

EARA News Digest, Week EARA News Digest 2019 Week 6 - Chickens used in research; EARA and Brexit; 3-D printing success; EARA vacancy.



**European Animal  
Research Association**

## **EARA News Digest 2019 - Week 6**

*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.*

### **Media**

## **Biomedical advances using chickens hit the news**



It's been a busy week for scientists who build their biomedical animal models from chickens.

First, neuroscience professor [Giorgio Vallortigara](#) of the University of Trento, Italy showed the value of basic research when he [discovered](#) that chicks have an instinctive preference for facial patterns.

This led him to develop software to see whether humans share this natural interest in faces; potentially, the software could be used to detect whether babies have autism.

Meanwhile, a British team is working to develop [genetically altered](#) chickens that are totally resistant to flu.

Professor [Wendy Barclay](#), a virologist at Imperial College London, and her team at the University of [Edinburgh](#), expect the first transgenic chicks - modified to stop a new form of bird flu before it reaches humans - will be hatched later this year.

Also at Edinburgh's Roslin Institute, researchers



have developed GA chickens that can [lay eggs](#) containing drugs for arthritis and some cancers.

Professor [Helen Sang](#), told the BBC: 'We are not yet producing medicines for people, but this study shows that chickens are commercially viable for producing proteins suitable for drug discovery studies and other applications in biotechnology.'

## Policy



## EARA pinpoints issues for research animal transport in no-deal Brexit

EARA has [highlighted](#), to the UK Parliament, the issues that could affect the transportation of

animals and animal-related products, in the event of a no-deal Brexit.

[The submission](#), to the Science and Technology Committee inquiry on, *Science and Innovation: preparations for a no-deal Brexit*, by the EARA Brexit Taskforce, examined the import and export to and from the UK,

Among the concerns were that exports of biological samples would now require compliance with customs formalities and export health certificates (EHCs) for each individual shipment for all animal species.

And as a third party to the EU, the UK will need to negotiate the content of each certificate separately with every member state.

EARA Executive Director, Kirk Leech said: 'Our main concern is that any logistical problems with transport and processing times, arising from lack of preparation for a no-deal Brexit, will have a negative effect on scientific investigation and animal welfare.'

## Minipig research leads to 3-D printed bone development



Researchers in Japan have [discovered](#) a way of treating osteoarthritis in humans following successful trials involving minipigs.

Scientists from the Joint Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Kagoshima University, Japan used 3-D printing to repair bones in the joints of minipigs.

Using stem cells derived from fat tissues they created new structures equivalent to cartilage and bone.

'To our knowledge, this is the first report to suggest that artificial scaffold-free 3D-printed constructs ... can aid in the osteochondral regeneration in pigs,' [stated](#) the authors.

EARA member Ellegaard Göttingen Minipigs, celebrating 50 years of the breed this year, shipped a minipig [breeding herd](#) to Japan, as part of a collaboration which started in [2009](#).

### Media

**EARA job vacancy:  
Communications Officer**



European Animal  
Research Association

The European Animal Research Association is recruiting for a communications officer.

The principal duties will include working on our social media accounts and website, assisting with media enquiries and monitoring and maintaining EARA's contact database.

[See here for more details](#). The application deadline is Thursday, 14 February, 17.00pm GMT.

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