

# Scientific Network for Zoonoses Monitoring Data

## Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> specific meeting on WGS joint with FBO



13-14 October 2025

13:30-18:00 / 08:30-12:00

Minutes agreed on 30 October 2025

**Location:** EFSA - Parma (Board Room 00/M10A + 00/M10B) and Webconference

### Attendees:

- Network Participants:

Country	Member State Organisation
Austria	Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety
Belgium	Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain
Croatia	Croatian Agency for Agriculture and Food (HAPIH)
Cyprus	Veterinary Services
Czech Republic	SVI Prague; State Veterinary Administration of the Czech Republic (SVA)
Denmark	Technical University of Denmark - National Food Institute (DTU)
Estonia	Agriculture and Food Board
Finland	Finnish Food Authority
France	French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES)
Germany	Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL); German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, BfR
Greece	Ministry of Rural Development and Food; Hellenic National Public Health Organisation
Iceland	Icelandic Food and Veterinary Authority (MAST)
Ireland	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Italy	Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie; Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale"; Istituto Superiore di Sanità
Latvia	Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment BIOR; Food and Veterinary Service of the Republic of Latvia
Lithuania	National Food and Veterinary Risk Assessment Institute
Luxembourg	National de Santé (LNS)
Malta	Animal Health and Welfare Department
Netherlands	Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA)
Norway	Norwegian Veterinary Institute
Poland	National Institute of Public Health; National Veterinary Research Institute



Portugal	Instituto Nacional de Saúde Doutor Ricardo Jorge (INSA); DGAV; Autoridade de Segurança Alimentar e Económica (ASAE)
Romania	National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority (ANSVSA)
Slovak Republic	State Veterinary and Food Administration of Slovak Republic (SVPS)
Slovenia	University of Ljubljana, Veterinary Faculty; NIJZ; Ministry of agriculture, forestry and food of the Republic of Slovenia, Administration for food safety, veterinary sector and plant protection
Spain	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Agencia Española de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutrición (AESAN)
Sweden	Swedish Veterinary Agency (SVA)

- **Observers:**  
Competent authority (Switzerland); Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office, Swiss Reference Laboratory for AMR and Zoonoses, Institute of Veterinary Bacteriology, University of Bern
- **European Commission:** SANTE G5, EURL *Listeria*, EURL *Salmonella*, EURL *Campylobacter*
- **Other EU Agencies representatives:** ECDC
- **EFSA:**  
BIOHAW Unit: Beatriz Guerra, Eleonora Sarno, Frank Verdonck, Giusi Amore, Laura Cabral, Mirko Rossi (Chair), Nuria Ferrer, Valentina Rizzi  
IDATA Unit: Anca Violetta Stoicescu, George Kritikos

## 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Bulgaria and Hungary.

## 2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

## 3. Agreement of the minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Network on WGS held on 14-15 October 2024, hybrid.

The minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Network meeting had been previously agreed by written procedure on 30 October 2024 and published on the EFSA website on the same day.

All the action points for EFSA identified at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Network meeting were closed and the results of the actions presented.

- **AP1** (*To discuss with Inter-EURL working group on NGS the coordination with data provider organizations*) EFSA informed the Inter-EURL WG about the request to ensure that NRLs coordinate at national level also with EFSA data providers.



- **AP2** (*To revise the Foodex2 classification of "chicken neck skin" as non-food matrix*) EFSA plans the release of a dedicated hierarchy for WGS and FBO of the MTX catalogue in 2026.
- **AP3** (*Review training material of the EFSA One Health WGS system and send to all users*) Training material is reviewed on quarterly basis and available in the dedicated [TEAMS channel](#) ([Manual](#), open to only data providers and country officers)
- **AP4** (*Send form for feedback on the changes desired by the network in view of the new regulation*) Survey submitted and feedback provided (covered in point 7 current meeting)
- **AP5** (*EFSA to discuss with ECDC about the access of food safety authorities to EpiPulse Events*) Access procedure to EpiPulse for Food Safety Authorities is under discussion with ECDC and it will be clarified in the joint protocol.
- **AP6** (*Draft an info sheet (flow chart) on how EFSA will use tagging to help the network to follow up on relevant clusters before the start of any assessments*) and **AP7** (*Develop use cases for a appropriate way to use tagging by the network and internally by EFSA, establish criteria for tagging*) Both action points were covered in a dedicated webinar in beginning 2025 and in a procedure document shared with the network at the same time. The recording of the webinar and the document is available in the dedicated [TEAMS channel](#) (open to only data providers and country officers).
- **AP8** (*Send protocol for final revision to the network via email*) EFSA and ECDC are significantly revising the text, currently under ECDC internal clearance and consultation with relevant stakeholders. The document will be shared with the network for final consultation before the end of 2025.
- **AP9** (*Send request to display names of people*) Internal discussion deprioritized this request

