



European Animal
Research Association

EARA News Digest 2019 - Week 2

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

Research

New research treats itchy and scratchy mice

A [new study](#) has revealed that itching can be stopped by shining a light on the skin.

Tests on mice have shown that they no longer experience the annoying sensation after undergoing the treatment - and they scratched less.

Scientists at the [European Molecular Biology Laboratory](#), in Rome, Italy, injected the skin cells that are sensitive to itch with a chemical. Then by shining a light on the area, the cells withdrew and the sensation stopped.



The researchers (story also [in French](#)) believe that it could lead to new treatments for those who suffer with chronic skin disorders such as eczema and psoriasis.

Current treatment options for relieving itchy skin using creams and moisturisers don't target the itch itself, while what drives a chronic itch at a cellular level is not yet fully understood.

Policy



Bundesministerium
für Ernährung
und Landwirtschaft

Germany statistics on 2017 animal use released

The total number of animals used in research in 2017 in Germany was 2.8 million, a similar level to 2015 and 2016, the latest figures reveal.

Germany is second only to the UK in its use of animals - in 2014, the total used was 3.3 million.

[The figures](#), sent to the European Commission, show the vast majority of animals involved in the tests were rodents - 1.37 million mice and 255,000 rats.

Among other figures provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, 3,300 dogs and 718 cats were also

used.

[German media](#) focused ([and in German](#)) also on the rise in experiments using monkeys - up to 3,472 from 2,462 in the previous year.

Agriculture Minister Julia Klöckner, was quoted as saying: "I want the number of experiments on animals to be continuously reduced. Animals are fellow creatures and they deserve our sympathy."

Media



U.S. praise for animal research achievements

In an [opinion piece](#) in *The Detroit News*, Matthew R. Bailey, President of the US-based Foundation for Biomedical Research, has praised the role of animal research in the fight against disease.

"Cures for dementia are on the horizon - and animal models will be the means by which they arrive," he said.

Bailey cited examples of the scientific breakthroughs made in research into Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and motor neurone

disease.

“...Alternatives are not yet nearly sophisticated enough to illustrate how a treatment - especially for a disease as complicated as Alzheimer's - will work within a complex living organism,” he added.

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