



INTEGRATED DATA UNIT

Scientific Network for Zoonoses Monitoring Data TSE-BSE Subgroup Minutes of the 2nd meeting

**Held on 20 September 2022
WEBCONFERENCE**

(Agreed on 30 September 2022)

Participants

- **Network Representatives of Member States (including EFTA Countries):**

Country	Name
Austria	Alexandra Bastian
Belgium	Paul De Winter
Bulgaria	Martin Vaskov Hristov
Croatia	Tihana Miškić
Cyprus	Georgia Aparin
Czechia	Klára Jelínková
Denmark	Hanne Christensen
Estonia	Luisa Leinberg
Estonia	Piret Aasmäe
Finland	Sirkka-Liisa Korpenfelt
France	Jean Philippe Amat
France	Eric Morignat
Germany	Andrea Cossmann
Greece	Marina Christopanou
Hungary	Tamás Lancsák
Italy	Giuseppe Ru
Italy	Romolo Nonno
Lithuania	Kristina Stakytė
Malta	Sergio Fiore
Netherlands	Linda Verhoef
Portugal	Renata Carvalho
Slovakia	Martin Mojžiš
Spain	Maria Esther Prieto Caballero
Sweden	Sandra Ögren

Iceland	Sigurbjörg Ólöf Bergsdóttir
Norway	Berit Heier
Switzerland	Michael Binggeli

- **Hearing Experts**

Walter Martelli (Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale del Piemonte, Liguria e Valle d'Aosta - IZSTO, Italy), for agenda items 5.1 and 5.2

- **European Commission:**

Fabien Schneegans (Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, G4 – Food Hygiene and Fraud)

- **Observers:**

Nikola Pejovic (Montenegro), Biljana Strojmanovska (North Macedonia), Anil Demeli (Turkey)

- **EFSA:**

Integrated Data (IDATA) Unit: Alexandra Papanikolaou (Chair), Perry Koevoets (scientific secretary), Fabrizio Abbinante*, Caroline Merten, Anca Stoicescu

(* attended for specific items)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Angel Ortiz (EFSA).

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Tour de table

The representatives introduced themselves by name, organisation, and country. Introduction started with the European Commission representative, then followed by the Network Representatives and Observers.

4. Introduction of TSE data team and Integrated Data (IDATA) unit

Fabrizio Abbinante (Head of the IDATA Unit) gave a brief introduction on the new organisational structure of EFSA (valid since January 2022). He explained the mission of the IDATA Unit and its responsibilities in relation to all data-related processes within EFSA.

Caroline Merten (Team Leader of Data Gateway and Outreach - DGO) introduced the DGO team (as part of IDATA Unit) and its role in data collection activities.

The other members of the team (Alexandra Papanikolaou, Perry Koevoets, and Anca Stoicescu) that are involved in the TSE data collection and the management of the Scientific Network for Zoonoses Monitoring Data briefly introduced themselves.

5. Topics for discussion

5.1. Process for validation and consultation on the TSE 2021 data collection

Giuseppe Ru (IZSTO) presented the role of his institute as EFSA contractor in the production of the European Summary Report (EUSR) on surveillance for the presence of TSE. The stepwise process followed to produce the report was presented, highlighting the contractor's role in the data validation, report drafting, report consultation, publication and dissemination. The first draft of the report was produced, and it is currently under consultation until 5 October 2022. The consultation focuses on how the data of reporting countries is presented in the EUSR. Publication is planned for end of November and dissemination of the report will take place via news, dashboards ([cattle](#), [sheep & goats](#), [cervids](#)), and a [story map](#).

5.2. Results of surveillance on TSE carried out in 2021

Giuseppe Ru (IZSTO) presented the results of the surveillance on TSE carried out in 2021 under Regulation (EC) No 999/2001. Data on TSE in cattle, small ruminants, and cervids, and genotyping in small ruminants is reported to EFSA based on this regulation. Data was submitted in the 2021 TSE data collection by 27 EU Member States (MSs), the United Kingdom (in respect of Northern Ireland), and eight other non-EU countries. For each of the animal groups (cattle, sheep, goats, cervids), the number of tests and number of positive cases was presented. Additional information was given on the most commonly sampled target groups, and details on positive cases, such as case type, index cases, trending over time and geospatial distribution. The results of genotyping in sheep were presented according to the categories originally defined in Great Britain's National Scrapie Plan (NSP). Data included in the presentation and in the draft report remains confidential until the report publication.

At the request of the EC, it was clarified that the BSE cases were found via active surveillance. Also, at the request of the EC, an explanation was given to explain the difference between the trend of index cases in relation to the trend of total cases. At the request of Switzerland, clarification was provided regarding the figures of BSE cases presented in the maps.

