

60th Focal Point Meeting

Location : online

Chair: Victoria Villamar / Sérgio Potier-Rodeia / Cristina Alonso Andicoberry

Attendees:

| Last name | First name | Member state |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Meusburger | Lukas | Austria |
| Boyen | Jens | Belgium |
| Polihronova | Lilyana | Bulgaria |
| Buzjak Služek | Vlatka | Croatia |
| Lendic | Barbara | Croatia |
| Stavroulakis | Georgios | Cyprus |
| Brychta | Vladimir | Czech Republic |
| Mizova | Alexandra | Czech Republic |
| Rejman | Lukas | Czech Republic |
| Beltoft | Vibe | Denmark |
| Lund Diemer | Sanna | Denmark |
| Priisalu | Piret | Estonia |
| Aleksasin | Allan | Estonia |
| Siekkinen | Kirsi-Maarit | Finland |
| Bahuon | Celine | France |
| Bultel | Coralie | France |
| Contreras | Samuel | France |
| Schoene | Julia | Germany |
| Friese | Sharleen | Germany |
| Papanastasiou | Danai | Greece |
| Tzoumanika | Foteini | Greece |
| Prisztóka | Renáta | Hungary |
| Tamás | Tamara | Hungary |
| Olafsson | Grimur | Iceland |
| Redmond | Gráinne | Ireland |
| Perrella | Alessandra | Italy |
| D'Archivo | Massimo | Italy |
| Marcone | Maria Felicita | Italy |
| Ciekure | Elina | Latvia |
| Siksna | Inese | Latvia |



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|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Vilkoicaitė | Agnė | Lithuania |
| Pisani | Giannella | Malta |
| Inguanez | Lara | Malta |
| van der Lugt | Timme | Netherlands |
| Kox | Linda | Netherlands |
| Solstad | Gisle | Norway |
| Yaa Boahene | Nana | Norway |
| Baraniak | Justyna | Poland |
| Jurczynska | Liliana | Poland |
| Monteiro | Sarogini | Portugal |
| Nabais | Pedro | Portugal |
| Rădulescu | Simona | Romania |
| Dringušová | Gabriela | Slovakia |
| Lépesová | Kristina | Slovakia |
| Janzekovic | Matej | Slovenia |
| Calderon | Vicente | Spain |
| Paterson | Emma | Sweden |
| Nyberg | Karin | Sweden |
| Widenfalk | Anneli | Sweden |

| Last name | First name | Observer country |
|-----------|------------|------------------------|
| Paluka | Valbona | Albania |
| Vidacak | Dalibor | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| Dibrani | Yllka | Kosovo ¹ |
| Joheski | Martin | North Macedonia |
| Lekic | Mirjana | Montenegro |
| Dukic | Nadezda | Serbia |
| Engeli | Barbara | Switzerland |
| Hanci | Serap | Türkiye |

| EFSA Representatives | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Victoria Villamar (Chair) | Potier-Rodeia Sergio (Chair) |
| Cristina Alonso Andicoberry (FP Team, speaker) | Andrea Laroni, (FP team, speaker) |

¹ Kosovo - This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



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| Julia Miriam Finger (FP Team, speaker) | Ana Tasheva (FP Team, speaker) |
| Andrea Nironi (COM Unit, speaker) | Monica Ingeaua (KNOW Unit, speaker) |
| Raquel Garcia Matas (KNOW Unit, speaker) | Martina Kurisova (KNOW Unit, speaker) |
| Giovanni Mancarella (COM Unit, speaker) | Cinzia Percivaldi (ENREL Unit, speaker) |
| Patricia Romero (FDP Unit, speaker) | Sofie Schryvers (FEEDCO Unit, speaker) |
| Bernard Bottex (KNOW Unit, speaker) | Angelo Maggiore (KNOW Unit, speaker) |
| Sanja Ilieva (ENREL Unit, speaker) | |

58 participants attended the meeting, representing Focal Point (FP) network members and alternates from MS, Iceland and Norway, as well as observers from Switzerland and IPA countries.

OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Chair, Victoria Villamar, opened the 60th Focal Point meeting and welcomed the participants to the first FP meeting of 2026, held online over two mornings (25 - 26 February).

