

**Location:** teleconference

**Attendees:**

○ Panel Members:

ALVAREZ Julio, BOKLUND Anette, DIPPEL Sabine, DÓREA Fernanda, FIGUEROLA Jordi, HERSKIN Mette, MICHEL Virginie, MIRANDA CHUECA Miguel Ángel, NANNONI Eleonora, NIELSEN Søren Saxmose, NONNO Romolo, RIBER Anja, STAHL Karl, STEGEMAN Arjan, THULKE Hans-Hermann, TUYTTENS Frank, WINCKLER Christoph

○ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

EC: ALAEZ PONZ Ester, COHEN Iulia Delia, TOFT HOLM Lærke.

○ EFSA:

ALARCON Evelyn, ASHE Sean, AZNAR ASENSIO J Inmaculada, BALDINELLI Francesca, BALTUSYTE Ieva, BENEDETTI Beatrice, CANDIANI Denise Francesca, CARO Eleonora, FABRIS Chiara, GERVELMEYER Andrea, GULUZADE Gulnara, KONDRASHOVA Julia, KOHNLE Lisa, KONDRASHOVA Julia, LIMA Eliana, LOPEZ Aitana, MANAKIDOU Aikaterini, MELO Miguel, ROJO GIMENO Cristina, STOCKER Anna Sophia, VAN DER STEDE Yves, VERDONCK Frank, VITALI Marika, ZANCANARO Gabriele

○ Others:

Not Applicable

## **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The chair welcomed the participants. No apologies were received.

## **2. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted without changes.

## **3. Declarations of Interest of Panel members**

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence<sup>1</sup> and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management<sup>2</sup>, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled by the Panel members invited to the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the members at the beginning of this meeting.

## **4. Agreement of the minutes of the 168<sup>th</sup> Panel plenary meeting held on 19 November 2025**

The minutes of the 168<sup>th</sup> Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2025.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf](https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf](https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf)



## 5. Report on written procedure

The technical report reviewing the most common housing systems and practices of keeping turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo gallopavo*) (Art 31) was unanimously endorsed by the Panel.

## 6. Scientific output submitted for adoption/discussion

### 6.1 Art. 29- Draft Scientific Opinion on the welfare of turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo gallopavo*) on farm (EFSA-Q-2023-00647)

The draft scientific opinion was submitted to the panel for adoption. The Panel's comments and reviews to the Draft Scientific Opinion on the Welfare of turkeys on farm were addressed prior to the plenary meeting. At the plenary meeting, the Panel discussed and agreed on the proposed modifications of the text and the opinion was unanimously adopted.

### 6.2 Art.29 – BSE Surveillance ([EFSA-Q-2025-00443](#))

The draft Scientific Opinion was submitted to the Panel for first reading. The Panel commented that work was needed on the clarity and consistency of the narrative along with the structure of the Scientific Opinion with particular reference to the background and methodology sections. Long complex sections such as the description of the BSE back calculation model were suggested to be moved in an Annex with a suitable summary in the methodology. It was agreed that any SWOT analysis should be within scope and also be placed in an Annex with any appropriate insight placed in the text of the Opinion.

### 6.3 Art. 29 Request for a Scientific Opinion on the use of Diathermic Syncope for stunning Cattle ([EFSA-2023-00085](#))

The draft Scientific Opinion was submitted to the Panel for thorough discussion. Productive discussions took place. It was agreed to emphasize the limited knowledge on the interpretation of the stepping behaviour as an ABM indicative of welfare consequences. Other suggestions from the panel were: to explain briefly in parenthesis any specific terminology that is not so known, to renumber the sub-sections of the Scientific Studies submitted for easier reading, and to remove unnecessary figures. The Opinion will be submitted to the Panel in January for adoption.

## 7. Other scientific topics for information/discussion

### 7.1 Kernel model, development of a RA model in absence of population data

The EFSA project NP/EFSA/BIOHAW/2024/07 – Spatial transmission risk model using outbreak data only – was presented to the Panel. The spatial model was used by EFSA in different previous mandates/scientific opinion to quantify and explain farm-to-farm disease transmission in time and space and to assess the effect of potential intervention measures. Given difficulties in obtaining detailed population (denominator) data that are required for this analysis, the project served as pilot to quantify transmission parameters using case data only. The results of a 'standard' model estimation using full data were compared with those of the cases-only approach. So far, the cases-only estimation approach has produced inaccurate results. The alternative to a cases-only estimation, using coarse-grained denominator data together with the case data, was also preliminary assessed and presented. Future work would be needed to further explore the latter approach.

### 7.2 Annual report on avian influenza and surveillance activities in Member States in 2024

The report presented an overview of avian influenza surveillance activities conducted in 2024 under the Avian Influenza Data Collection (AIDC), the EU4Health One Health initiatives, and the SENTINEL project. Surveillance covered poultry, captive and wild birds, and mammals in EU Member States and selected non-EU countries and included a summary of outbreaks reported



through the Animal Disease Information System (ADIS). Risk-based surveillance focused on the detection of highly pathogenic and low pathogenic avian influenza viruses, early warning, and assessment of zoonotic potential. In 2024, extensive data were submitted across all surveillance streams, with HPAIV detections reported in poultry, captive birds, wild birds, and mammals, predominantly during the first quarter and mainly associated with subtype H5N1. Numerous outbreaks were reported in both EU and non-EU countries, with wild birds accounting for the majority of detections.

## **8 AOB**

The Panel was informed about the Call for Data launched by EFSA on 28 November 2025 in relation to the new mandate received and the electrical head-only stunning of heavy pigs ([M-2025-00139](#)). The link to the call was provided<sup>3</sup>, and the submission deadline was communicated. Panel members were invited to disseminate the information to their contacts and to potentially interested stakeholders.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/call/call-data-head-only-electrical-stunning-heavy-pigs>