

National Programmes of Research into Alternative Tests**A Review of Activities in Member States of the European Union**

This questionnaire has been draw up in consultation with Eurogroup for Animal Welfare, *ecopa*, scientists and representatives from industry.

It is expected that the information received from Member States will provide a comprehensive picture of EU research in this area and will be of great assistance in planning an EU coordinated research programme in the future and will be placed in the public domain.

Research into alternative methods should not only include the important research into *in vitro* and non- animal procedures but also research into refinement techniques and reducing the number of animals used.

Research into all three of these areas, Refinement, Reduction and Replacement will lead to improved animal welfare and reduced animal usage.

Questionnaire

Budget	
1	<p>-Provide an estimation of the total budget per year that is made available from Public funds for alternatives research in your country. -For what year(s) does this estimate relate to?</p> <p>There is at present no public fund specifically for research on alternatives, although there are a number of more general sources, not via from the Norwegian Research Council, that support alternatives. For 2006 an amount of NOK 550.000,- (approx. 70, 000 euros) has been made available from the Food Safety Authority to continue the work of establishing a National Platform for Alternatives in Norway. Some of this money will be used to fund research projects within the Three Rs. It is hoped that Norway will soon establish a State Fund for Alternatives, on the lines of the Swedish model.</p>
2	<p>-List the agencies, institutions and other sources that provide financial support for the development of alternative methods? No agencies or institutions have budgets particularly aimed at development of alternative methods.</p> <p>See point 1 above.</p> <p>-If possible, provide a breakdown of the amounts of the different contributions. The Research Council Norway publishes an overview of information about its funding activities in the field. To provide a breakdown, all relevant funding activities of the Council (several hundred a year) would have to be investigated, and this has not been carried out.</p>
3	<p>To what extent are mechanisms in place to make funds available to match EU supported projects? The Research Council Norway provides an overview of EU supported projects. It is up to the individual researcher to search the relevant</p>

	information and match his/her projects with the areas given priority.
Strategy	
4	Does a national strategy exist in your country for making finance available for research into alternative methods? No. However a Norwegian Platform for Alternatives is under construction and hopefully the Platform will be able to outline such a strategy in collaboration with other stakeholders.
	Is this information made explicit and is it readily available i.e., is it published on a website? No. General information about the proposed Norwegian Platform is available here: http://oslovet.veths.no. If so, please provide links and/or published brochures.
5	In which area of Alternatives (Refinement, Reduction or Replacement) is the research focused? Does it involve all three R's? Are there particular aims connected with that research? Is there a general focus or are specific topics getting attention? As no strategy exists, these questions cannot be answered.
6	How are priorities selected? Is there consultation with stakeholders such as industry, academia and animal welfare NGO's? The Norwegian Research Council selects its areas of priority based on its general policies and a report indicating the needs for research in animal welfare: "Forskningsbehov innen dyrevelferd i Norge" ("Research needs within animal welfare in Norway"), The Norwegian Research Council/Norwegian Agricultural Authority, 2005. The report was written on the basis of advice from a reference group consisting of various stakeholder groups (industry, academia, animal welfare).
7	Is there preference for a few large projects or rather for many small projects? Too few projects are known to give a general impression. (Please specify what you define as "large") -What is the percentage of funding that is normally given towards the estimated cost of a project? Too few projects are known to give a general impression. -Do some projects receive 100% funding and others a lesser percentage and are there strict limits on the maximum amount of money available for each project? There are no strict limits.
8	If a project is running in your country, to what extent is there cooperation and coordination between the different stakeholders? Specify the partners. In the field of alternatives to animal experimentation there has been little cooperation apart from among academic parties.
Separation of responsibility	
9	Within your country, which competent authority or government department is responsible for supporting research into alternatives? The Food Safety Authority, which is part of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Does the same department control chemical management and animal testing procedures? Please explain the structures. <u>Control of animal testing procedures</u>

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food is responsible for the control of animal testing procedures, but this role has been delegated to The Norwegian Animal Research Authority (*Forsøksdyrutvalget*, www.fdu.no) and the Food Safety Authority (*Mattilsynet*, www.mattilsynet.no).

The Animal Research Authority is a committee composed by 8 members, out of which 5 represent research, 1 represents animal welfare, 1 represents animal technicians and 1 (the leader) is considered neutral.

The Authority is assisted by a secretary who is employed by the Food Safety Authority. The Food Safety Authority is in charge of providing a budget and managing the Authority.

The Animal Research Authority is responsible for controlling that all use of animal experimentation complies with Norwegian law. The Authority inspects animal research facilities and decides whether or not to approve applications to perform animal experiments.

The Animal Research Authority has delegated much of its authority to a named Competent Person at each approved animal research facility. The Competent person is employed by the facility, but is supposed to act as a representative of the Animal Research Authority, i.e. the Competent Person can decide whether or not to approve applications to perform animal experiments at the facility. When the Competent Person is involved in the experiment or is in doubt as to whether or not it should be approved, or when the experiment may cause severe suffering, he/she may not approve the application. In such cases the applications must be directed to the Animal Research Authority. The Animal Research Authority has every opportunity to instruct the Competent Persons.

The Food Safety Authority is, by delegation from the Ministry of Agriculture, commissioned to handle complaints addressed to the Animal Research Authority. The decision of the Food Safety Authority is final.

In practice the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will not interfere with decisions made by the Animal Research Authority, as it is considered to be a specialist committee. The Food Safety Authority, on the other hand, is a subordinate agency to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and may therefore be instructed both in general terms and in specific cases.

Control of chemical management

The Ministry of Environment is responsible for chemical management, but the control function has been delegated to the Norwegian Pollution Control Authority, which is a subordinate agency (<http://www.sft.no/english/activity/>). The Ministry of Environment can instruct the Pollution Control Agency and handles complaints on its decisions.

If separated, are the different authorities cooperating together?

The Food Safety Authority and the Animal Research Authority communicate regularly. There is little cooperation between them and The Pollution Control Agency.

--

If further information is needed to help you answer the questions please do not hesitate to contact one of the persons listed below:

Prof. Vera Rogiers (ecopa) : vrogiers@vub.ac.be

Mme Sonja van Tichelen (Eurogroup): S.vantichelen@eurogroupanimalwelfare.org

We thank you for completing this questionnaire and would be grateful if you would return it to Tonia Devolder, general secretariat of *ecopa* at ecopa@vub.ac.be .

The deadline for receiving the completed questionnaire is: 31 MARCH 2006