



15 Years of Animal Welfare Bodies in Europe

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HiLIFE
HELSINKI INSTITUTE OF LIFE SCIENCE



felasa2025.eu



Research, Animals & Welfare – FELASA course in 1996

CERTIFICATE

Vootele Võikar

has participated in the intensive course on

RESEARCH, ANIMALS & WELFARE

held in Trakai, Lithuania during 2-11 October 1996.

This course followed the FELASA curriculum and thus fulfilled the European requirements for scientists' competence education.

The course included 90 hours of lectures, demonstrations, hands on work and group work, on basic and applied laboratory animal science and a written examination.

The course was the second of systematic courses offered for Baltic scientists by the ScandLAS education working group represented by the signatories below.

The course was made possible through support from European Union, the Finnish Ministry of Education, the Swedish Medical Research Council, AALAS and LASA.

Trakai 11 October 1996

Timo Nevalainen

Timo Nevalainen
DVM, MS, PhD, Docent
Director, National Laboratory Animal Center
University of Kuopio, Finland
Course coordinator and organizing group member

Jann Hau

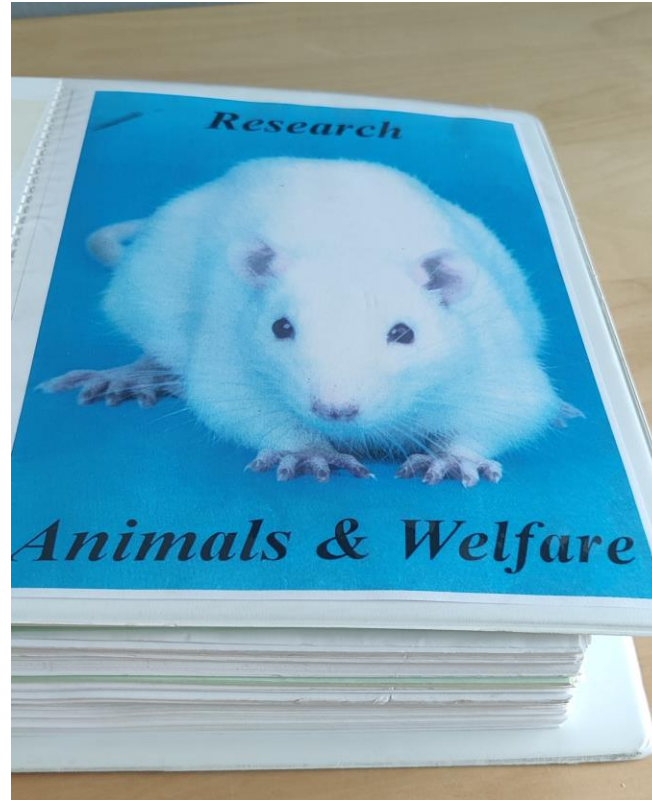
Jann Hau
Professor
Department of Comparative Medicine
University of Uppsala, Sweden
Organizing group member

Otto Kugelberg

Otto Kugelberg
PhD, Principal of ULASS
Swedish Medical Research Council
Stockholm, Sweden
Organizing group member

Valdemaras Laukaitis

Valdemaras Laukaitis
President of Lith-LASA
Institute of Biochemistry
Vilnius, Lithuania
Organizing group member



**Experimental animal is
not a calibrated machine**
Timo Nevalainen, 1996

Project Application in 1999 (Helsinki) – as short and simple as possible

- The necessity and purpose of the research and a summary of the research plan (**maximum 30 lines**)
- List and describe all experimental procedures involving animals (**maximum 30 lines**)
- Use a **simple calculation** to determine how the number of animals presented was arrived at
- What alternative or complementary methods for experimental animals have been considered (**maximum 20 lines**)
- Criteria for termination of the experiment or killing the animal during the experiment (to be completed if necessary)
- Assessment of pain and suffering caused to the animal (no pain, very mild, mild, moderate, severe, very severe)
- *Still - Veterinarian perceived as a threat for innovative cutting-edge science?!*

Article 7, 2. An experiment **shall not be performed** if another scientifically satisfactory method of obtaining the result sought, not entailing the use of an animal, is **reasonably and practicably available**.

