

Draft Minutes¹

37th MEETING OF THE FOCAL POINT NETWORK Bratislava (Slovak Republic), 3 – 4 October 2018

Chair: Sérgio Potier Rodeia

Members

Austria	<i>Johann Steinwider Melanie Kuffner</i>
Belgium	<i>Frederic Denauw</i>
Bulgaria	<i>Donka Popova</i>
Croatia	<i>Sanja Milos</i>
Cyprus	<i>Maro Christodoulidou</i>
Czech Republic	<i>Petr Beneš</i>
Denmark	<i>Birgitte Helwich</i>
Estonia	<i>Piret Priisalu</i>
France	<i>Celine Bahuon</i>
Germany	<i>Susanne Kaus</i>
Greece	<i>Foteini Tzoumanika</i>
Hungary	<i>Judit Sali</i>
Ireland	<i>Grainne Redmond</i>
Island	<i>Grimur Olafsson</i>
Latvia	<i>Elina Ciekure</i>
Luxembourg	<i>Elisa Barillozzi</i>
Malta	<i>Giannella Pisani</i>
Netherlands	<i>Linda Kox</i>
Norway	<i>Gisle Solstad</i>
Poland	<i>Katarzyna Floryanowicz-Czekalska</i>
Romania	<i>Felix Nicolescu</i>
Slovak Republic	<i>Marica Kuzmiak Theiszová Milo Bystrický</i>
Slovenia	<i>Blaža Nahtigal</i>
Spain	<i>Maria José Rubio (AC)</i>
Sweden	<i>Karin Nyberg</i>
United Kingdom	<i>Patrick Miller</i>

¹ For more details on each session please listen to the respective audiocasts available online

Observers

Serbia	<i>Shpresa Ohri</i>
Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia	<i>Svetlana Tomeska</i>
Montenegro	<i>Ana Velimirovic</i>
Serbia	<i>Nadežda Dukić</i>
Turkey	<i>Muzaffer Nurseren Budak</i>
Kosovo*	<i>Fisnik Rexhepi</i>

FP Secretariat

Julia Finger *Drago Marojevic*

EFSA Staff

<i>Barbara Gallani (VC)</i>	<i>Gisele Gizzi (VC)</i>
<i>Kerstin Gross-Helmert (VC)</i>	<i>Margherita Guidi (VC)</i>
<i>Maria Astridou (VC)</i>	<i>Martin Moravek (VC)</i>
<i>Martina Kurisova (VC)</i>	<i>Mary Gilsean (VC)</i>
<i>Riccardo Siligato (VC)</i>	<i>Stef Bronzwaer (VC)</i>

Apologies: Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Switzerland, Bosnia-Herzegovina

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair opened the 37th Focal Point (FP) plenary meeting, welcoming participants to Bratislava. He introduced Felix Nicolescu as new alternate FP (FP) for Romania and noted apologies from Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Switzerland and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

2. Welcome by the Advisory Forum Member of the Slovak Republic

Petra Vanková, Senior State Counsellor of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic and member of EFSA's Advisory Forum (AF) expressed her pleasure in hosting the 37th FP meeting in Bratislava and underlined the crucial role FPs play as liaison between EFSA, the AF and the scientific community.

3. Joint Report on Zoonoses, Food Borne and Waterborne Diseases – outcomes and next steps

Marica Kuzmiak-Theiszová, FP member for the Slovak Republic, presented the joint report on zoonoses, foodborne and waterborne diseases of the Slovak Republic. This yearly report, which has been produced for ten years now, highlights the key zoonotic agents of concern in the Slovak Republic overtime.

4. Strategic Partnership with Slovakia on Data Quality (Pilot Project) – summary, achievements

Milo Bystrický, FP alternate for the Slovak Republic, presented the preliminary results of the pilot on data quality from a national perspective. Milo outlined the administrative aspects falling under the FP responsibility and as well the good results achieved with system enhancements and data quality. This pilot agreement was signed during 2018 and covers five data domains. Overall, the pilot allowed for a significant decrease in data errors and for a better fit of national data into the EFSA data warehouse. Denmark and Cyprus, also participants in the pilot on data quality, underlined similar outcomes.