EFSA reminded the network about the two action points for the network representatives both remaining open: (I) coordination at national level between National Reference Laboratories and Data Provider organizations (II) coordination at national level between Country Officers and RASFF representatives.

#### 4. Intro : Group discussion on data sharing and use

The group exercise was based on the discussion of four sessions (three physical and one online) where all participants discussed three fictional scenarios on preparedness to multi-country foodborne outbreak and genomic surveillance. This exercise had the objective to collect from the participants their opinions about the best data sharing approaches and the strategy applied in their countries as well as to discuss to actions taken, the expected roles of EFSA and ECDC, and the expected countries' reaction.

The first scenario focused on an investigation of a *Listeria* outbreak where an EFSA WGS system user detects a *Listeria* food isolate matching a human cluster from another country, but without access to the country information of the human cases in the EFSA WGS system; in such situations, EFSA can assist by facilitating communication between the relevant countries.

*The strategy to share all/ most data available was considered the best for the early detection of clusters across sectors; unfortunately, this is not the strategy applied in most of the countries, mainly due to constraints on the resources available.*



*The intervention of EFSA as an intermediary between countries and sectors has been considered useful and well received. The importance of the country notification concerning these detected clusters was highlighted in order to increase awareness and stimulate communications and exchange across the sectors. This bilateral exchange is particularly relevant in case of isolates belonging to food items compliant or nationally distributed, not necessarily shared e.g. in the RASFF platform.*

*Based on EFSA input, countries are willing to investigate further and consider the collaboration across countries. Participants in their role of country officers agreed that EFSA provides the public health sector (via ECDC) with their contact details. This can facilitate the bi- and multilateral interactions between countries if further investigations on a detected clusters are needed.*

In the second scenario it was discussed the possibility of requesting genomic data for a food isolate detected during the investigation of a *S. Enteritidis* event, which matched the human cluster and was referenced in EpiPulse but had not been uploaded to the EFSA WGS system.

*It was stressed that food data should primarily be shared on dedicated platforms (or at least at the same time with other platforms). To facilitate an efficient flow of information, participants encouraged the use of the EpiPulse platform to inform about the existence of matching isolates in the joint EFSA-ECDC WGS System under the relevant EpiPulse Event. In the same way, the 'Warning' feature of the EFSA WGS System can be used to inform about the existence of a RASFF notification linked to the matching food isolate.*

*Sharing all profiles is considered the best option as it allows to follow the evolution of the strain (genetic diversity) if detected in different products and allows to share more epidemiological data in support to the events' investigation.*

*If the event is under investigation at national level, some information on the food could be shared but not the sequence. In case of need, the support from EFSA could be requested.*

The third scenario addressed how to initiate human case finding starting from a STEC isolate detected in a food product during the investigation of a multi-country *Salmonella* event involving a company with a wide distribution network.

*There was not a consensus on the types of genomic data to be used for case finding. Some experts proposed the FASTQ, cgMLST profile, FASTA. Other suggested that there is no need to share the sequence, and the following can be used: In-silico serotype, MLST type, STX and other Toxins, Resistotypes. However, it was acknowledged that changes in the sequencing technologies (e.g. from short to long reads) and analytical pipelines could affect the results and the genomic comparisons to be done.*

*These genomic data could be made available in RASFF (by posting the identifier of sequences uploaded in a public repository) or in EpiPulse.*

*In similar events, ECDC can inform its public health network about this event and possibly share the food sequence to search for matches. EFSA can inform about the food isolate (sequence) the food authorities of the countries involved in the distribution of the relevant food company and invite them to collaborate*



*with public health authorities in their country.* In absence of human isolates and before any food information could be shared, the country internal discussion should take place. EFSA was encouraged to liaise with the country officer to inform about the food incident and seek for the permission to share. This could be followed by the country internal discussion for possible sharing (regardless the detail of the information to be shared). In the case of a previous related outbreak (e.g. the *S. Enteritidis* case), the countries originally involved in that outbreak, could be informed directly by EFSA/ECDC about the new findings.