Replacement

Article 7, 3. In a choice between experiments, those which **use the minimum number of animals**, involve animals with the **lowest degree of neurophysiological sensitivity**, cause **the least pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm** and which are most likely to provide **satisfactory results** shall be selected.

Reduction

Article 7, 4. All experiments shall be designed to **avoid distress and unnecessary pain** and suffering to the experimental animals.

Refinement

Article 19, 2. In each user establishment:

- (a) the person or persons who are administratively **responsible for the care** of the animals and the functioning of the equipment shall be identified;
- (b) sufficient **trained staff** shall be provided;
- (c) adequate arrangements shall be made for the provision of **veterinary advice and treatment**;
- (d) a veterinarian or other competent person should be charged with **advisory duties in relation to the well-being of the animals**.

Welfare

Directive 86/609/EEC on the Protection of Animals Used for Experimental and Other Scientific Purposes¹

Susanna Louhimies

Chemical Substances, Environment Directorate General, European Commission, 200 rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels, Belgium

Summary — Directive 86/609/EEC regulates the use of animals for experimental and other scientific purposes in the EU. The Directive seeks to improve the controls on the use of laboratory animals, and to set minimum standards for housing and care, and for the training of personnel handling these animals and supervising the experiments. It also aims to reduce the numbers of animals used for experiments, by encouraging the development and the validation of alternative methods to replace animals methods. Since the scientific basis of the Directive dates back at least 15 years, the Commission is planning on an in-depth revision of the Directive. The Commission aims to have a first draft proposal ready by the end of 2003.

What’s in store for animal research in the EU?

Researchers should have little to fear from the EU’s new animal-welfare directive, but the menace is in the minutiae

The law through the eye of a needle

How and when to apply the new European Directive on animals used in research

Lab-animal battle reaches truce

Biomedical scientists say revised European directive on animal welfare averts feared disaster for research.

Nearly one-quarter of biologists say they have been affected by animal activists. A Nature poll exposes the

BATTLE SCARS

The Directive 2010/63/EU on animal experimentation may skew the conclusions of pharmacological and behavioural studies

EU Directive 2010/63/EU – Focus on Three Rs and Welfare

Recital (11)

The care and use of live animals for scientific purposes is governed by internationally established principles of **replacement, reduction and refinement**.

Recital (31)

Animal-welfare considerations should be given the highest priority in the context of animal keeping, breeding and use. Breeders, suppliers and users should therefore have **an animal-welfare body** in place with the primary task of focusing on **giving advice on animal-welfare issues**. The body should also follow the development and outcome of projects at establishment level, **foster a climate of care** and provide tools for the practical application and timely implementation of recent technical and scientific developments in relation to the principles of **replacement, reduction and refinement**, in order to enhance the life-time experience of the animals. **The advice given by the animal-welfare body should be properly documented and open to scrutiny during inspections.**

EU Directive 2010/63/EU – assuring welfare

Article 25

Designated veterinarian

Member States shall ensure that **each breeder, supplier and user has a designated veterinarian** with expertise in laboratory animal medicine, or a suitably qualified expert where more appropriate, charged with advisory duties in relation to the well-being and treatment of the animals.

Article 26

Animal-welfare body

1. Member States shall ensure that **each breeder, supplier and user sets up an animal-welfare body**.
2. The animal-welfare body shall include at least the person or **persons responsible for the welfare and care** of the animals and, in the case of a user, **a scientific member**. The animal-welfare body shall also receive input from the designated veterinarian or the expert referred to in Article 25.
3. Member States may allow small breeders, suppliers and users to fulfil the tasks laid down in Article 27(1) by other means.