5. Matters arising

5.1. FP evaluation of the 36th FP meeting

The Chair, supported by Julia Finger, provided a short feedback from the last FP meeting, which consisted on a training session on the new FP tasks, with special focus on the support roles FPs may provide on data and regulated product domains. Feedback received from this meeting was overall quite positive. FPs underlined once more the need to have time for discussion of FP related topics and tasks that concern specifically their activities. The Chair underlined that the current meeting will again be almost entirely dedicated to the implementation of the new agreements. Overall, a substantial amount of time was allocated by EFSA for an open consultation with MS on the main FP tasks and activities, as well on the new flexible performance-based approach.

5.2. Audiocasts of FP meetings

The Chair reminded FPs that meetings are being audio-recorded and that the respective audiocasts are then published on EFSA's website after each meeting. This activity is being carried out on a pilot basis for a 1 year period i.e. until spring 2019. Feedback on the added value and limitations of this new approach will be collected via a survey at the end of the period of the pilot.

6. Focal Point Agreements 2019-2022

6.1. New performance-based approach

The main operational framework for the new FP agreements 2019-2022 was presented. The revised list of main and specific activities and the new flexible performance-based approach endorsed by AF members on 17.09.2018 (at the 69th AF meeting) was detailed. The Chair highlighted the key principles behind the new approach and noted that FPs were involved in different consultation stages, the last one running in parallel with the AF (from 31.07.2018 until 07.09.2018). All comments received were clarified and taken aboard as far as possible, and a list with FAQs was shared as annex to the main framework document. The new flexible approach offers FPs a choice of 15 discretionary tasks of two different priority levels, in addition to 6 mandatory tasks. The new FP grant agreement cycle and the procedure for updating the maximum grant ceilings were also explained in detail. A plenary discussion followed.

6.2. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Maria Astridou presented the main drivers that led to the setting of performance indicators under the new FP agreements. The new system is based on the definition of outputs, output indicators and expected outcomes. The Chair noted that the background document setting the performance indicators and targets was shared with AF members for comments on 03.09.2018. This background document was prepared by an EFSA internal FP Task Force and complements the main proposal, providing a broader picture for its implementation. Maria underlined that every MS will be measured according to planned / reported targets. During plenary discussion, FPs made specific comments for improvement of targets that will lead to a revision of some of the pre-established KPIs. In order to give FPs the opportunity for fine-tuning the draft KPIs, the Chair concluded that final comments are welcome by 18.10.2018. A summary of all comments made and replies given / actions taken by EFSA will be shared with FPs to ensure full transparency and clarity on the subject. The Chair noted that since this is a new approach, its implementation will be made with flexibility, allowing for the possible annual adjustment of KPIs. The setting of a baseline will help both EFSA and FPs to measure their performance and, later, measure outcomes and impact of scientific cooperation activities carried out by the FP network.

Action Point 1: FPs to send comments on the [background document](#) setting KPIs for the different activities by 18.10.2018

Action Point 2: EFSA to create an annex to the background document with a summary of comments made and answers provided (FAQs on KPIs)

6.3. Practicalities (planning and reporting)

A prototype of the new Excel template for planning and reporting FP tasks was presented by Martin Moravek. A single template will be used for both purposes, including for written comments, allowing measuring planning versus reporting. After signature of the new FP Agreements, FPs will be asked to submit their yearly plans using the new template. Practical examples were given on how to fill in the new template and how to choose a minimum number of specific activities and respective level of performance in order to achieve the maximum full grant. Specific comments on the prototype can be made by FPs by 18.10.2018.

The Chair further clarified that the final version of the new FP Agreements along with the final planning / reporting template will be shared with FPs after the end of the reporting period for year 2018 i.e. as of 08.11.2018. At this point in time FPs will be sent an email with clear instructions for digitally signing the new FP Agreements and, once concluded that process, to submit their yearly plans until 06.12.2018, in order to enable the payment of the FP pre-financing still during 2018. HU expressed the wish to receive the pre-financing of the new Agreements in January 2019.

