

## **STATEMENT on the case of an institution linked to the University of Barcelona hiring Vivotecnia to experiment with beagles**

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It has been made public that the Barcelona Science Park Foundation–PCB (affiliated to the University of Barcelona) has contracted the services of the company Vivotecnia to test a drug with beagle puppies, which are expected to die during the experiment or to be sacrificed after it.

The board of the UPF-Centre for Animal Ethics condemns contracting with a company currently under judicial investigation for illegal harmful practices against animals. We ask the authorities to encourage the transfer to sanctuaries or foster homes of the puppies that do not die during the experiment, as long as their condition allows it. We encourage all authorities stand by the explicit goal set by European regulation of the abolition of experimentation with animals and, in the meantime, the strict application of the principles of replacement, reduction and refinement.

Additionally, we want to share some reflections and questions that we believe of relevance:

In the first place, universities, and especially public ones, are supposed to lead the changes and reforms necessary to improve society. It is incomprehensible that an entity linked to the University of Barcelona has [contracted the services](#) of a private company that is at the center of one of the most important recent scandals in Europe regarding animal experimentation. The [UB rector's statement](#) claiming that the hiring process was carried out by a company external to the UB, but is housed in the PCB, perhaps exempts the university from legal responsibility, but not from the moral responsibility this institution has.

Second, although Spanish law ([Real Decreto 53/2013, de 1 de febrero, por el que se establecen las normas básicas aplicables para la protección de los animales utilizados en experimentación y otros fines científicos, incluyendo la docencia, article 30](#)) does not require animals that do not die during the experiments to be given up for adoption, rehoused or returned to their habitat, it does contemplate these options if the health of the animals allows it and there are no added public health risks. This raises a number of important questions:

- Why doesn't Vivotecnia take into account the possibility of giving up for adoption the animals that can survive the experiment if they can still have a good life?
- Why doesn't the regulation require that the sacrifice of animals that survive the experiments be only a last resort?
- Perhaps this prioritization of death is used to hide evidence of illegal mistreatment? Perhaps the aim is preventing these animals from receiving a name, care and the love from a family and, in this way, further questioning their consideration as mere laboratory instruments?

We believe that institutions have a responsibility to modify the legal regime to which animal experimentation is subject in order to, at least, address these problems. Regardless of the justification for animal testing, all individuals subjected to it should have the opportunity for the best possible life both during and after experimentation.