She welcomed the new members and alternates of the Focal Point community: Stefan Grigorov (Bulgaria); Sanna Lund Diemer (Denmark); Sharleen Freise (Germany); Maria Felicità Marcone (Italy); Caroline Frechard (Luxembourg); Nana Yaa Boahene (Norway); and Pedro Nabais (Portugal).

The **Chair** expressed enthusiasm for the two mornings ahead and introduced the agenda topics for the two-day event. The Focal Points were invited to raise any new items to be discussed under AOB. It was adopted without any amendments.

The Chair gave the floor to **Cristina Alonso Andicoberry (EFSA)** for a short recap on the action points stemming from the 59th FP meeting, held in September 2025. All five action points were confirmed as completed.

1. HEALTH CHECK – UPDATE OF THE TASK FORCE

The Chair opened the agenda point, introducing EFSA’s strategic drivers, which were recently presented by the EFSA’s Executive Director - Speed, Innovation and Joining Forces/Partnerships. These drivers will guide the development of the next Focal Point Operational Framework, together with Member State’s needs.

The Chair gave the floor to **Gisle Solstad (Norway) and Julia Finger (EFSA)**.

This session aimed to introduce the set-up and planning of the Task Force (TF) that is working on the co-creation of the next Focal Point Operational Framework.

The presentation informed on the composition of the Task Force, the mission and vision, and scope of the TF work. It outlined the shift from the current five working areas towards the existing three functional pillars (Support, Connect, Incubate). Discussions also addressed the potential repositioning the risk communication tasks outside the FP framework.



The Focal Points were further presented with the Task Force’s high-level working approach, and particularly the AS-IS to TO-BE model, whereas the group is currently conducting the AS-IS analysis.

The session concluded with a Slido survey capturing reflection on the current FP roles and future priorities.

Chair Victoria Villamar handed over the chairing role to **Sérgio Potier-Rodeia**.

2. FOCAL POINT FRAMEWORK ACTIVITIES

2.1 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

Chair Sérgio Potier-Rodeia gave the floor to **Ana Tasheva (EFSA)**.

This presentation communicated the outcome of the reporting of Principal Activities for 2025, which took place in the month of January. It provided insights into the least and most selected activities, echoing the feedback received during the AF-FP Workshop in November 2025. The presentation also delved into the planning exercise for 2026, supported by a brief retrospective overview of the 2024-2025 planning cycles.

The agenda point concluded with the announcement that the planning and reporting instructions in the FP SharePoint have been revised to streamline the procedures and address recurring challenges and feedback received.

2.2 TAILOR-MADE ACTIVITIES

The Chair gave the floor to **Andrea Laroni (EFSA)**.

This session focused on the TMA reporting procedure, including submission of deliverables, payment request letters, and final notifications. Key novelties of the 2026 TMA cycle were presented, alongside an overview of concluding activities.

Specific attention was given to the eligibility conditions linked to the expiry of the Framework Partnership Agreements (end of 2027) and of their 6-month buffer periods (harmonised to April 2028 for all FPAs). Proposals exceeding 14 months in duration will not be assessed. The final deadline for TMA submission was confirmed as 15 April 2028.

2.3 UPDATES ON THE RISK ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE HUB

The Chair gave the floor to **Cristina Alonso Andicoberry (EFSA)** and **Andrea Nironi (EFSA)**.

This presentation provided an overview of the enhancements of the RA Initiative Hub, which were implemented in the period of October 2025 – February 2026. Both the submission of collaboration proposals and RA plans received improvements, and a list of the enhancements were presented. A short demonstration illustrated the updated functionalities of the Hub.

Participants shared initial comment and suggestions, which were noted for further improvement and future consideration.



2.4 EFSA'S TRAINING ROADMAP

The Chair gave the floor to **Monica Ingeaua (EFSA)** and **Raquel Garcia Matas (EFSA)**.

The content of the presentation covered EFSA Scientific training programme (STP) set-up concept, its pilot in 2025, and the upcoming 2026 and 2027 STP.

EFSA's Scientific Training Programme (STP) was presented as a structured, multi-annual capacity-building plan for EFSA and the EU. The pilot was set-up and implemented in 2025, during which challenges were identified and addressed in the next 2026 STP. The improvements aim to address the timeline for submission of training needs, prioritisation efforts and information on participation. In this regard, FP are requested to submit their training needs (Principal Activity 3.3) by end of August, allowing timely integration into the 2027 programme.

