

# PRESS RELEASE



**For immediate release**

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## **Animal group welcomes the House of Lords report on animal experimentation in the EU**

The BUAV, the UK's leading organisation campaigning to end animal experiments, has today welcomed aspects of the report published by the House of Lords EU Committee. The Committee carried out an enquiry into proposals to revise EU Directive 86/609 on the protection of animals used in experiments.

The report is the result of an analysis of submissions of oral and written evidence provided by all stakeholders, including the European Commission, researchers, the pharmaceutical industry, academic and funding bodies representatives and animal protection groups including the BUAV. The Council of Ministers (EU Member States representatives) is currently discussing the European Commission proposals, and it is expected that it will adopt its position within the next few weeks.

The Committee's report shows their position is in line with the European Commission proposals. The BUAV believes this report shows promise and represents an improvement on the latest provisions adopted at the European Parliament last May and the current proposals on the table of the EU Council of Ministers.

The report contains some important provisions such as the requirement for all animal experiments to receive authorisation by governments and calls for strict limitations on the use of non-human primates (although the BUAV believes strongly, as does the public, that primates should not be used at all). Key conclusions include:

- the use of primates should be restricted to life threatening/debilitating conditions
- a move towards the use of second generation captive bred primates
- a ban on suffering which is severe and prolonged
- authorization by governments required for all procedures

However, the BUAV does not believe that the House of Lords has gone far enough; in particular regarding the need to avoid duplicative experiments and on the issue of the re-use of animals.

The BUAV is also calling for the directive to reflect public opinion. A recent opinion poll, carried out by YouGov, in the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the Czech Republic found:

- **81%** of people surveyed agree or strongly agree the new law should **prohibit all experiments causing pain or suffering to primates**
- **79%** of people agree or strongly agree the new law should **prohibit all experiments on animals which do not relate to serious or life-threatening human conditions**
- **84%** of people surveyed agree or strongly agree the new law should **prohibit all experiments causing severe pain or suffering to any animal**

- **80%** of people agree or strongly agree **all information about animal experiments should be publicly available**, except information which is confidential and information which would identify researchers or where they work
- **73%** of people **disagree or strongly disagree** that the new law should **permit experiments causing pain or suffering to cats**
- **77%** of people **disagree or strongly disagree** that the new law should **permit experiments causing pain or suffering to dogs**

**BUAV's Chief Executive, Michelle Thew states:** *"This is a critical time for animals in laboratories across Europe. Although we welcome aspects of the House of Lords report, it would still leave a chasm between public opinion and the reality for laboratory animals"*

**ENDS**

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**Notes:**

1. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 7139 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 24th February - 4th March 2009. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of the population sizes of the countries surveyed.
2. The Lords has now submitted this report to the Home Office, as the Government Department in charge of the negotiating the UK position on the revised Directive. The Council of Ministers (EU Member States representatives) is currently discussing the European Commission proposals, and is expecting to adopt its position within the next months.