## **5. ECDC updates of the One Health WGS system (including cluster detection and nomenclature)**

ECDC presented its WGS system, with a focus on the EpiPulse Case, EpiPulse Events, and the EpiPulse Molecular Typing Tool. In EpiPulse Case, MS can submit both metadata and WGS data (including raw reads and assemblies) associated with isolates, either via the user interface (UI) or through an API. Additionally, ECDC screens public repositories and manually imports assemblies shared by MS during outbreak events reported in EpiPulse Events. The submitted data are analyzed in the Azure cloud using an end-to-end Nextflow bioinformatics pipeline, which is compatible with EFSA's pipeline. The pipeline uses chewBBACA as the allele caller. Results from cluster analyses are visualized through the EpiPulse Molecular Typing Tool. To date, approximately 7,500 sequences of *Listeria monocytogenes* from 32 countries and 14,000 sequences of *Salmonella enterica* from 34 countries have been processed and included in the ECDC database. However, data contributions are uneven, with a few countries accounting for more than half of the total entries. The presentation also covered the cluster detection process, including definitions of core and extended clusters, the ECDC cgMLST address (refers to the classification of a genomic profile into five distinct categories – bins –, based on varying thresholds of genetic similarity), and overall statistics on clusters detected for *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella enterica*. Further, the integration with the EFSA WGS system was showcased, highlighting how cross-sectoral cluster detection and investigation are supported. The presentation included details on how the One Health system is embedded within EpiPulse Events during event reporting by MS. Finally, ECDC addressed challenges in data generation and sharing from the public health sector, emphasizing financial constraints and the reduced availability of isolates due to the growing use of point-of-care PCR-based diagnostic tools. Proposed mitigation actions included legislative interventions, training, and technical support. ECDC showcased its genomic epidemiology training program, [GenEpi-BioTrain](#), aimed at strengthening capacity in genomic data analysis and interpretation across public health sectors.

In response to questions from participants, ECDC provided clarifications on several aspects of its system. These included the permanent storage and data retention policies, the ECDC cgMLST address, and the procedures for data querying during outbreak events. It was explained that ECDC routinely performs data searches during ongoing outbreaks to support timely cluster identification and monitoring. Additionally, EFSA clarified how EFSA WGS system distinguishes between *ad hoc* queries and systematic automated queries originating from ECDC. This distinction is





important for understanding the nature and frequency of data access during outbreak investigations or routine surveillance.

## 6. EFSA-ECDC data exchange update

EFSA provided an overview of recent developments and performance metrics related to its WGS system. A key highlight was the significant increase in data submissions following the publication of new regulation, even before it officially came into force. Monthly uploads have nearly doubled, reaching around 200, with over 5,000 total uploads—96% of which passed quality checks. However, data contributions remain uneven across Member States, with a few countries accounting for over 70% of the total data.

EFSA emphasized its efforts to streamline data integration by automatically importing food, animal, and environmental data from public repositories like NCBI since March 2025. This aims to create a “single-shop” platform for outbreak investigations, reducing the need for multiple queries. Public data in the system are used solely to populate cluster diversity and do not contribute to assessments unless accompanied by validated metadata from national authorities.

The update also included a pathogen-by-pathogen breakdown, showing which countries are leading in data submissions for *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella enterica*, and *E. coli*. Moreover, a detailed overview of the data was provided, focusing on typing information and sample matrices. The most frequently submitted sequence types (STs) and serovars were identified, with certain STs dominating due to recent outbreak investigations or targeted data calls. Sample matrices were also analysed, showing that the majority of data come from non-food sources, mammal and bird meat, and poultry. Specific food types such as fish, herbs, sprouts, and seeds—though less represented—were noted for their relevance in certain investigations.

Finally, EFSA discussed system improvements in response to user feedback, including the planned implementation of batch editing and enhanced programmatic data submission. A new plugin now allows users to submit FASTQ files directly to NCBI from the EFSA system and claim ownership, simplifying the publication process. However, EFSA clarified that the system is not intended for routine research data management, but rather for targeted public health use.

