

## ***EU Roadmap towards phasing out animal testing for chemical safety assessments***

### **Communication publication by the European Commission**

Link to EU Roadmap [here](#)

### **Analysis of key content**

The European Commission has published its long-awaited Roadmap to phase out animal testing in chemical safety assessment. The initiative builds on momentum from the European Citizens Initiative "Save Cruelty Free Cosmetics," which mobilized unprecedented public support for ending animal tests.

✔ This wide-scope communication, confirms the intention of the Commission to replace all animal testing for chemical safety assessments across the EU in 15 legislative domains, spanning industrial chemicals, substances supplied to the general public, pesticides and biocides, pharmaceuticals, food and feed additives, and verification of medical device biocompatibility.

Today animal testing still represents a significant amount of animals used in laboratories across Europe and globally, so this Roadmap represents a milestone for the EU in terms of its affirmed commitment to make the decisive shift to a new paradigm that does not rely on animals for safety assessments.

However, not all animals used in safety testing will benefit from the Roadmap's phase-out pathway. Animals used to test biologicals, vaccines, gene therapies, advanced therapy medicinal products and novel therapy veterinary medicinal products, which are not classified as chemicals, fall outside the Roadmap's scope.

✔ The Roadmap outlines over 20 actions and specific targets for the initial implementation phase, aiming to accelerate the development and adoption of animal-free testing methods.

🔥 A key feature is its goal to outline a "conceptual, overarching **new scientific framework**" to be able to use non-animal information in the assessment of chemical safety. This is extremely relevant, the recognition that methods and the overall safety assessment framework must change.

#### Short term actions notably include:

✔ Adapting legislation and guidance by 2029 to adopt available non-animal approaches into regulatory practice and eliminate "redundant" animal tests. There is a long-standing need to address complex regulatory frameworks and advance them to reflect and incorporate better science, so this is a welcome inclusion.

It is worth noting that the above short-term action covers ready-to-use methods, yet other less developed approaches are expected to be adopted as soon as they become ready to be applied in the regulatory context.

As 2029 was set as the deadline for the short-term actions, a conference will be held in that year to assess progress achieved and define next targets and actions. A list of proposed indicators will be developed to help with this process (more on this below).

- ✓ Plan to establish a **dedicated governance structure this year**, with clear collaboration frameworks involving EU agencies, Member States, and stakeholders (including NGOs). The governance bodies and the Steering Team in particular will define mid and long term steps to accelerate the transition to animal-free testing.
- ✓ Plan to identify, develop and publish a **Key Areas of Regulatory Need for alternatives to animal testing report in 2027**, with the intention of regular updates every 3 years. This offers a key opportunity to align priorities in guiding the development of non animal approaches, which in turn is crucial for accelerating their use and aligning funding mechanisms to support these.

### 3 pillar approach

Actions under the roadmap will be organised into three pillars:



#### 1. Pillar One: Making Change Happen

This pillar proposes a way forward to accelerate the development, validation, qualification, standardisation and application of non-animal approaches. It is worth noting that a significant portion of Pillar One focuses on the 3Rs framework, with numerous actions focusing on reduction and refinement. Although the Roadmap aims at ultimately relying on non-animal approaches only, this will be a point worth closely monitoring.

#### 2. Pillar Two: Innovation and European Leadership

Pillar two aims at positioning Europe as a global leader in next-generation safety testing. This includes actions to advance non-animal approaches notably through artificial intelligence and big human-relevant data sets, as well as accelerating time to market. Actions under this pillar are aligned with the EU's broader Life Sciences Strategy, the AI in science strategy, the European Research Area policy action on NAMs, the EU Innovation Act, and the Biotech Act. They also complement EU research partnerships and projects, as well as industry-driven initiatives.

### **3. Pillar Three: EU and Global Collaboration**

The third pillar focuses on increasing EU and international collaboration, which will be essential for wide acceptance of animal-free testing strategies.

#### **Monitoring and accountability**

By the end of 2026, the Commission will establish a set of **measurable indicators** to monitor progress on the Roadmap's implementation, as well as a **public dashboard** to regularly report on the status of actions. These indicators will include, among others, data on animal use for chemical safety assessments outside the EU but for the purposes of EU legislation. These actions will ensure transparency and accountability to citizens and stakeholders.

