



# ETPLAS

Harmonizing Education & Training in Laboratory Science  
the role of ETPLAS in the EU and beyond

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Animaux et alternatives: la voie à suivre  
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Education and Training Platform for Laboratory Animal Science

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## Legislation and harmonization

2010/63/EU Directive - Article 23

2. The staff shall be adequately educated and trained before they perform any of the following functions:

- (a) carrying out procedures on animals;
- (b) designing procedures and projects;
- (c) taking care of animals;
- (d) killing animals.


[How to ensure harmonization of E&T across Europe?](#)

EC set up Expert Working Group to develop common framework to facilitate meeting requirements for competence and free movement of personnel



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## Legislation and harmonization

2010/63/EU Directive - Article 23


Education & Training frameworks defines **modules** for laboratory animal science education & training:

- Core modules (common to all EU functions)
- Function-specific modules
- Additional tasks and skills
- Other additional modules



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## Legislation and harmonization


### LIST OF MODULES

1	National legislation	core
2	Ethics, animal welfare and the Three Rs (level 1)	
3.1	Basic and appropriate biology – species specific (theory)	
3.2	Basic and appropriate biology – species specific (practical)	
4	Animal care, health and management – species specific (theory)	core
5	Recognition of pain, suffering and distress - species specific	
6.1	Humane methods of killing (theory)	
6.2	Humane methods of killing (skills)	
6.3	Humane methods of killing - Alternative stand-alone Module for Function D	
7	Minimally invasive procedures without anaesthesia – species specific (theory)	
8	Minimally invasive procedures without anaesthesia – species specific (skills)	
9	Ethics, animal welfare and the Three Rs (level 2)	
10	Design of procedures and projects (level 1)	
11	Design of procedures and projects (level 2)	



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## Legislation and harmonization

### Additional tasks or skills

- 20 Anaesthesia for minor procedures
- 21 Advanced anaesthesia for surgical or prolonged procedures
- 22 Principles of surgery
- 23 Advanced animal husbandry, care and enrichment practices
- 24 Designated Veterinarian
- 25 Project Evaluator


### Other additional modules

- 50 Introduction to the local environment (establishment) for persons taking specific roles under the Directive
- 51 Information provision and retrieval



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## Legislation and harmonization

### Questions from professionals:

- What Education & Training do I need?
- Where can I get it?
- Is my training valid in other countries?
- Does this course have the minimum requirements?

### Questions from course providers:

- What are the minimum requirements for a LAS course?
- How to ensure I meet mutually recognised standards?

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## The Education & Training Platform for Laboratory Animal Science



A European platform at which **information** on education and training can be exchanged is proposed.




Education and Training Platform  
**ETPLAS**  
for Laboratory Animal Science

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## About ETLAS




- **Established in 2014**
- **To provide:**
  - **Information and tools** for the delivery and assessment of high quality laboratory animal science training in Europe
  - A forum for exchanging information on LAS education and training
- **Pools together**
  - Member State Authorities
  - Course Providers
  - Course Accreditors
- **To facilitate**
  - Mutual recognition of education & training in Laboratory Animal Science (LAS)
  - The free movement of personnel

The EU one-stop-shop for E&T in lab animal science, information sharing and communication; registered in Spain (Spring 2021)

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## About ETPLAS




- The platform should gather key European stakeholders
- Should **not add bureaucracy or control** approval/accrediting processes
- ETPLAS goal is to **facilitate and inform** (European Commission, 2014) – e.g. by publishing list of available courses formally recognized by Competent Authorities, or Accrediting Bodies
- Establishing and **harmonizing standards for E&T in LAS** (e.g. defining learning outcomes, publishing DOPS forms)
- Not originally defined by the European Commission (but EC endorsed):
  - e-learning courses
  - ETPLAS exam platform
  - Resource library (for 3<sup>rd</sup> party content)


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## ETPLAS Pilot Project (2019-2021) Five Working Groups



EU GRANT N° 07.02774/2018/794340/SUB/ENV.B2





1. Developing further **guidance for producing assessment + criteria** for the Learning Outcomes;
2. Developing a **database of assessment criteria** for Core and function A specific modules;
3. Developing a **Questions Database** for theoretical Core and function A specific modules;
4. Developing a **Library of Direct Observation of Procedural Skills (DOPS)** for assessment of commonly used practical techniques;
5. Establishing a fit-for-purpose **ETPLAS IT-platform**.