Article 27

Tasks of the animal-welfare body

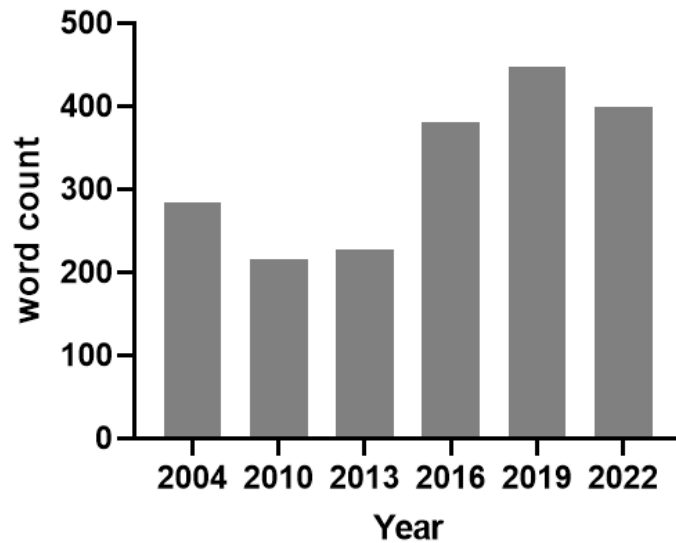
1. The animal-welfare body shall, as a minimum, carry out the following tasks:
 - (a) **advise** the staff dealing with animals on matters related to the welfare of animals, in relation to their acquisition, accommodation, care and use;
 - (b) **advise** the staff on the application of the requirement of replacement, reduction and refinement, and keep it informed of technical and scientific developments concerning the application of that requirement;
 - (c) establish and review internal operational processes as regards monitoring, **reporting** and follow-up in relation to the welfare of animals housed or used in the establishment;
 - (d) follow the development and outcome of projects, taking into account the effect on the animals used, and identify and **advise** as regards elements that further contribute to replacement, reduction and refinement; and
 - (e) **advise** on rehoming schemes, including the appropriate socialisation of the animals to be rehomed.
2. Member States shall ensure that the **records of any advice** given by the animal-welfare body and decisions taken regarding that advice are kept for at least 3 years.

The records shall be made available to the competent authority upon request.

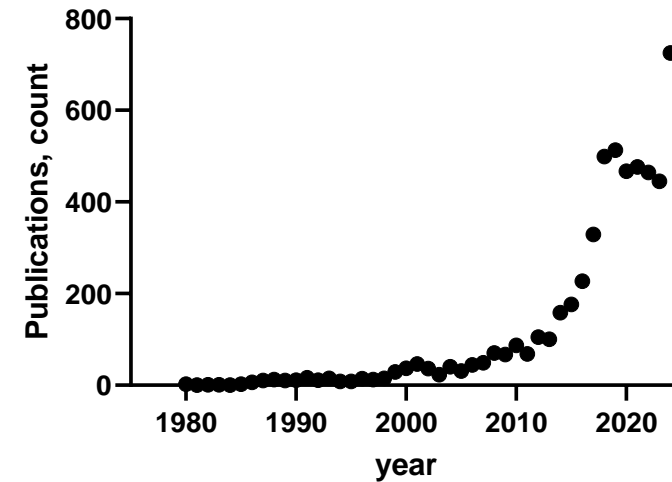
Council Directive 86/609/EEC
Well-being: 5x, Welfare: 1x

EU Directive 2010/63/EU
Well-being: 7x, **Welfare 54x**

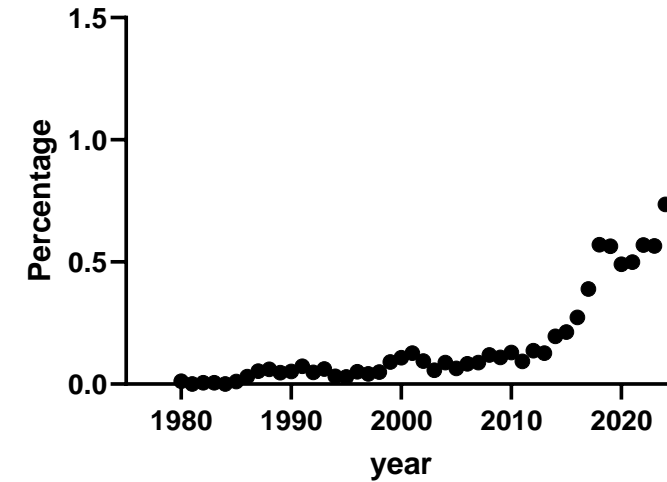
"Welfare" in FELASA
conference proceedings