At the end of the presentation, EFSA introduced a voting session regarding a request from ECDC on metadata sharing. The proposal was to allow full metadata sharing for clusters already under assessment, ensuring that any new elements linked to those clusters would be automatically transferred to ECDC. Participants were invited to vote via an online tool, with both in-person and remote attendees included. The question was straightforward: whether to agree to keep full metadata sharing open for assessed clusters. The outcome showed clear support from the network, with 28 out of 33 participants voting in favour. This decision confirms the network’s commitment to enhancing collaboration and transparency in outbreak investigations.

## 7. Commission Implementing Regulation 2025/179

EFSA presented the scope and requirements of the new Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/179, which mandates the use of WGS for foodborne outbreak investigations involving key foodborne pathogens: *Salmonella enterica*, *Listeria*



*monocytogenes*, *Escherichia coli*, and *Campylobacter jejuni/coli*. The regulation applies to isolates from food, feed, animals, and related environments that are associated or suspected to be associated with outbreaks. WGS must be performed in ISO 17025-accredited laboratories, and both sequence data and metadata must be submitted to EFSA without undue delay.

The metadata requirements include existing fields such as sample ID, pathogen species, sampling date, and country, as well as new mandatory elements: the Outbreak Investigation ID and the RASFF notification number. These additions aim to improve traceability and linkage between laboratory findings and outbreak events. EFSA showed how these fields will be integrated into the system in a major system update planned for Summer 2026, and explained the logic for assigning outbreak IDs, even in cases where the outbreak is not national (e.g., cross-border investigations).

The planned change will introduce a clear separation between voluntary and mandatory submission workflows. Mandatory submissions will be required for entries falling under the scope of the regulation, starting from 23 August 2026. The system will support expanded data types (FASTQ, assembly FASTA, cgMLST profiles), enhanced metadata, and robust transmission via both UI and API. A new user role will be introduced (i.e. 'submitter') to allow data submission on behalf of other organisations, with appropriate approval mechanisms to ensure data protection.

During the discussion, participants raised questions about metadata download options, batch editing, and the ability to test submissions before formal transmission. EFSA confirmed that a testing mode is under development, allowing users to simulate submissions, run the bioinformatics pipeline, and test editing functionalities. This will support both manual and programmatic workflows and help users gain confidence in using the system.

To support the transition, EFSA outlined a change management plan including the publication of new guidelines by December 2025, the formation of a champion group (Nov 2025–Mar 2026) to test and refine implementation strategies and finally the running of a series of webinars and training sessions from March to August 2026.

The champion group includes experienced users from several Member States and will play a key role in peer-to-peer support and feedback.

## **8. Community development effort relevant for EFSA WGS data collection**

EFSA opened the session by highlighting the complexity of the WGS data collection process, which involves not only raw reads and assemblies but also quality control and profile generation. EFSA stressed that the success of the system depends on a shared understanding across the network of what constitutes acceptable data quality. To avoid discrepancies between EFSA's automated checks and Member States' interpretations, there is a need to establish minimum standards that are broadly accepted and aligned with regulatory obligations.

Crucially, EFSA emphasized that this challenge cannot be addressed by EFSA alone. Instead, it called for a community-based implementation approach, where Member States can contribute, according to their capacities, with innovative solutions tailored to their national contexts. These contributions should be shared within the network



to foster a peer-to-peer virtuous support cycle. To facilitate this, EFSA is leveraging the champion group, composed of experienced representatives from selected Member States, to help test solutions, share best practices, and support others in implementing improvements. EFSA encouraged collaboration on defining quality standards for assemblies, distributing protocols for generating correct assemblies from different sequencing technologies, and ensuring that profiles generated from diverse platforms remain compatible with EFSA's system. The overarching goal is to build a resilient and adaptive community that supports continuous improvement of the WGS data collection system across the EU.