Action Point 3: EFSA to share the [Excel planning / reporting prototype](#) with FPs for comments by 18.10.2018

Action Point 4: EFSA to launch the process for signature of new FP Agreements (2019-2022), submission of yearly plans and payment of 2019 pre-financing as of 08.11.2018

7. Horizons for food safety research – EFSA & Focal Points as Knowledge Brokers

Stef Bronzwaer and Riccardo Siligato introduced a newly created dedicated EFSA webpage that operates as a research platform in the food safety domain. FPs are asked to follow this new webpage in support of their new discretionary activity for supporting new partnerships and the formation of consortia, including the exchange of information and implementation of research-oriented and research funding-oriented actions. To this end, FPs are encouraged to liaise with relevant national organisations that directly interact with research funders, for example the national contact points for Horizon 2020. The final slide of the presentation lists a suite of possible activities for FPs to consider under this new FP task.

Action Point 5: Focal Points to provide comments on the new Research Platform (<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/engage/research-platform>) and follow EFSA's research coordinator, if interested, for funding news and upcoming calls on <https://twitter.com/sbronzwaer> or <http://www.linkedin.com/in/stefbronzwaer>

8. EU-RAA: second round

Drago Marojevic explained the anticipated process for running the EU-RAA update, expected to be launched closer to year-end. The update process will focus in obtaining a clear picture on the current state-of-play of the EU-RAA uptake; and, on a second phase, in collecting new project ideas through the use of a new database that will host the EU-RAA catalogue and be linked with the current R4EU database on MS RA plans. The latter follows up a suggestion made by FPs in the recent past. As a first step, FPs are requested to contact the leading organisations that proposed project ideas to the current catalogue and seek input on whether ideas have materialised into concrete projects.

Action Point 5: EFSA to launch the process for updating the current EU-RAA catalogue of project ideas, focusing on their uptake by end of 2018

9. Communications update

Barbara Gallani, Head of the COMCO Department, provided an update on the most relevant and recent EFSA communication initiatives. FPs expressed interest in receiving a regular update on these topics, in particular the media coverage. Barbara highlighted also recent media outputs such as videos and infographics, many of them translated into various EU languages that can be re-used and distributed at national level by FPs.

Action Point 6: *FPs to disseminate recent EFSA media outputs at national level*

10. Focal Points 10th anniversary and Focal Points timeline

On the year of the 10th anniversary of the FP network, Barbara Gallani highlighted the importance of the FP network in boosting scientific cooperation, networking, engagement and the scientific visibility of the work carried out by EFSA and MSs, and as well the planned activities aiming to celebrate the occasion. Barbara briefly mentioned the joint AF / FP networking dinner and presented the FP timeline, an interactive scroller displaying important milestones of the FP network during the past 10 years. FPs are asked to reuse and disseminate as widely as possible this dynamic FP timeline (as well as the static one) and as well support / promote the related planned media initiatives (new-in-brief, social media campaigns, among other), and in this way contribute to raise the visibility and outreach of the FP network.

Action Point 7: *FPs to reuse the FP timelines and support / promote the planned media activities aiming to raise the visibility and outreach of the FP network*

11. Focal Point reporting 2018

Julia Finger gave an overview on the main steps for the FP reporting season for 2018. The reporting season was launched on 21.09.2018. FPs are asked to submit their annual reports by 07.11.2018, preferably before. This year the procedure will have some steps less, since no draft reports are asked and no renewal procedure will occur. After the end of the deadline, EFSA will evaluate reports and, once approved, pay the remaining balance before year-end. Julia also anticipated that audit procedures will be carried out to three countries, after submission of the respective annual reports.

Action Point 8: *FPs to submit the annual FP reports for 2018 before or by 07.11.2018*

12. FP Agreements 2019-2022: summary of discussion on new tasks

Julia Finger provided FPs with summaries of the training sessions held during the 36th FP meeting, focused on data related matters and in the area of regulated products. Regarding the latter, a number of FPs anticipated the wish to implement this activity and thus to be interested in additional training.

13. Art.36 Task Force – next steps

Birgitte Helwigh (DK) and Gisle Solstad (NO) presented an update on the work of the Art.36 Task Force, providing an overview on how the new approach will be implemented and highlighting the main changes with current procedures, the new tasks falling under the responsibility of FPs, the new tool and upcoming trainings.

