

Protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes

2001/0277(COD) - 20/01/2005 - Follow-up document

The objective of this fourth report is to present to the Council and to the European Parliament statistics on the number of laboratory animals used in the EU, in accordance with Article 26 of Directive 86/609/EEC on the approximation of laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States regarding the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes.

This Report is accompanied by a Commission Staff Working Paper - Report on the Statistics on the Number of Animals used for Experimental and other Scientific Purposes in the Member States of the European Union in the year 2002. The Staff Working Paper provides more details and also includes data from the single Member States and their respective comments.

The main difference with the previous Reports is that the data now cover the complete range of procedures and their purposes. This allows, for the first time, for a more precise and comprehensive picture at EU level. Data are far more coherent amongst the different Tables than in previous Reports. Nevertheless, for the next Report coherence still needs to be improved. In this regard, the accession of the ten new Member States will require additional efforts.

The report highlights that the total number of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes in 2002 was 10.7 million (with data from France from 2001). This indicates an increase beyond the 9.8 million counted in 1999, but it is still a decrease compared to the 11.6 million of 1996. By far the biggest group of animals used was rodents and rabbits, as in the previous Reports. A significant increase in the use of fish has made the group of cold-blooded animals account for over 15 % of all animals used.