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## Delivered: WG 1 and 2

Check for updates

Working Party Report

**Assessable learning outcomes for the EU Education and Training Framework core and Function A specific modules: Report of an ETPLAS WORKING Group**

Laboratory Animals  
doi:10.1016/j.la.2020.100000  
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DOI: 10.1177/095457942095459  
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Jan-Bas Prins<sup>8,9</sup>, Anne-Dominique Degryse<sup>10</sup> and  
David I Lewis<sup>11</sup>

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## Delivered: WG 3 – questions database

Promoting Alternatives to Animal Testing

Not following Share

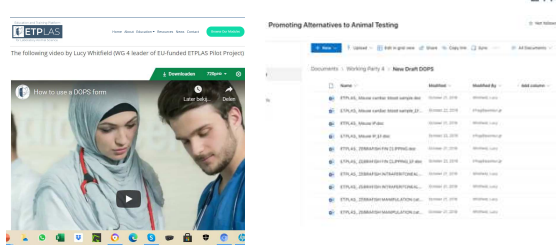
Documents Working Party 3

Name	Modified	Modified By	Add column
Documents	March 1	Maddeline La Grèves	
Examples of assessment	March 22, 2020	vaillantrath@hormat...	
Final module 2	March 12	Maddeline La Grèves	
Final module 3	March 12	Maddeline La Grèves	
Final module 4	March 12	Maddeline La Grèves	
Final module 5	March 12	Maddeline La Grèves	
Final module 6	March 12	Maddeline La Grèves	
Final module 7	March 12	Maddeline La Grèves	

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**Delivered:**  
**WG 4 – DOPS database + video**

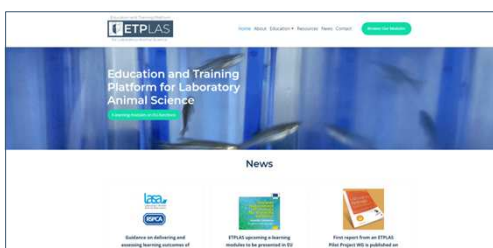


The screenshot shows the ETPLAS website interface. On the left, there is a video player titled 'How to use a DOPS form' with a play button. On the right, there is a table titled 'Promoting Alternatives to Animal Testing' with columns for 'Name', 'Status', and 'Location'. The table lists several documents related to DOPS forms.

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**Delivered: WG 5 – ETPLAS web portal**




The screenshot shows the ETPLAS web portal. The main header reads 'Education and Training Platform for Laboratory Animal Science'. Below the header, there is a 'News' section with three articles: 'Guidance on delivering and assessing training outcomes of EU Module 1 (DOPS) and the', 'ETPLAS opening a training module for personnel in EU', and 'First report from an ETPLAS PhD Project (H2020) published on Laboratory Animals'.

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**Site statistics**



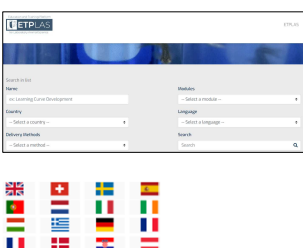
COUNTRY	ID
Spain	9.4K
Germany	811
United Kingdom	491
Netherlands	437
Belgium	375
France	317
Portugal	283

- Since January 2021, more than +5 000 registered users
- 14K visits since July 2022
- ~2.6K monthly visits, mostly by new users
- Most users and visitors from Spain

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**Fully searchable European LAS course database**




The screenshot shows the ETPLAS course database search interface. It includes a search bar, filters for 'Country', 'Language', and 'Delivery Methods', and a list of search results. The search results are displayed in a table with columns for 'Name', 'Country', 'Language', and 'Delivery Methods'.

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**E-Modules developed under other EU grants available**



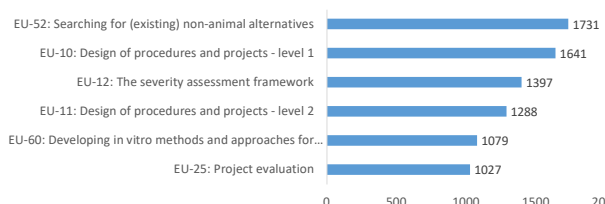
The screenshot shows the ETPLAS website interface. The main header reads 'E-Modules developed under other EU grants available'. Below the header, there is a list of modules available, including EU-10, EU-11, EU-12, EU-25, EU-52, and EU-60. A note indicates that these modules are not originally described in the E&T framework guidance document.

