

The annual MORI poll has now been tracking public opinion on the use of animals for over 10 years. The most recent poll shows a small but significant decline in public acceptance of animal research in medicine since this research was carried out in 2010-2011.

There was less public trust in the regulations during 2012 than in 2010 /2011

Over half (53%) of people still believe that Britain probably has tough rules, but this figure is down on previous years, signifying a drop in public confidence. The number of people feeling that the laws are well-enforced (42%) has also fallen. These figures are now the lowest since 2002.

Fewer people felt that *"Britain probably has tough rules governing animal experimentation"*; that *"rules on animal experimentation are well enforced"*; that they *"can trust inspectors to bring to light misconduct"* compared with 2010 / 2011.

The number of people who do not agree has increased, and therefore the Net agreement (which compares the number who agree with the number who disagree) has also fallen.

Conditional acceptance of animal research has fallen slightly

Ipsos MORI use two figures for conditional acceptance, but the higher figure (including statement J) includes those who accept animal research only for life threatening diseases.

The lower figure indicates agreement with at least one of the following statements:

- *"I can accept animal experimentation as long as it is for medical research purposes"* (66%)
- *"I can accept animal experimentation as long as there is no unnecessary suffering to the animals"* (66%)
- *"I agree with animal experimentation for all types of medical research where there is no alternative"* (63%)

It shows that although 80% of people still accept the need for animals in research, conditional acceptance has

Science's contribution to society

This broader picture, gives context to the data. The number of people disagreeing that science makes a good contribution to society has increased, while the number of people who agree that science makes a useful contribution has fallen.

The majority of people do not feel well-informed about science (64%), and this figure is consistent with the response in 2010-2011.

Unconditional acceptance is down from last year, but the trend is consistent

There are two questions that indicate unconditional acceptance:

- *"It does not bother me if animals are used in experimentation"*

consistent with previous years, 21% of people agree with this statement, indicating that this is still an issue that the public care about.

- *"I agree with animal experimentation for all types of research where there is no alternative"*

Around 50% of people agree with this statement

Just over half of people (55%) are unconditional acceptors.

Objection has increased but not significantly

There has been a general increase in objection to animal research over 5 years. Objection is indicated by agreement with one of the following questions:

- *"I do not support the use of animals in research because of the importance I place on animal welfare"*

and the stronger:

- *"The Government should ban all experiments on animals for any form of research"*.

consistent with previous years, 21% of people agree with this statement, indicating that this is still an issue that the public care about.

Around 1/3 of people are objectors while the majority of the public (70%) **disagree** with both those statements.