

Press release

People for Animal Rights – Federal Association of Antivivisectionists, Germany

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New: Ethics ranking of German universities

Survey shows studying without animal use is nearly impossible

Studying without animals killed especially for the purpose - this is nearly impossible when studying biology, human medicine or veterinary medicine in Germany, despite the fact that there is alternative teaching material and legislation stipulating that these be implemented preferentially. An ethics ranking of universities now casts light on teaching methods in German tertiary education for the first time. The survey, evaluated according to ethical criteria, is published by SATIS, the project for humane education of People for Animal Rights Germany, and is available online at www.satis-tierrechte.de (German language PDF file).

The interviews were conducted with leading university teachers of all biological (70), medical (35) and veterinary (5) faculties in Germany. The main focus was on which animals are used and whether alternatives are available during elementary studies. Alternatives include computer simulations, videos, student self-experiments, plastinates or so-called animal donor programmes, in which animal owners donate the bodies of animals whose deaths were natural or for medical reasons. The results of the survey show that a change of direction can only be ascertained in human medicine, with a shift towards studying human subjects. The degrees veterinary medicine and Bachelor of Science in biology cannot be attained without harmful animal use. Conscientious objectors must opt for teaching or other fields of study.

“Other EU countries, such as Italy, Sweden or the Netherlands are far ahead of Germany. Conscientious objection is regulated by laws or policies and ethical alternatives are promoted. This is important, because our society expects scientists and especially medical professions to act ethically. This foundation is already laid during training”, says biologist Astrid Schmidt, project leader of SATIS. Moreover, Germany is under an obligation; as of 2006, the German Animal Protection Act requires that animal experiments for educational purposes only be approved if alternative methods can not achieve the same results. Also, the new EU directive on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes (2010/63/EU) instructs all EU countries to use possible alternatives in education from January 2013.

With the ethics ranking for universities, People for Animal Rights Germany want to supply high-school graduates and students with a decision-making aid and facilitate choosing study and profession. In addition, teaching and administrative staff gain an insight as to how German medical licensure regulations and harmonised European bachelor degrees are implemented at other universities.



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Above and beyond that, People for Animal Rights Germany demand from politics and academia the following:

- conscientious objection for students via a change in German animal welfare law
- mandatory use of existing alternatives
- promotion of alternatives and development of unavailable teaching methods

People for Animal Rights Germany recently submitted these demands to the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the states of the Federal Republic of Germany and to the Federal Minister of Education. Moreover, SATIS offers concrete implementation concepts for universities, administration and politics.

Ethics ranking: www.satis-tierrechte.de/uni-ranking

Further information: www.satis-tierrechte.de

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