#### **Funding**

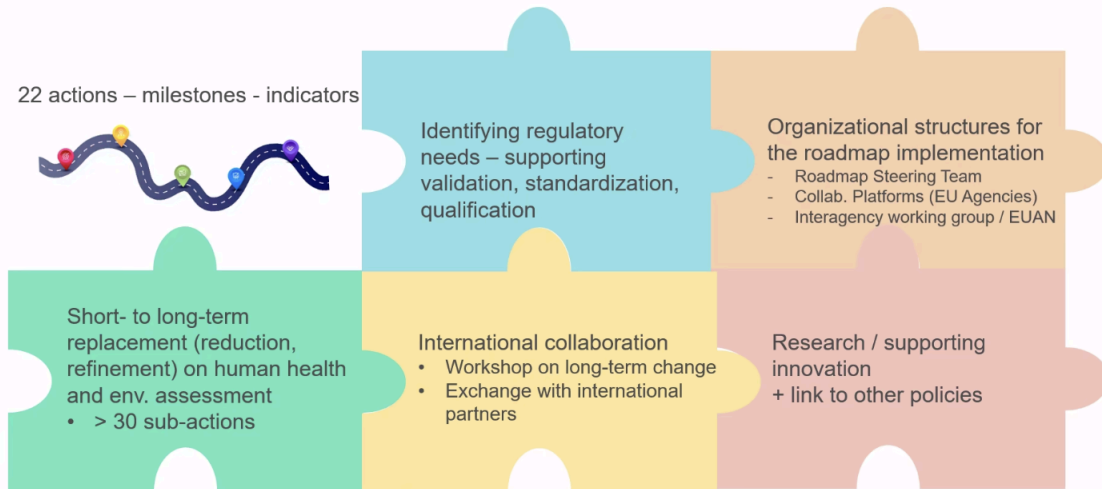
In general, funding is addressed as a topic in the Roadmap. Conversations on the topic of validation, standardisation or qualification of non-animal approaches already started taking place before the publication of the Roadmap. As such, the Commission has proposed to inform on options for funding activities that support these actions by 2027.

It is worth noting that no separate funding schemes have been set up as of now for the implementation of the Roadmap. However, one of the activities of the Steering Committee (full organisational structure below) will be to identify and prioritise the funding opportunities for implementing the actions included in the Roadmap.

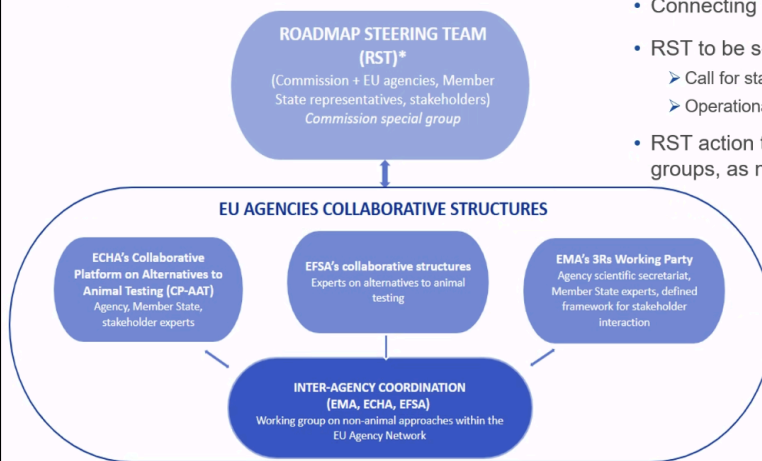
***From the European Commission's official presentation of the Roadmap (2 June, 2026)***

## Roadmap building blocks for making change to non-animal chemical safety assessments happen – comprehensive set of actions

22 actions – milestones - indicators



## Organisational set-up supporting implementation



- Making use of existing structures
- Connecting existing groups and initiatives
- RST to be set up in 2026
  - Call for stakeholder participation during next months
  - Operational by end of Q3/2026
- RST action teams will be set up as sub-groups, as needed