

58th Focal Point Meeting

Location: EFSA, Parma; online

Attendees: Chair: Victoria Villamar; Sérgio Potier-Rodeia

Last name	First name	Member state
Paluka	Valbona	Albania
Steinwider	Johann	Austria
Boyen	Jens	Belgium
Polihronova	Lilyana	Bulgaria
Petric	Jasenka	Croatia
Lendic	Barbara	Croatia
Benes	Petr	Czech REPUBLIC
Beltoft	Vibe	Denmark
Priisalu	Piret	Estonia
Siekkinen	Kirsi-Maarit	Finland
Bultel	Coralie	France
Bahuon	Céline	France
Contreras	Samuel	France (online)
Raeke	Julia	France (online)
Schone	Julia	Germany
Wlucka	Katrin	Germany
Friese	Sharleen	Germany (online)
Tzoumanika	Foteini	Greece
Prisztoka	Renata	Hungary
Tamas	Tamara	Hungary (online)
Redmond	Grainne	Ireland
Perrella	Alessandra	Italy (online)
Lazda	Ilva	Latvia
Siksna	Inese	Latvia
Vilkoicaite	Agne	Lithuania
Fougeras	Miriam	Luxembourg
Pisani	Giannella	Malta
Van der Lugt	Timme	Netherlands
Solstad	Gisle	Norway
Baraniak	Justyna	Poland
Jurczynska	Liliana	Poland
Melo de Vasconcelos	Filipa	Portugal
Monteiro	Sarogini Carmen	Portugal (online)
Papachrysostomou	Christoforos	Republic of Cyprus
Stavroulakis	Georgios	Republic of Cyprus
Radulescu	Simona	Romania
Dukic	Nadezda	Serbia
Dringusova	Gabriela	Slovakia (online)
Lepesova	Kristina	Slovakia (online)
Prosek	Sara	Slovenia (online)
Caldron Pascal	Vicente	Spain
Llarena Martinez	Beatriz	Spain (online)
Widenfalk	Anneli	Sweden
Patterson	Emma	Sweden



Last name	First name	Observer country
Vidacak	Dalibor	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Dibrani	Yilka	Kosovo
Lekic	Mirjana	Montenegro
Joheski	Martin	North Macedonia (online)
Engeli	Barbara	Switzerland
Hanci	Serap	Turkey

EFSA Representatives		
Victoria Villamar	Sergio Potier Rodeia	Bernhard Url
Barbara Gallani	Elina Ciekure	Julia Finger
Cristina Alonso Andicoberry	Andrea Laroni	Russo Chloé
Matthew Ramon	Victor Lopez Saavedra	Zoi Mousia
Sara Bellamqadam	Sanja Ilieva	Gorgias Garofalakis
Aikaterini Vlachou	Martina Kurisova	Fabrizio Abbinante
Anastasia Livianou	Sofia Ioannidou	Victoria Flamini
Alicia Gutierrez Linares	Catalin Iancu	Luca Pasinato
Monica Ingeaua	Cemre Uyar	Raquel Garcia Matas
Carolina Pereira Da Silva	Elena Testa	Federica Barrucci
Andrea Nironi	Jacopo Alabiso	

50 participants attended the meeting, representing FP members and alternates from MS, Iceland and Norway as well as observers from Switzerland and IPA countries. 12 online and 38 attended the meeting physically, and 12 were online. The Icelandic Focal Point presented their apologies.

I. Opening of the Meeting

Chair Victoria Villamar welcomed the Focal Points and observers to the 58th Focal Point Meeting and gave the floor to ENGAGE's head **Barbara Gallani (EFSA)** for her welcome speech.

- Action Points from the 57th Focal Points meeting

Chair Victoria Villamar gave a short recap on the **APs stemming** from the 57th FP meeting in September. There were 10 **APs** stemming from the last meeting, 8 were for FP and two for EFSA, 6 were completed and 4 are ongoing.



II. Focal Point Framework and activities

2.1 EU-FOR A 2025-2026 Call

Chair Victoria Villamar gave the floor to **Cristina Alonso Andicoberry (EFSA)** to update the Plenary on the outcome of the EU-FORA 2025-2026 Call, sharing information such as the number of the proposals received, the highlight of new sending and hosting institutions, the quality of proposals and the division of final award. **Chair Victoria Villamar** thanked the FPs for their long standing support to this EFSA program. More detailed information on the awarded consortia will follow after the award letters are dispatched.

