 %), followed by veterinary medicinal products (15 %) and industrial chemicals (11 %)⁴;
- E. whereas the formal encouragement of non-animal methods is unique to the EU;

¹ OJ L 276, 20.10.2010, p. 33.

² OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59.

³ OJ C 41, 6.2.2020, p. 45.

⁴ 2019 report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of 5 February 2020 on the statistics on the use of animals for scientific purposes in the Member States of the European Union in 2015-2017 (COM(2020)0016).

whereas, however, there are bureaucratic hurdles to the acceptance of these methods, their use is not properly enforced and funding for their development remains inadequate;

- F. whereas the EU's landmark ban on animal testing for cosmetics has had a positive impact on animal welfare in the EU and has successfully shown that phasing out the use of animal testing is possible without jeopardising the development of the cosmetics sector;
- G. whereas the replacement of animal tests by advanced non-animal methods will be crucial in achieving the Commission's ambitious health and environmental goals set out in the NextGenerationEU recovery plan and the European Green Deal;
1. Stresses that Directive 2010/63/EU is among the strictest legislation in the world, yet the number of animals being used in science remains high, and in some Member States is increasing again; calls, in this regard, for the Commission to evaluate Directive 2010/63/EU and make specific recommendations to the Member States on its implementation and enforcement in practice;
 2. Points out that any new initiatives and legislation, such as the chemicals strategy for sustainability, must fully respect the goal of Directive 2010/63/EU to phase out, where possible, the use of animals for scientific purposes; is of the opinion that the use of grouping of substances, read-across from similar chemicals and the extension of the generic risk assessment are essential tools to reduce animal testing;
 3. Calls on the Commission to establish an action plan that would help achieve the goal outlined in Directive 2010/63/EU and that would ultimately phase out animal-based methods wherever alternative methods can be developed and accelerate the transition towards animal-free methods; highlights that such an action plan should focus on replacing animal experiments where possible, reducing the number of animals used and refining experiments to minimise the impact on animals; stresses that a clear and ambitious timeline and list of milestones should be set out to incentivise progress;
 4. Stresses that although phasing out the use of animals for scientific purposes should be the only and ultimate goal, it must be acknowledged that non-animal methods are not yet available in all scientific research areas; underlines that there are cases where animal experiments are still needed to gain scientific insights in the long search for an effective remedy for certain diseases; stresses that because of the unavailability of non-animal methods, such experiments must take place in optimal conditions which minimise pain, distress and suffering and respect the welfare of the animals as much as possible;
 5. Encourages the private sector to play an active part in this action plan, in particular companies willing to switch to non-animal models and start-ups that develop and perfect these models; believes that government bodies must take on a coordinating role and enter into a positive and constructive dialogue with the sector, but that solutions must ultimately grow bottom-up; calls out for a better coordinated, cross-sectoral and EU-wide approach across all Member States and all EU agencies;
 6. Sets out as a priority for the scientific community the development of innovative non-animal testing methods to replace animal testing, and, where alternatives are non-

existent, the refinement of animal methods in order to minimise stress on animals; points out the need for knowledge sharing and international cooperation on this subject; sees the potential of promoting and rewarding best practices;

7. Insists that new alternative animal testing methods need to be better streamlined and that continuous training of scientists and researchers is key in that respect; calls on the Commission and the Member States to treat the training of scientists and researchers in the use of new alternative methods to animal testing as a priority; highlights the need for adequate training on the use of advanced non-animal models to be included in all relevant education courses;
8. Highlights the need for increased and targeted funding under Horizon Europe for animal-free research methods and new, advanced non-animal models; states that methods of testing and the use of non-animal methods should be taken into account through preferential funding in all EU research and innovation initiatives, as these alternative methods bring additional costs and investments;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.