Pubmed: Mice AND Welfare



Pubmed: Mice AND Welfare
(% of Mice total)



European Citizens' Initiative

SAVE CRUELTY FREE COSMETICS - COMMIT TO A EUROPE WITHOUT ANIMAL TESTING



How to optimize communication about animal and animal-free research methods

Judith Regina Homberg^{1*†}, Aldert H. Piersma^{2,3†},
Cyrille A. M. Krul⁴, Lisa Genzel⁵, Anne Kienhuis², Ellen ter Gast⁶
and Monique Wolvekamp⁵

Animal studies must be useful, says public

... we urge the European Commission to abrogate the protection of animals used for scientific purposes and to present a new proposal that does away with animal experimentation and instead makes compulsory the use - in biomedical and toxicological research - of data directly relevant for the human species



Save
Cruelty Free
Cosmetics

science in the EU.

Commit to a legislative proposal plotting a roadmap to phase-out all animal testing in the EU before the end of the current legislative term.

Three Rs and Welfare – beyond ”our bubble”



Vootele Voikar
@VVoikar

...

After [#FELASA2022](#) preparing for [#FENS2022](#) two largest conferences of European societies close to my work on the same year. Collaboration and dialogue between two is crucial for the success in [#animalresearch](#)
[Käännä julkaisu](#)

	FELASA-2022	FENS-2022
<u>Attendees</u>	2208	>7500
Count of some key words in abstract books:		
<u>Mice</u>	433	8716
<u>Rats</u>	112	3346
<u>Welfare</u>	399	28
3Rs	122	5

10.54 ap. · 8. heinäk. 2022

New initiatives after 2010

The Rise of Three Rs Centres and Platforms in Europe

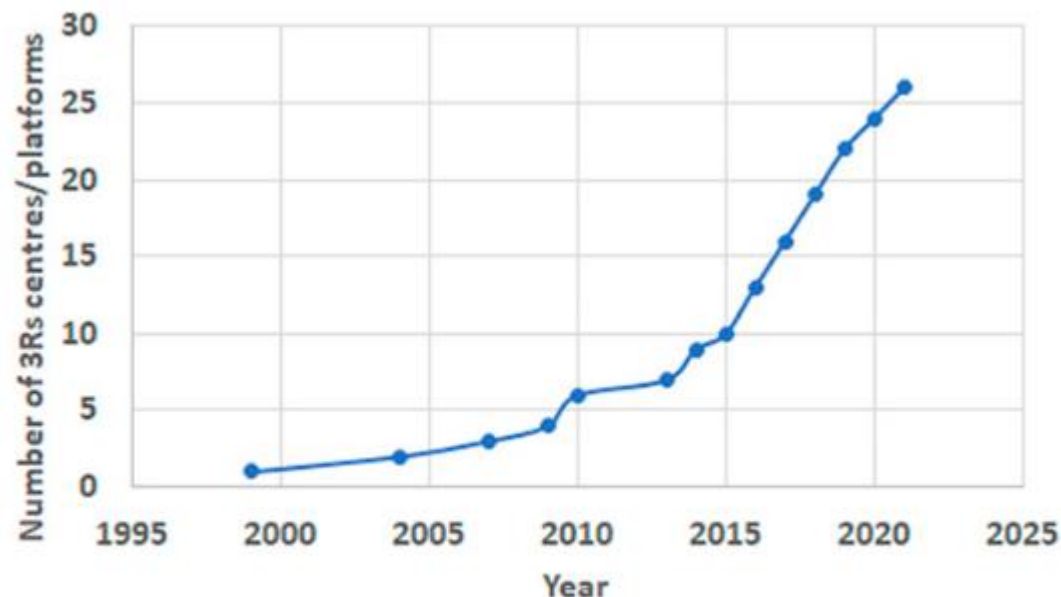


Figure 1. The cumulative increase in the number of Three Rs centres and platforms in Europe over recent years.

