

EARA News Digest 2019 Week 23 - EARA website study; Award for mole rat research; Article on improving openness; Genetic tool for mice.



EARA News Digest 2019 - Week 23

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.

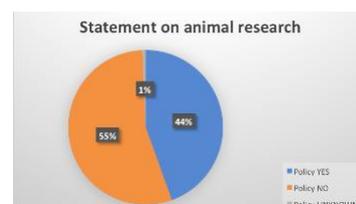
Media

More progress needed to improve openness on animal research - EARA website study

A study by EARA of more than a 1,000 websites across the EU, assessing how the biomedical sector talks about research using animals, has found that 'the sector is still some way from an acceptable level of openness and transparency in animal research'.

The findings from the [EARA Study of EU-based websites 2018](#) have now been presented to the EU Commission, which is currently examining the results.

A total of 1,219 institutional websites within the EU were assessed in 2018, both public and private bodies, such as universities and pharmaceutical companies, and a rating system was developed to analyse the data.



The criterion used were whether a statement on animal research was present, as well as images, case studies, added information and the prominence of the web pages.

Among the EU-wide findings, just under half (44%) of the institutions conducting animal research carry a recognisable statement on their websites explaining the use of animals in research/animal welfare - see pie chart pictured..

Comparing some of the countries in the study, showed variations across the EU.

The percentage of institutions that displayed a statement on the use of animals in research was – France 32%, Germany 34%, Italy 39%, Spain 84%, and UK 95%.

Executive Director, Kirk Leech, said: “We believe the sector needs to make greater use of all opportunities to be more accessible and to be more transparent with the public. Whilst progress has been made by many institutions, much more could be done.”

Media



Understanding touch and pain in animals awarded in Germany

A scientist targeted by activists last year has received a prestigious prize for his research on tactile sense and pain perception.

Neurophysiologist Professor [Gary R. Lewin](#), of EARA member the [Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine](#) (MDC), Germany, has received the [Ernst Jung Prize for Medicine](#) for his work with naked mole rats.

Prof Lewin has studied the fundamentals of pain perception which could lead to new pain-relieving treatments in the future.

His [studies](#) have also sought to help protect the heart and brain of patients after infarction and stroke by studying how these animals survive in oxygen starved conditions, which made him a [target of activists](#) last year.

Policy

Communicating with the public on animal research

A recently published [article](#) about communicating on animal research with the public addresses a wide range of topics on improving public understanding.

Based on the idea that an open and transparent communication by the biomedical sector is the best approach to increase public understanding, the article highlights the efforts that are being made in Europe and the USA.

One of the initiatives examined is the [UK Concordat](#) of [Understanding Animal Research](#) (UAR).

The article was written by Judy MacArthur Clark

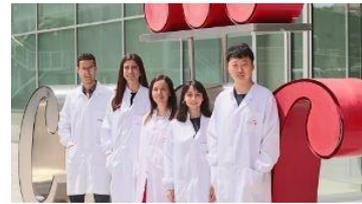


(JMC Welfare International), Paula Clifford (Americans for Medical Progress), Wendy Jarrett (UAR) and Cynthia Pekow (Veterans Affairs Puget Sound Healthcare System) and was published in the [ILAR Journal](#).

Research

An innovative method to study mouse genes

Researchers in Spain, have created a [new genetic tool](#) to help the study of genes in mice.



The tool, called iSuRe-Cre, “significantly increases the ease, efficiency, and reliability of genetic modification in the mouse, the most widely used animal model in research,” said the lead of the study, [Rui Benedito](#) at the [National Center for Cardiovascular Research](#) (CNIC).

In the [results](#), published in the journal Nature Communications, the team (pictured) described the development, validation and usefulness of iSuRe-Cre.

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