5.3. Mandate on monitoring of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

In the absence of Angel Ortiz, Alexandra Papanikolaou presented the mandate on monitoring of CWD ([M-2022-00040](#)). The background regarding the first detection of CWD in Europe in 2016 and the 3-year programme of compulsory monitoring

in six Member States (Com. Reg. (EU) 2017/1972) was presented. The mandate was received on 4 February 2022 and the deadline to deliver the opinion is on 31 March 2023. EFSA is required to provide a scientific opinion on the monitoring of CWD based on the monitoring programme and other data collected with the same epidemiological objective. The terms of reference of the mandate, the composition of the working group and an overview of its current activities were presented.

5.4. Sheep and goat genotyping in Cyprus

Georgia Aparin presented the goat and sheep genotyping programmes in Cyprus. An overview of the history of scrapie in Cyprus was presented. The registration of the small ruminants and holdings was briefly presented. Ovine and caprine animals are registered in the national animal identification and registration scheme. An electronic registry of holdings is also available including detailed information such as geographical coordinates. Small ruminants are identified by a ruminal bolus and a plastic ear tag. The information on identification of all animals is stored in a web-enabled database. The legal basis for the genotyping of sheep (since 2004) was explained. However, genotyping of goats, although in place since 2009, does not have defined legal framework. The process of the sample collection for genotyping was presented. The number of sheep and goats with genotypes indicating resistance to scrapie has increased since the beginning of the genotyping programme. The increase was less pronounced in goats where the legal framework is not yet in place. At the request of the Chair, it was clarified that animal history can be tracked, combining data from the animal identification and registration database, and the holding registry.

5.5. Direct upload of TSE data in XML format to EFSA's Data Collection Framework, experiences from Sweden

Sandra Ögren presented the process followed by Sweden to extract TSE data from the national database and convert in the format required by EFSA, without using the [TSE reporting tool](#). The system is in place since 2019 and is based on the collaboration between the National Veterinary Institute (responsible for sampling and storing information) and the Swedish Board of Agriculture (responsible for surveillance activities and for the national registration of cattle). The data provider receives a CSV file with the TSE surveillance data on a monthly basis and corrects data if needed. The CSV file is uploaded to a dedicated application that generates an XML file with codes from the EFSA catalogues. This is manually uploaded to the EFSA Data Collection Framework (DCF). The efforts done at the beginning of setting up the system paid off considering how smoothly the process of data reporting works now.

5.6. Results of the user survey on the TSE 2021 data collection

Perry Koevoets presented the results on the user feedback survey for the TSE 2021 data collection. EFSA sent this survey to the experts involved in the TSE data reporting in order to collect their views on the 2021 TSE data reporting and define any improvements needed. The results show high appreciation of the communication and the scientific and technical support provided by EFSA. However, there is room for improvement on the catalogues and the data visualisation/validation in MicroStrategy. EFSA will answer to all comments added

in the survey. EFSA highly encouraged the participants to propose ideas for improvements of the data collection and validation process.

5.7. Where to find information and data (MS Teams and MicroStrategy validation dashboard)

Perry Koevoets presented a short overview of Teams, as the platform used for communication, and MicroStrategy, as the tool used for data validation. The structure of the TSE channel, which is included in the EFSA Team of the Scientific Network for Zoonoses Monitoring Data, was presented. Participants were advised to use this channel available in EFSA Teams to communicate with EFSA and among them.

The MicroStrategy dashboard used to support the reporting countries with the data validation was presented. It was emphasised that data becomes available a day after submitting it. The use and functionalities of the validation dashboard were demonstrated. The participant from Belgium asked if MicroStrategy users could see data from other countries. EFSA clarified that nominated users (Network Members/Observers and data providers) can only see data from their own organisation and not data from other countries/organisations or aggregated data on EU level.

5.8. EFSA Scientific Network for Zoonoses Monitoring Data

Anca Stoicescu presented the background on Scientific Networks in EFSA and specifically the Network for Zoonoses Monitoring Data. The keywords for networks are scientific collaboration, exchange information and expertise and development and implementation of joint projects. The rules of organisation and operation of EFSA Scientific Networks were explained highlighting the responsibilities of the participants and confidentiality requirements. She then focused on the updated terms of reference Scientific Network for Zoonoses Monitoring data, that besides the main network, consists of the subgroups antimicrobial resistance (AMR), foodborne outbreaks (FBO), and transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE). The main Network and the subgroups have specific data- and science-related tasks regarding collection, validation and analysis. The main deliverables of the Network are validated data and revised EFSA's scientific outputs related to the Network e.g. annual scientific reports, scientific and technical reports, guidance documents, reporting manuals and online reports.

6. Any Other Business (AOB)

The proposed date for the next meeting, Tuesday 19 September 2023, was agreed with the participants. EFSA will inform the Network Representatives in case of any changes.

7. Closure of the meeting

The chair closed the meeting on time and thanked all participants for their attendance and contributions.