#### 8.1 ONT based cgMLST profile generation compatible with EFSA WGS data collection (Germany)

Germany presented findings from a comprehensive study on the use of Oxford Nanopore Technologies (ONT) for generating cgMLST profiles compatible with EFSA WGS system. The presentation addressed both the potential and the challenges of integrating ONT data into routine surveillance workflows. The core of the presentation focused on a large-scale precision study comparing ONT data to Illumina gold-standard assemblies across four pathogens: *Campylobacter* spp., *E. coli*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Salmonella enterica*. Using the latest basecalling model (SUP via Dorado), assemblies were generated with Flye and polished with Medaka. Allele calling was performed using chewBBACA via the chewieSnake pipeline. The study assessed allele distances between ONT and Illumina assemblies, showing high compatibility. Further analysis revealed that coverage depth (>30x), genome completeness (>90%), and long-read polishing are key factors for achieving high-quality assemblies. The impact of polishing strategies was presented, noting that Medaka polishing improved results in 11–28% of cases but could also introduce deterioration in a small percentage. The presentation concluded with a proposal for quality metrics tailored to long-read data, and a demonstration of how ONT data could be integrated into EFSA's API and bioinformatics pipeline. Germany advocated for transparent reporting of sequencing parameters (e.g., flowcell version, basecalling model, assembler used) to support reproducibility and data validation. The follow up discussion with the network focused on practical aspects of using ONT-based assemblies for routine surveillance. The network expressed strong interest in collaborative validation of ONT data and welcomed the idea of sharing protocols and experiences to improve consistency and confidence in data quality.

### **9. Discussion on data submission in the context of Commission Implementing Regulation 2025/179: WGS data and FBO annual reporting**

EFSA emphasized the strategic importance of aligning the WGS data collection with FBO annual reporting process, especially in light of the upcoming Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/179. The regulation introduces mandatory sequencing and data submission for outbreak-related isolates, reinforcing the need for closer collaboration between the WGS and FBO subgroups. EFSA highlighted that the two data streams are intrinsically interconnected and that linking them will enhance the effectiveness of outbreak investigations and reporting. EFSA provided an overview of the FBO data model, explaining how it already includes elements that can be linked to WGS data, such as the national outbreak code and the raw reads ID.





These fields are intended to integrate outbreak reports and sequencing data. However, the sequencing data might refer to both human and food reference sequencing information and it is not directly related to the new WGS data collection linked to the new regulation. The discussion focused on the introduction of a new linking element: the Outbreak Investigation ID, which is already used in the WGS system and proposed for integration into the FBO reporting framework.

Participants discussed several technical and procedural challenges related to this integration:

- The need to manage versioning of outbreak IDs over time, especially when new data become available, or investigations evolve.
- Ensuring consistency in how outbreak IDs are assigned and maintained across both systems.
- The need to ensure coordination between country officers and reporting officers, particularly in cases where outbreak data and sequencing data are managed by different teams or institutions.

EFSA acknowledged these concerns and proposed a phased approach to implementation. Rather than enforcing immediate integration, EFSA will postpone the formal linkage between the WGS and FBO data collections to the 2026 data collection cycle (in 2027). This decision will allow time to complete the discussion with the network and ensure the right technical and operational approach is adopted.

To support this process, EFSA will launch a survey to the network aimed at identifying potential drawbacks, technical limitations, and practical solutions. The feedback will inform the design of the integration and help ensure that the system meets the needs of all MSs.

## 10. Tailored made activities

Sweden, through the Swedish Veterinary Agency, is leading an EFSA tailor-made project focused on improving the use of WGS data for *Salmonella* Enteritidis outbreak investigations. *Salmonella* Enteritidis (SE) is the most common serovar among EU-acquired cases of human salmonellosis. Poultry products and particularly eggs are the main sources of infection, with SE being more likely to be transmitted internally in egg contents compared to other serovars. SE associated with poultry form globally distributed clonal populations characterized by very low genetic variability, posing challenges for molecular surveillance and outbreak investigation. The EFSA tailor-made activity project "Use of inter- and intrasectoral WGS comparisons for mapping sources and spread of *Salmonella* Enteritidis" aims to meet this challenge by characterizing the genetic variability of SE across sectors (i.e. human and food/poultry) using the EFSA/ECDC One Health WGS System. Genomic epidemiology data will be correlated with traditional mapping of contacts and trade networks as well as identification of likely poultry-derived cases of illness among humans. The aims of the project are to expand the WGS database, gain a better understanding of SE transmission routes, optimize cluster detection and analysis methodology and highlight both the possibilities and limitations of using WGS data in outbreak investigations when pathogen genetic variability is low. The project is a collaboration between the human and vet/food sectors in Sweden, Denmark, and Belgium, and is currently ongoing with data collection approaching completion. A seminar and report presenting the results are planned for 2026.



The meeting featured a presentation from DTU (Technical University of Denmark) on the EFSA Tailor-Made Project “Cross member state collaboration and development for improved outbreak investigation, preparedness and sharing of Whole Genome Sequences in the EU”, a two-year initiative aimed at supporting Member States in overcoming barriers to compliance with the new regulation. The project, involving partners from Denmark, Germany, Italy, and France, seeks to identify legal, technical, and operational gaps through surveys and workshops. A key milestone is the upcoming workshop in November 2025, which will focus on outbreak investigation practices and data sharing challenges. The project aims to produce guidelines and recommendations based on its findings.