The Rise of Three Rs Centres and Platforms in Europe*

W. Neuhaus et al.

Alternatives to Laboratory Animals 2022 Vol. 50 (2) pp 90-120

EU3Rnet

Founded in 2018 (EUSAAT)

<https://norecopa.no/3r-guide/eu3rnet/>

...there has been an ever-increasing number of Three Rs centres and platforms established over recent years—not only to develop novel methods, but also to **disseminate knowledge and help to implement the Three Rs principles in policies and education.**

...very important **points of contact** and play an immense role in their respective countries as ‘on the ground’ facilitators of Directive 2010/63/EU.

...invaluable for the widespread **dissemination** of information and for **promoting implementation** of the Three Rs in general.



IMPROVE



The Network was originally proposed by Thomas Bertelsen at the FELASA Congress in Brussels in June 2016.

Established in September 2016, there are currently 57 individual members from 14 countries in the Network (June 2024).

<https://norecopa.no/more-resources/culture-of-care/>

COMMUNICATION

Communication and the Culture of Care

Poster produced by the International Culture of Care Network*

Effective two-way communication between scientists and animal technologists is essential for a good Culture of Care

The European Commission suggests the 'development of formal and informal communication channels, for mutual benefit with respect to science and animal welfare'
Here are some examples from International Culture of Care network members

Regular meetings

Scheduled meetings for scientists, animal technologists, vets, unit managers and AWB members



Regular refresher/update meetings for all, organised by person responsible for training and competence



Special events

Duo-talks: researcher talks about their science, and animal technologists talk about techniques and animal care within the project



Informal meetings for all, in which anyone can raise welfare issues



Building communication into existing processes

Each study has a **pre-start** and **wash-up** meeting involving **everybody**



3Rs improvements **reported to AWB & shared** at external user meetings



Other ideas

A **'boxless' event:** anyone can submit 'out of the box' ideas to improve practice