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**Module course statistics**

From January 2021 to March 2023: **+8200 completed courses** on EU function modules



Module	Completed Courses
EU-52: Searching for (existing) non-animal alternatives	1731
EU-10: Design of procedures and projects - level 1	1641
EU-12: The severity assessment framework	1397
EU-11: Design of procedures and projects - level 2	1288
EU-60: Developing in vitro methods and approaches for...	1079
EU-25: Project evaluation	1027

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### E-Modules developed under other EU grants available

- E-learning modules should not be seen as sufficient, *per se*
- Developed to be used in a blended-learning approach that combines e-learning with face-to-face teaching.
- Can be integrated in existing courses or followed on need-basis.
- Expected to be complemented with further development of the material, either face-to-face or otherwise.



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### Pilot project conclusions

- ETPLAS is becoming EU's one-stop-shop for E&T in laboratory animal science
- All Pilot project deliverables finished
  - Refined Learning outcomes EU-function A
  - Database of exam questions
  - Database of DOPS
  - Web-portal
  - Publication of e-modules
  - Searchable database of LAS courses
- The expertise developed under this Pilot Project Grant should be continued to tackle other EU-functions in a similar way! ETPLAS programme for 2021-2024.

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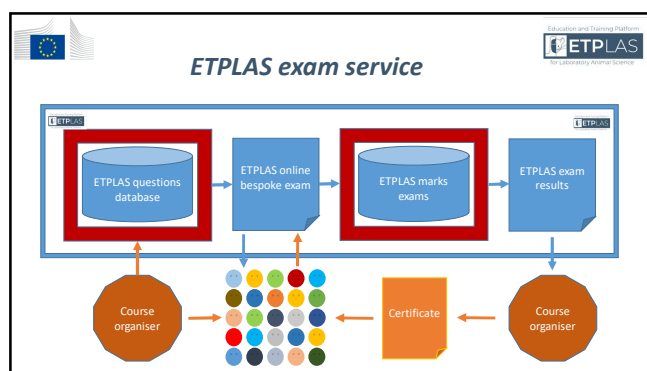
### ETPLAS 2021-2024

EU GRANT N.º 09.200200.A092004/2021/864077/SUB/ENV.B.2


- Extend programme to include EU-function B and C
- Extend database of questions for theoretical Core and function A, B and C specific modules
- Develop exam service to be offered through the ETPLAS IT-platform
- Development of a Union-wide continuing professional development (CPD) framework
- Development of a Union wide continuing professional development (CPD) framework for functions A and B
- Incorporation of educational tools in relation to the Three Rs and non-animal approaches for all levels

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### ETPLAS 2021-2023 LAS-Learning Project

- Uni. of Porto (Nuno Franco) + Uni. of Utrecht (Ivo Tiebosch) + OneSource IT consulting
- 24 European Experts producing new 13 e-learning modules
  - EU-2 and EU-9 – Ethics, Animal Welfare and the 3Rs (lv 1 and 2)
  - EU-3.1 – Basic and appropriate biology (mouse, rat, zebrafish, farm animals)
  - EU-5 - Recognition of pain, suffering and distress (mouse, rat, zebrafish, farm animals)
  - EU-24 - Designated Veterinarian
  - EU-26 - Inspections
  - Develop LOs and new module: Competence Assessor
- Reflection Group of 60 professionals and regulators to evaluate output

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### ETPLAS 2021-2023 Other activities


Hosting of 3<sup>rd</sup> party e-learning modules

- SYRCLE course on Systematic reviews of animal studies
  - April 2023
- Preclinicaltrials.eu course on preregistration of animal studies (funded by Laboratory Animals)
- Hosting of other content (searchable repository)
- Recognition of ETPLAS modules as CPD?
  - By most Spanish Competent Authorities
  - Other countries – to be explored




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## Conclusions and perspective



- **+100 people involved in ETPLAS activities**
  - Executive Committee
  - Stakeholders Board
  - Stakeholders group
  - Preparatory Action
  - Reflection group
- We have a searchable resource library (for images, videos, PDFs) for 3<sup>rd</sup>-party LAS and 3Rs content – **submissions are open and welcome!**
- **13+1 e-learning modules being developed**
- Course list built on voluntary submissions – register and advertise **your course on our website!**

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## Acknowledgements

- Anne-Dominique Degryse (ETPLAS Pilot Project leader)
- Jan-Bas Prins (ETPLAS Pilot Project deputy leader)
- Executive Committee, Stakeholders' Board and Stakeholder Group
- ETPLAS Pilot project members
- European Commission



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**EU GRANT N.° 09.200200.A092004/2021/864077/SUB/ENV.B.2**




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Thank you!



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