2.2 Overview on TMA proposal submission

Chair Victoria Villamar gave the floor to **Elina Ciekure (EFSA)** to give a short overview of the outcome of the tailor-made activities proposals window for 2025, that concluded on April 15th. The results were deemed very satisfactory as EFSA received 16 proposals, and the total budget requested is 5.7M euros (not counting the 1.7M already booked for the MSCC 2025 TMA). The presentation provided a comparison with the previous years and gave an overview of the TMA submission and implementation, half-way through the current FP framework. The overview highlighted the constant number of proposals and the growing number of proponents through the years, as well as the fact that, for 2024 and 2025, the total budget demand was two times the budget available. The proposals for this year are diverse and in all areas, with the majority in the area of data.

Chair Victoria Villamar thanked the FPs for their great effort and dedication to the TMA process and the support to their national organisations in submitting new proposals, and encouraged their participation in all activities of their interest (as observers or active participants), even those that will not be prioritized.

2.3 Health Check outline for 2025 and beyond

Chair Victoria Villamar gave the floor to **Julia Finger (EFSA)** to invite the FPs to a Workshop that will be held on 4 and 5 November online for both Focal Points and Advisory Forum, to discuss together with EFSA colleagues the possibilities for the next FP Framework. This workshop will kick off the co-creation of the framework for Focal Points to replace the current one, running until 2027. FPs were invited to prepare together with their Advisory Forum members for the discussion. Part of the next FP meeting, to be in September, will be dedicated to the workshop preparation.

III. Networking and awareness raising session on tailor-made activities, partnerships, joint planning and other activities that strengthen FP role as connecting hubs.

Chair Victoria Villamar gave the floor to **EFSA's executive director Bernhard Url** for an opening speech.

The participants were then invited to freely visit the room, which consisted in seven thematic islands.



This session aimed to increase awareness and enhance the added value and benefits to MSs and EFSA brought by the tailor-made part of the FP framework and was conceived as a networking opportunity to discuss between EFSA and MS on strategic and operation level about MS priorities, common interests for the engagement and partnerships, and to introduce EFSA's progress in work on novel cooperation mechanisms.

List of the islands:

1. 101 Focal Points: island on general support on FP activities –EFSA Focal Point team (**Elina Ciekure, Julia Finger, Cristina Alonso, Chloe Russo**)
2. Joining forces on engagement: supported by ENREL Strategic Engagement Team (**Matthew Ramon, Victor Lopez, Zoi Mousia, Sara Bellamqaddam, Sanja Ilieva**)
3. Partnerships: supported by KNOW Unit (**Gorgias Garofalakis, Aikaterini Vlachou, Martina Kurisova**)
4. Activities related to data: supported by iData Unit (**Fabrizio Abbinante, Anastasia Livianou, Sofia Ioannidou, Victoria Flamini, Luca Pasinato, Catalin Iancu, Alicia Gutierrez Linares**)
5. Capacity building activities: supported by KNOW Unit (**Monica Ingeaua, Cemre Uyar, Raquel Garcia Matas**)
6. SNE at EFSA – Collaborate to amplify talent pipeline: supported by HUCAP Unit (**Carolina Pereira Da Silva, Elena Testa**)
7. Tailor-made activities: pitches on tailor-made activities:
 - “FLARE - Framework to quantify Likelihood and Availability to assess potential Risks in e-Commerce” (newly submitted proposal), **Austria**
 - Training on tools and methods for risk assessment (ongoing activity), **Finland**
 - xORA platform (evolution of the European Excellence Label initiative TMA) - **Netherlands**
 - Initiative group on PFAS, **France and Germany**
 - One Health Approach to investigate Botulinum neurotoxin-producing bacteria contamination levels from farm to work, **France**

Chair Victoria Villamar closed the networking session by thanking everyone on the effort of preparation of the event and active discussion in every island and encouraged the FPs to continue raising visibility of SNE schema in EFSA and strengthen risk assessment capacity around Europe, to support improving data sharing, and using opportunities given by tailor-made activities.

IV. Session on the new EFSA digital platform “Risk Assessment Initiatives Hub” for gathering information on MS RA plans and supporting MS TMA process

4.1 Overview on EFSA’s digitalisation process

Chair Sérgio Potier Rodeia gave the floor to **Federica Barrucci (EFSA)** to set the scene for the upcoming day with a presentation EFSA’s digitalisation roadmap, giving examples on already



performed and planned digitalisation initiatives, including the projects leading up to the new digital platform for engagement and cooperation.