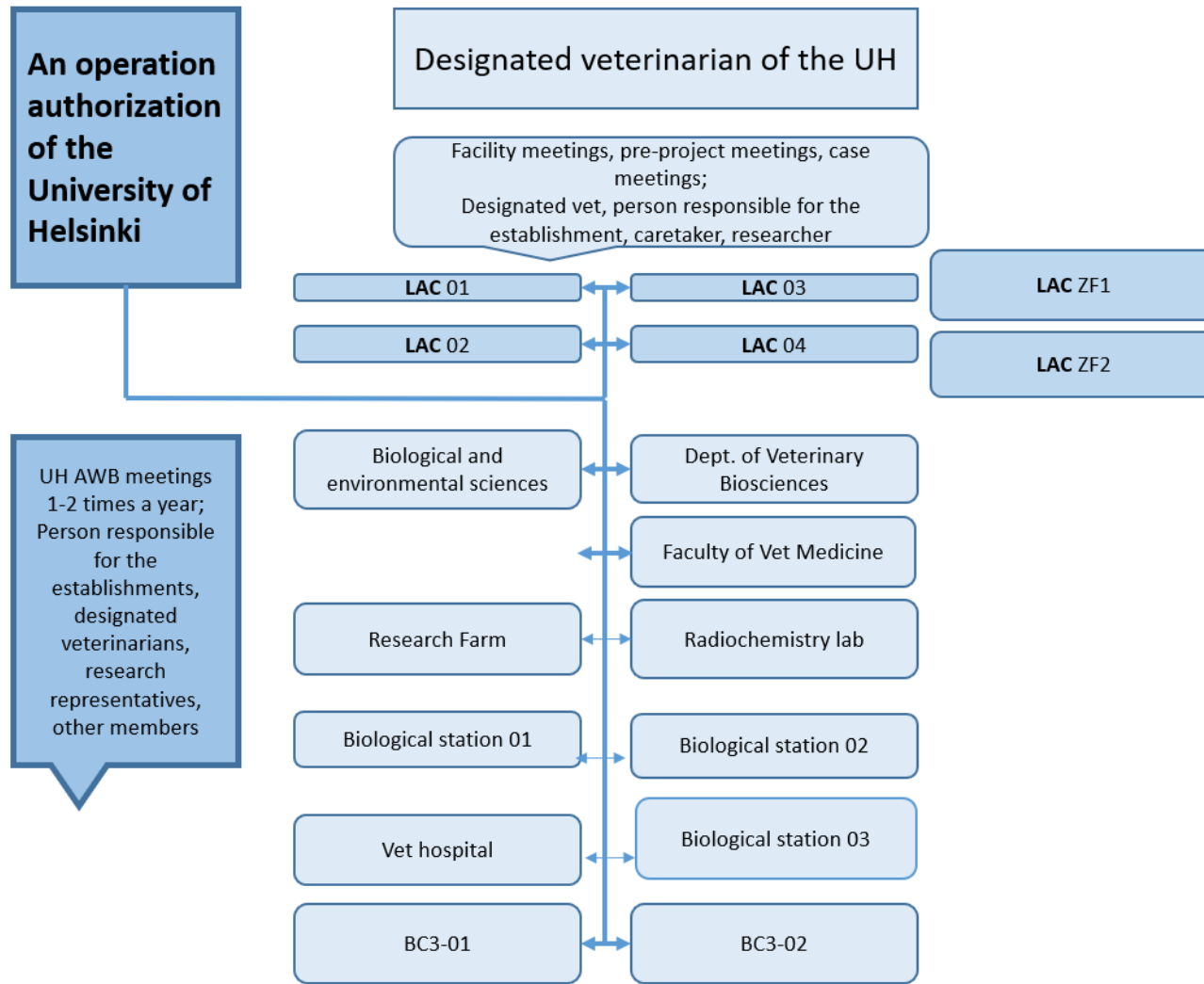


A **staff survey** for all e.g. how much do you agree with statements such as *'in our group we listen to each others' ideas about animal welfare'*



Animal Welfare Body

AWB Structure & Meeting Protocol (University of Helsinki)



LAC AWB meeting date / time

Place:

Present:

1. Minutes of the previous meeting, unfinished business
2. Lawful activity
 - 1) *ADVICE ON WELFARE ISSUES RELATED TO THE ACQUISITION, KEEPING AND USE OF ANIMALS*
 - 2) *ADVICE ON THE APPLICATION OF THE 3R PRINCIPLES IN THE BREEDING, KEEPING AND USE OF ANIMALS*
 - 3) *INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO THE APPLICATION OF THE 3R PRINCIPLE*
 - 4) *INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT OF ANIMAL WELFARE CONTROL, REPORTING AND MONITORING*
 - 5) *MONITORING AND ADVICE ON THE SEVERITY ASSESSMENT OF PROCEDURES PERFORMED ON ANIMALS TO PROMOTE THE 3R PRINCIPLES*
 - 6) *ADAPTATION OF ANIMALS TO THE NEW ENVIRONMENT (REHOMING)*
 - 7) *RECORDING OF DECISIONS, ACTIVITIES AND ADVICE, AS WELL AS MONITORING AND REPORTING OF ACTIVITIES*
3. Training & Educational events
4. AOB

PREPARE – dialogue between Researchers and LAC personnel



TOIMENPITEISSÄ OLEVIENTEN KOE-ELÄINTEN SEURANTALOMAKE FORM TO FOLLOW LABORATORY ANIMALS DURING EXPERIMENTS

RESEARCHER / TUTKIJ: Click here to enter text.

