



## Polling shows MPs must take leadership role to end animal tests

This September polling carried out by YouGov<sup>1</sup> for Cruelty Free International shows that most people in the UK are against the continued use of animals in research and testing and want to see a government-led plan to phase out animal tests.

### Our key findings

Across multiple demographics, including age, gender and work status:

- Most people (65%) want to see a plan to phase out animal experiments with a target date for ending tests in the UK.
- Almost 7 in 10 people (68%) have a favourable view of MPs who back a plan to phase out animal experiments.

### An end to animal tests

Analysis by Cruelty Free International scientists shows that the overall number of animal experiments in Great Britain has only fallen by an average 1% annually in the 10 years up to 2019. Without intervention, if that rate of decrease continues, animal testing in the UK will not end for around 90 years.

Animals cannot endure this suffering for almost another century, and we need better solutions for the human health and environmental challenges we face.

- Those surveyed by YouGov agreed, with 70% finding it unacceptable for animal tests to continue to take place for the next 90 years.
- People want to see a government-led plan for phasing out animal tests (65%).
- Two-thirds of respondents also backed a **target date** for ending **all** animal experiments in the UK.

We believe that the Government must listen to the public and publish a clear and ambitious action plan with timetables and milestones to drive the phase-out of animal experiments. As well as preventing animal suffering, this will benefit public health and business.

### Support for alternatives

There are significant physiological differences between animals and humans meaning that data from animal experiments does not reliably translate to humans. 92% of drugs fail in human trials

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<sup>1</sup> All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,765 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 13th - 14th September 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

even though they passed preclinical tests (including animal tests). Furthermore, our research has shown that using dogs, rats, mice and rabbits to test whether or not a drug will be safe for humans provides statistically little useful insight.

The development of new drugs cost billions and takes 10-15 years. A more innovative approach using non-animal methods is needed and backed by the public.

- 68% of people back a government-led investment strategy to accelerate the availability of non-animal alternatives to tests.

There are a range of cutting-edge non-animal methods already available, including organ-on-a-chip<sup>2</sup> technology and stem cell technology, which increasingly provide results that are directly applicable to human patients. With more emphasis on promotion and investment, non-animal methods could deliver safer and more effective medicines, more quickly and at less cost.

### Monkeys, rabbits, rodents, dogs and cats,

When asked by YouGov to share their views on tests carried out on specific species, most people found it unacceptable for monkeys, rabbits, dogs and cats or rodents to be used for any purpose.

- 8 out of 10 people found it unacceptable for dogs and cats to be experimented on.

Despite this the UK continues to be one of top users in Europe of dogs in research and testing.

- 76% of people believe that it is unacceptable to carry out tests on monkeys.

Yet the UK continues to be one of top users in Europe of primates in research. This is likely to continue as long as outdated regulatory guidelines state that in the UK new drugs are tested in two species of animals one of which cannot be a rodent. In 2020, 76% of all monkey experiments were for regulatory purposes. We believe that with investment in and promotion of alternative methods, the use of second species for tests could be rapidly phased out.

### Constituents call on MPs to act

Not only is the tide of public opinion clearly against animal testing, YouGov polling demonstrates public appetite for MPs to take a lead on this issue.

- 68% of those polled across supporters of Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats have a favourable opinion of MPs who support a plan to phase out animal tests.
- 65% have a favourable opinion of parties who commit to phasing out animal testing.

A UK strategy to phase out animal experiments requires political will and commitment across Government, industry, academia, scientists and the funders of research, as well as dedicated funding. The public has voiced its opinion and wants leadership from MPs and the UK Government to successfully transition from unreliable animal experiments to humane and human-relevant science.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.crueltyfreeinternational.org/what-we-do/breaking-news/human-chip-breakthrough-could-help-consign-animal-tests-history-books>