

# Media release



## Germany: More than one million genetically engineered animals used in animal experiments in just one year

Testbiotech demands political initiatives to stop this growing trend in animal suffering

**2 December 2016 / In Germany, the number of genetically engineered animals being used in experiments exceeded one million per year for the first time. The official statistics published for 2015 list more than 1.1 million genetically engineered animals, most of these are rats and mice. This is an increase of more than 10 percent compared to the figures in 2014 (984.886 genetically engineered animals).**

It exposes an alarming trend: From 2004 to 2013, the number of genetically engineered animals used in experiments tripled from 317.777 to 947.019.

As Testbiotech has shown in several reports, the reason for this strong increase is not actual medical benefit. It is, in fact, the emergence of new methods of genetic engineering, such as CRISPR-Cas in combination with commercial incentives. The actual time needed to create a genetically engineered mouse or rat has decreased from years to just a few months. This has led to more and more specialised companies offering services to manipulate such animals within short periods of time and at low cost. In many cases, additional commercial incentives are created by patents granted on genetically engineered animals and their use. Several thousand patent applications in this field have already been filed in Europe, and more than 1500 have been granted. The European Patent Office has even granted patents on genetically engineered chimpanzees.

Testbiotech demands that political action is taken to stop investment in animal suffering and that patents on genetically engineered animals are prohibited. We need much stricter rules for the authorisation of such experiments. And public funding should place much greater emphasis on prioritising alternatives to animal experiments.

In addition, Testbiotech warns that within next few years, the use of genetic engineering in animals used for food production is likely to increase if the EU allows a market for these animals and relevant products to be created and marketed. Therefore, Testbiotech recommends that the EU establishes specific prohibitions for the import and production of genetically engineered farm animals.

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### Further information:

Official figures for 2015:

[www.bmel.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/Tier/Tierschutz/Versuchstierdaten2015.pdf;jsessionid=300095322EE370E32F705AABEE1BB1F0.2\\_cid385?\\_blob=publicationFile](http://www.bmel.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/Tier/Tierschutz/Versuchstierdaten2015.pdf;jsessionid=300095322EE370E32F705AABEE1BB1F0.2_cid385?_blob=publicationFile)

Testbiotech report: [www.testbiotech.org/node/1266](http://www.testbiotech.org/node/1266)