14. Any Other Business

14.1. European Joint Project Orion

Birgitte Helwigh (DK) briefly updated FPs on the European Joint Project (EJP) ORION², which aims to enhance One Health surveillance through increased knowledge flow and data sharing. Birgitte reminded FPs to liaise at national level with contacts working with One Health surveillance initiatives for seeking their contribution onto this project.

² <https://onehealthjep.eu/structure/jip1-orion/>

14.2. Workshop EFSA-ECDC on AMR

Drago Marojevic informed FPs about a regional workshop on the One Health approach against AMR in EU Pre-Accession countries, to take place on 26-27.02.2019 in Belgrade, Serbia.

14.3. Scientific Conference in Dublin

Grainne Redmond (IE) informed FPs about a scientific conference to be held in Dublin.

14.4. Information on ANSES Recent opinions and news

Céline Bahuon (FR) presented to FPs the recent scientific opinions and news from ANSES, with specific reference to bitter apricot kernel poisoning and excess of iodine intake linked to the consumption of seaweed in foodstuffs.

14.5. 8^o Colloque: La sécurité dans mon assiette - les contaminants

Elisa Barilozzi (LU) briefed FPs on the main outcomes of their 8th Colloquium. Plenary discussions focused on the best management of this type of conferences and, in particular, how to address the information needs of a varied target audience.

14.6. European Researchers Night

Elina Ciekure (LV) briefed FPs about her participation on the initiative "European Researchers Night" held recently in Latvia. The objective of this initiative is to raise awareness of the larger public, especially young people, about science. Elina's participation focused mainly on the role of EFSA at EU level.

14.7. Scientific Opinion on Hazard Analysis approaches for small retail establishments & food donation

The Chair briefly announced to FPs that EFSA will soon publish a scientific opinion on a simplified approach to food safety management in small retail business (supermarkets, restaurants, catering activities). The Chair noted the food waste reduction / food donation angle included in it, since experts identified activities that need to be implemented by donors and receivers to ensure that donated food is safe.

14.8. Focal Point meetings in 2019

Julia Finger presented the plan for FP meetings in 2019. In this context, the Chair reminded FPs to update, on a regular basis, the overview of upcoming FP and national events available in DMS³.

Action Point 9: *FPs to regularly update the list of FP and national events in DMS*

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The Chair closed the meeting, thanking the Slovak Republic representatives for hosting this FP meeting and for the excellent preparatory work; and expressed his deepest appreciation for the active contribution to the meeting by all participants.

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<https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/livelink.exe?func=ll&objid=15263659&objAction=browse&sort=name&viewType=1>

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>What</i>
<i>Action 1</i>	<i>FPS</i>	<i>send comments on the background document setting KPIs for the different activities by 18.10.2018</i>
<i>Action 2</i>	<i>EFSA</i>	<i>create an annex to the background document with a summary of comments made and answers provided (FAQs on KPIs)</i>
<i>Action 3</i>	<i>EFSA</i>	<i>share the Excel planning / reporting prototype with FPS for comments by 18.10.2018</i>
<i>Action 4</i>	<i>EFSA</i>	<i>launch the process for signature of new FP Agreements (2019-2022), submission of yearly plans and payment of 2019 pre-financing as of 08.11.2018</i>
<i>Action 5</i>	<i>EFSA</i>	<i>launch the process for updating the current EU-RAA catalogue of project ideas, focusing on their uptake by end of 2018</i>
<i>Action 6</i>	<i>FPS</i>	<i>disseminate recent EFSA media outputs at national level</i>
<i>Action 7</i>	<i>FPS</i>	<i>reuse the FP timelines and support / promote the planned media activities aiming to raise the visibility and outreach of the FP network</i>
<i>Action 8</i>	<i>FPS</i>	<i>submit the annual FP reports for 2018 before or by 07.11.2018</i>
<i>Action 9</i>	<i>FPS</i>	<i>Regularly update the list of FP and national events in DMS</i>

Document history

<i>Document reference</i>	<i>Version 1.1</i>
<i>Prepared by</i>	<i>Julia Finger</i>
<i>Reviewed by</i>	<i>Sérgio Potier Rodeia</i>
<i>Last date modified</i>	<i>7 October 2018</i>