Phone number / Puhelinnumero: Click here to enter text.

E-mail address / Sähköpostiosoite: Click here to enter text.

Project license number / Hankeluvan numero: Click here to enter text.

Experiment starts / Koe alkaa: Click here to enter a date.

Experiment ends / Koe päättyy: Click here to enter a date.

Number of animals / Eläinmäärä: Click here to enter a date.

Animal IDs in Provet system / Eläinten tunnistet Provetissa: Click here to enter text.

☐ Animals are euthanized at the end of the experiment / Eläimet lopetetaan kokeen päättyessä
Date(s) / Päivä(t): Click here to enter text.

Short description about the experiment / Lyhyt kuvaus kokeesta:
Click here to enter text.

Pain medication during procedures / Kipulääkitys toimenpiteiden aikana:
Click here to enter text.

Actions how to take care of the animal welfare during procedures / Toimet, joilla huolehditaan
eläinten hyvinvoinnista toimenpiteiden aikana:
Click here to enter text.

Follow-up to laboratory animal welfare and actions in problem situations (researchers' and animal
care takers' roles) / Eläinten hyvinvoinnin seuranta ja toiminta ongelmatilanteissa (tutkijoiden ja
eläintenhoitajien roolit):
Click here to enter text.

Form to be filled in before the
experiments start, and discussed at pre-
experiment meeting; combined with
authorised Project

Euthanasia criteria according to the project license for the animal during the experiment /
Hankeluvan mukaiset kriteerit eläimen lopettamiselle kokeen aikana:
Click here to enter text.

What is done with the animals that are found dead or euthanized by the animal care taker? / Mitä
tehdään eläimille, jotka löydetään kuolleena tai eläintenhoitaja lopettaa?:
Click here to enter text.

EXPERIMENTS IN BSL2

BSL2 level research involved: ☐

The responsible person of the research described here confirms that person(s) Click here to enter
text. has (have) received appropriate training prior the start of the work YES ☐ NO ☐

What has been changed? What people think, feedback?

- Improved information flow, open and direct communication between Animal Facility and researchers
- Increased awareness and responsibility for animal welfare
- Better prediction and handling of expected and unexpected welfare issues
- Improved experimental design, refined procedures
- Experience and expertise by technicians valued and used by research groups – cooperation, collaboration
- Lab Animal personnel not an obstacle anymore but a valuable partner in research!

Questions remaining – keeping in mind that AWB has an advisory role implied by legislation

- Many tasks – do AWB members possess all necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their tasks, do we have time, appropriate training, necessary support, resources, power, endorsement?
- Advising about Replacement? Reviewing project applications before submission? Facilitating dialogue?
- Oversight and harmonized reporting
- **Effective communication between CA <--> NC <--> AWB <--> (3RC)**
- Organising training - we are not born with knowledge how to design and analyse scientific experiments, (maybe we know even less about the animals we are using)
- Future perspectives – networking, harmonizing, supporting...

AWB - Taking a lead role in improving animal welfare, promoting Three Rs, and fostering culture of care – To improve the QUALITY OF SCIENCE

Timo Nevalainen, Thomas Bertelsen, Nuno Franco, Aurora Bronstad, Adrian Smith, Jordi Tremoleda, Paulin Jirkof, Fernando Gonzalez Uarquin, Hanna-Marja Voipio, Sakari Laaksonen, Anna Meller, Johanna Åhlgren, and many others –

- Lab Animal Center of the University of Helsinki
- Finnish 3R Center
- AWB Network in Finland and ENAWB
- COST Actions TEATIME and IMPROVE –

THANK YOU for insightful discussions on
#AnimalResearch
#AnimalWelfare
#3Rs
#CultureOfCare



UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI
LABORATORY ANIMAL CENTRE

HiLIFE
HELSINKI INSTITUTE OF LIFE SCIENCE