

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001196/25
to the Commission
Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE)
(20 March 2025)**

Subject: EU funding for animal experiments

The announcement from the Mauritian Minister of Agro-Industry regarding a memorandum of understanding with Charles River Laboratories to conduct experiments on long-tailed macaques in Mauritius has raised concerns about the potential increase in public EU funding for animal experiments in countries with lower standards than Directive 2010/63/EU.

Several EU countries have already funded primate experiments in China, Kenya and St Kitts, where there is little to no animal welfare oversight and no transparency regarding the sourcing of these animals. This is particularly alarming as the International Union for Conservation of Nature has classified the long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*) as endangered since 2022, with the biomedical industry being identified as a major threat. Additionally, ongoing US investigations into alleged trafficking by Charles River have uncovered evidence of poaching and fraud.

1. What measures are in place to prevent EU funds from supporting animal experiments in non-EU countries that would not be permitted under EU legislation?
2. Will the Commission revise Directive 2010/63/EU to prohibit public institutions and publicly funded projects from conducting animal experiments in facilities not complying with EU welfare regulations?
3. How will the Commission address the risk of Directive 2010/63/EU being undermined by the EU or Member States funding animal experiments overseas?

Submitted: 20.3.2025

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(8 May 2025)**

In reference to the second question, the directive on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes ⁽¹⁾ regulates the use of animals for scientific purposes in the territory of the Union.

Projects using live animals in the EU, irrespective of the source of funding, can only be authorised when in compliance with the directive. However, the directive does not and cannot regulate activities carried out outside of the territory of the Union.

In response to the two other questions, since the previous Research & Innovation Framework Programme, Horizon 2020 ⁽²⁾, the EU has included a rule in the regulation for these funding instruments to tackle what it calls ‘ethics dumping’.

This is the export of practices that do not meet EU ethics standards and legal frameworks and would not be acceptable in the EU. Under the current setting as regards animal protection, this concretely means that the standards imposed by the directive are also valid for research involving animals conducted outside the EU.

When submitting a proposal for Horizon Europe ⁽³⁾, applicants must sign a declaration stating that any activities conducted outside the EU would be acceptable in at least one EU Member State.

Applicants must confirm and explain this in an Ethics declaration to the application, which is systematically reviewed during the Ethics Screening as part of the proposal evaluation.

This process can lead to more in-depth Ethics Assessments, Reviews and Checks by ethics experts, both before the funding decision and in the course of the project implementation.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes, OJ L 276, 20.10.2010, p. 33-79.

⁽²⁾ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-2020_en

⁽³⁾ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en