



The European Partnership
for Alternative Approaches to Animal Testing



European Parliament

PRESS STATEMENT - Embargo until 5 November 2025, 15:00 CET

Paving the way for a Future without Animal Testing: EPAA 20th Anniversary

5th November 2025 - European Parliament, Brussels

Twenty years ago, the European Partnership on Alternative Approaches to Animal Testing (EPAA) began as a ‘bold experiment’ – a Commission-industry partnership focussed on replacing animal testing with innovative, science-based alternatives.

Today, it became a European success story: proof that we can align innovation, industrial competitiveness, and ethical responsibility. EPAA has shown that regulatory ambition and industrial innovation can be complementary. They can reinforce each other. By building trust across sectors, fostering scientific excellence, and championing the 3Rs – the principle of replacement, reduction, and refinement of animal use in testing – EPAA has helped bring animal-free methods into the regulatory mainstream.

This is evident in chemical safety assessments and in one of Europe’s proudest achievements: the ban on animal testing for cosmetics, which has inspired action worldwide. As we implement the European Commission’s roadmap to phase out animal testing for chemical safety assessments, the EPAA’s experience will be indispensable. EPAA has created not only a knowledge base but a community – one capable of delivering smarter, safer, and more sustainable solutions for Europe.

Quote

The transition to animal-free methods is not just an ethical imperative, it’s also a strategic advantage. By embracing innovative, human-relevant approaches, we unlock faster innovation, more targeted safety assessments, and access to new markets. EPAA has laid the foundation. Our task now is to scale this vision – together.

Stéphane Séjourné, Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy of the European Commission



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Insights from EPAA Anniversary event

Today we congregated within the European Parliament in an event hosted by MEP Tilly Metz and opened by the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola to recognise EPAA's contribution to ending animal testing through advancing regulatory use of animal-free methods over the last twenty years. Two forward looking panel discussions took place with EPAA members and partners from policy, industry, regulators and stakeholders. The first panel discussion, chaired by MEP Tilly Metz, gave insights on policy aspects on achieving the goal of replacing, reducing or refining animal testing, new policy initiatives and the role EPAA can play in supporting them. The second panel discussion, chaired by MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen, outlined how to strengthen regulatory acceptance of animal-free methods and how EPAA can help in the implementation of the upcoming Commission's roadmap to phase out animal testing for chemical safety assessments as well as in progressing a Test Method Development and Validation Strategy.

Quotes

"The EPAA builds bridges between regulators, scientists, industry, and NGOs to turn ethical commitment into concrete progress. It is the European platform for the 3R principles — a driving force for innovation, change, and compassion. Over the past 20 years, the EPAA has been instrumental in phasing-out animal testing and will be a key partner in implementing the Commission's roadmap towards a future without animal suffering." **Tilly Metz, Member of the European Parliament**

"Old habits die hard - as we have seen in our continued reliance on animal testing. Still, on too many occasions, we cling to these methods as the gold standard despite of the rapid development of excellent, scientifically more accurate, and reliable non-animal alternatives. Thank you to EPAA and to the scientists who have worked relentlessly for over two decades toward this goal. My humble thanks for your contribution to better science, improved human safety, and, of course, a more respectful and humane treatment of animals." **Sirpa Pietikäinen, Member of the European Parliament**

"The promotion and use of alternative methods for chemical safety assessments is a strategic priority for ECHA. We need sound science, strong collaboration and robust knowledge to replace or reduce animal testing. EPAA plays an important role in bringing stakeholders and experts together to achieve our shared goal." **Sharon McGuinness, Executive Director European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)**

"EPAA's achievements include catalysing innovation in animal-free next generation risk assessment (NGRA) approaches that are now ready for regulatory use. In partnering to implement the roadmap towards phasing out animal testing for chemical safety assessment, EPAA must champion science-based regulatory innovation to help strengthen EU leadership and competitiveness." **Julia Fentem, Executive Vice President Safety, Environmental and Regulatory Sciences, Unilever**



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“Over the past 20 years, EPAA has played a pivotal role in driving significant advancements—from scientific innovations to the evolution of guidelines, regulations, and industry practices. Moving forward, the Partnership will be essential in supporting the implementation of the Commission’s roadmap, enabling continued progress towards the long-term goal of phasing out animal testing.”

Kristin Schreiber, Director, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Commission

“Cosmetics Europe is proud to have been part of EPAA’s journey since its foundation 20 years ago. By joining forces across sectors, we can accelerate progress towards our shared goal: a future without animal testing.” **John Chave, Director-General Cosmetics Europe**

“At EFSA, we’re working with partners across Europe and beyond to advance next-generation risk assessment. By embracing viable alternatives to animal testing, we can reduce animal suffering and accelerate the delivery of scientifically robust assessments that better serve the needs of EU decision-makers.” **Nikolaus Kriz, Executive Director European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)**

“The last two decades have seen significant reductions in animal use for regulatory testing of medicines. Moving the needle further requires progressing New Approach Methodologies from research towards regulatory acceptance. 3Rs advancements are most impactful if supported through global harmonisation and EMA is committed to providing leadership in this area.” **Ivo Claassen, Deputy Executive Director European Medicines Agency (EMA)**

Notes for editors

The European Partnership for Alternative Approaches to Animal Testing (EPAA) is a joint initiative from the European Commission, European trade associations from 9 industry sectors and individual companies. It was launched in November 2005 with the purpose to promote the development and implementation of new 3Rs methods (replace, reduce, refine) and modern alternative approaches in the field of regulatory testing. Further information is available on

https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/chemicals/european-partnership-alternative-approaches-animal-testing_en

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