## 11. Any Other Business

- During the open discussion, a concern was raised regarding laboratory accreditation requirements under the new regulation. Specifically, some laboratories performing sequencing for public health purposes are accredited under medical ISO standards, not the food safety-specific ISO 17025 standard referenced in the regulation. EFSA clarified that there is a transitional period (likely two years) during which data can be submitted while accreditation is being pursued. Additionally, it was noted that the European Commission is exploring the possibility of recognizing public health accreditation standards for food safety purposes. [A call for evidence](#), within the “EU Food and Feed Safety – simplification omnibus”<sup>1</sup>, including this topic was mentioned (deadline for contributions closed the same day of the meeting). The session concluded with encouragement for Member States to engage in ongoing initiatives, including the EFSA Tailor-Made Project and the accreditation discussion, to ensure readiness for the regulation’s full implementation in August 2026.
- The network members agreed to organise the 2026 network meeting side-by-side with the main zoonoses network meeting in Parma on 12-13 October 2026.

## 12. Conclusions

- All participants, both online and in person, actively contributed to the group discussion, which highlighted several strengths as well as areas for improvement. Below are the main conclusions drawn from the discussion:
  - **Sharing contact details:** The majority of participants agreed that sharing contact information would facilitate bilateral interactions between countries and sectors. An action point for EFSA is to contact each country officer and agree on a tailored approach (Action Point 4).
  - **Coordination by EFSA and ECDC:** Most participants acknowledged that coordination efforts by EFSA and ECDC can support bilateral interactions between countries, especially when cross-sectoral matches are identified through the EFSA and ECDC One Health WGS system. The network has shown clear support for this approach.
  - **Data sharing practices:** There was broad agreement that the preferred approach to data sharing is to exchange all available data from both sectors. However, despite being the ideal method, several

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<sup>1</sup> [Food and feed safety – simplification omnibus](#)



- constraints—both financial and organizational—limit the ability of countries to implement this strategy fully.
- **Human case finding from food isolate data:** There was no clear consensus on best practices for identifying human cases based on food isolate information. Further discussion is needed. For now, the recommended approach is to assess each case individually and ensure that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process.
  - The network supported the continued full sharing of metadata for assessed clusters, reinforcing its commitment to collaboration and transparency in outbreak investigations.
  - Based on feedback from the network, a refactoring of the EFSA WGS system is currently underway. A change management process will be supported by a series of webinars and training sessions throughout 2026, and strengthened by the establishment of a champions group—comprising experienced users from several Member States—which will play a key role in testing the new workflows, refining implementation strategies, and providing peer-to-peer support during the transition.
  - EFSA is leveraging the champions group to help test new solutions, share best practices across the network of Member States—such as assessing assembly quality from different sequencing technologies and generating cgMLST profiles compatible with the EFSA WGS system— aiming for an improved interaction between Member States and EFSA in the collection and submission of WGS data.
  - The network agreed on the strategic importance of linking the WGS data collection with the FBO reporting framework to improve outbreak traceability and data integration. However, the correct procedures and technical solutions require further analysis. Therefore, any changes to the FBO data collection related to this alignment will be applied starting with the 2027 data collection (submitted in 2028). EFSA will launch a survey to gather feedback from Member States on potential challenges and practical solutions for linking WGS and FBO data, which will guide the design and implementation of the integration (Action Point 5).

### 13. Closure of the meeting

The chair thanked the network representatives for the intensive and productive meeting and closed the meeting at 12:00 CET.



## APPENDIX I: List of Action Points

List of action points agreed at the meeting

No	Agenda Point	Action point	Deadline	Actor
1	3	To release a dedicated hierarchy for WGS and FBO of the MTX catalogue in 2026.	October 2026	EFSA
2	3	Send protocol for final revision to the network via email	November/December 2025	EFSA
3	4	To contact each country officer and agree on a tailored approach for sharing contact details during genomic surveillance activities	January – March 2026	EFSA
5	9	To launch a survey to gather feedback from Member States on potential challenges and practical solutions for linking WGS and FBO data, which will guide the design and implementation of the integration for the 2027 data collection	January 2026	EFSA