4.2 MS experience in information sharing and use of MS RA plans and ideas exchange databases

Chair Sérgio Potier Rodeia gave the floor to **Beatriz Llarena Martínez (Spain)** for a brief presentation on the evolution of the TMA "Monitoring and assessing the potential impact of the introduction of the invasive weed teosinte on maize cultivation in the EU", from the idea conceived in the EU-RAA to a prioritized TMA.

4.3 Who, what, when, where and why to collaborate

Chair Julia Finger introduced the panel discussion, a new element intended to raise the added value of the FP meeting and gave the floor to **moderator Sérgio Potier Rodeia** to kick-off the discussion.

Moderator Sérgio Potier Rodeia introduced the panel participants and kicked-off the discussion with the participation of **Gorgias Garofalakis (EFSA)** and **Victor Lopez (EFSA)**, on cooperation and how this can occur with the new platform "Risk Assessment Initiatives Hub", further supporting MS priorities (MS RA plans) and partnerships (collaboration proposals).

Key takeaways:

- The digital platform EFSA has had to capture MS RA plans and formulate an EU Risk Assessment Agenda has proven to be useful, even though the EU-RAA database had no dedicated resource stream and no clear framing on how to address the type/content of the ideas there, which was something to improve.
- We will all benefit more by having a centralised space where the MS interests are recorded. EFSA finds that information of great value and it helps to enable the cooperation by creating the right tools to reach the MS objectives.
- The new platform goes beyond a mere face-lift. From a technology perspective, it brings information to the platform that holds an increasing amount of data on competent organisations, consultations, etc. The platform should also offer a unified experience to the FP users. From a function perspective, this will make entries more visible inside EFSA and across MS, e.g., via better classification and search options. Finally, for risk assessment initiatives, proponents can now clearly explain the intention of their proposal, which is a notable change.
- The hub brings added value; every MS gain immediate visibility through the active use of the Hub, a space where country priorities can be formally captured as "plans" or "project ideas". Users, such as the FPs, can customize the way in which they receive notifications, to be more or less active based on their capacities. The Hub allows as well to select implementation pathways, and to adjust these through the operation, and to search for potential partners autonomously.
- This platform complements the infrastructure available (MS Teams, face to face-to-face discussions, etc) by offering focused exchanges, discoverability and transparency in the work that the MS enter or propose.
- The information expected to be registered at the Risk Assessment Plans is any important or urgent topic on which MS want to communicate an interest from their



country. It could be that they will conduct R.A. yourselves, to highlight a subject where they foresee the need to properly inform policy makers with information upcoming from R.A. activities done by EFSA or other MS, or ongoing/upcoming assessments mandated at the national level (which could trigger help from other actors).

4.4 Introduction of the new digital platform, its aim and functionalities

4.5 DEMO and Q&A session on the platform's operational use

Chair Sérgio Potier Rodeia gave the floor to **Cristina Alonso Andicoberry (EFSA)**, **Andrea Nironi (EFSA)** and **Jacopo Alabiso (EFSA)** to run the session on the demo of the new Hub that will allow to hands-on training in the afternoon session.

4.6 Raising awareness of opportunities given by the platform

Chair Sérgio Potier Rodeia gave the floor to **Julia Finger** to introduce the breakout groups exercise and the discussion items.

Next 1.5 h is dedicated to the interactive breakout group activity to explore opportunities given by platform, path from idea to funded project, raising awareness of the database at national level and cooperation with other FP/MS.

4.7 Pitches on main findings from breakout group discussion

Chair Julia Finger gave the floor to the groups' rapporteurs to pitch their main findings from the group discussion.

4.8 Strategic conclusions

Chair Julia Finger gave the floor to **Sérgio Potier Rodeia** to provide a summary with the main key words from the pitches heard and conclusions on how the platform can be the collaboration tool supporting novel cooperation mechanisms such as joint programming, MS priorities setting, and long-term partnerships.

Chair Sérgio Potier Rodeia closed the meeting, thanking everyone for the very intense meeting and invited the FPs to the next meeting in September, online.

Annex I. Summary of the Action Points:

Action 1	EFSA	to share placeholder to AF and FP for the workshop on FP framework Health Check (4-5 November)
Action 2	FP	to support FP framework Health Check by gathering feedback from their national institutions on current framework
Action 3	EFSA	to share summary of input received during Networking Session (Thematic Islands).
Action 4	FP	to support transfer of information to new collaboration hub (checking transferred information, assuring quality check of transferred records)
Action 5	EFSA	to provide further opportunities to clarify questions related to use of collaboration hub
Action 6	FP	to check the EU risk assessment agenda

