

Question for written answer E-002231/2021
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Reducing animal testing

While Directive 2010/63/EU of 22 September 2010 aims to protect animals used for scientific purposes, protection measures in Europe remain flawed.

Whistleblowers have testified that European laboratories are failing to fully apply the 'Three Rs' method.

This method was introduced to reduce the harmful effects of testing on animals by applying the following three principles: replacement, reduction and refinement.

In practical terms it means that anyone intending to conduct an experiment involving animals must first:

check whether an alternative method is available (replacement);

reduce the number of animals being used (reduction);

improve husbandry and testing conditions to minimise pain (refinement).

However, there is a degree of 'inertia' among the scientific community:

laboratories are still reluctant to swap animal testing for in vitro experiments, computer-modelling techniques or even microdosing;

animals used for testing often do not receive the necessary care;

finally, certain universities are failing to limit this form of testing.

Will the Commission propose a reform of the current EU legislation to enhance the protection of animals used for testing?