The presentation concluded announcing that the STP for 2026 is now available, incorporating MSs contribution (8 specific topics) and other areas of knowledge for different groups. The Focal Points were invited to take a look and share their perspectives.

2.5 UPDATE IN MSCC – CYCLE 2026/2027

The Chair gave the floor to **Giovanni Mancarella (EFSA)**.

The presentation started recapping the vision for MSCCs and the journey so far, with 21 countries onboard in 2025. Then went on highlighting the results of a recently conducted survey by EFSA, which indicated added value of the MSCC in their own words, including better planning and coordination, addressing fragmentation, maintaining public trust, increased networking, capacity building, and knowledge sharing.

Examples of activities which took place in 2025 were presented, such as the creation of a "Danube Group", "Oursafefood newsletter" (DE), capacity building initiatives for autonomous communities (ES), Educational package on food safety and food waste (HU), and joint infographics developed (CY and GR).

With regards to the 2026/2027 MSCC cycle, the objectives were confirmed to remain the same (Building bridges, Learning together and Working together). Next actions include a meeting for MSCCs to prepare and present pitches (February); developing partnerships and shaping joint proposals (March – June) and submission of plans (end of August). The second half of the year will be dedicated to providing feedback, approval of reports, and contract signature for the following year.

2.6 STATUS OF THE UPDATE OF THE ART 36 LIST

The Chair gave the floor to **Martina Kurisova (EFSA)**.

This session provided in brief a summary on the ongoing activities of the Focal Points in relation to Art. 36 list update and a reminder for the procedures for its management at national level. Until 20 February 2026, 97% of organisations are updated, which falls within the targeted 0-5% of competent organisation with pending update.

Focal Points are having the key role at national level in maintaining contact with their competent organisations and providing input through EFSA tools. It is advisable to make it regularly,



keeping good practices (i.e. annual updates) and connect with other related activities (as promoting EFSA work programme, national events, campaigns, etc.).

The session concluded requesting FP to share their perspectives and experiences, including engaging in dialogues with Art.36 to identify areas for possible enhancements. A dedicated operational meeting/session on this topic shall be planned to allow the exchange.

3. ENGAGEMENT WITH MS FOR EFSA SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

The **Chair** introduced the session by emphasizing the importance of proactive and continuous engagement with Member States throughout the scientific production process, rather than only at specific request points. Therefore, a block of presentations is prepared in relation to the MSs engagement to contribute to scientific production,

3.2 ENGAGING MEMBER STATES IN RISK ASSESSMENT – GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND ROLE OF THE FP

The Chair gave the floor to **Cinzia Percivaldi (EFSA)**.

The presentation set the scene for this block on engagement with MS by illustrating how engagement is organised through four engagement windows in risk assessment, supported by the ladder of engagement methodology. The presentation focused on the pivotal role of the Focal Points in facilitating MS involvement in EFSA's work. A practical example using the case of the guidance on biomarker effects was used to demonstrate how engagement is operationalized across these windows.

3.3 REGULATED PRODUCTS – MS INVOLVEMENT

The Chair gave the floor to **Patricia Romero (EFSA)**.

The session presented the role of Member States in the processing of applications for regulated products, excluding Pesticides. The presentation delved into the different phases of the applications process, providing concrete details into the role and responsibilities of MS at each stage.

While not under the main tasks of Focal Points, they can have a supportive role to complement the work of the institutions dealing with application procedures. The example of the Health Claims showed how FPs can provide assistance, such as facilitating contact identification at national level.



3.4 GENERIC MANDATES – MICRO- AND NANOPLASTICS REQUESTS

The **Chair** gave the floor to **Sofie Schryvers (EFSA)**.

The session showcased EFSA’s work in the area of micro- and nanoplastics, and specifically focused on the EP mandate on micro- and nanoplastics, which arrived in November 2025. The initiative will follow a One Health approach and will involve collaborations with other agencies, such as ECHA and EMA, and Member States.

In this regard, Focal Points have recently been requested to identify any ongoing, recently completed or planned research and/or assessment work related to any areas covered by the mandate in their countries and provide an entry within the Risk Assessment Initiative Hub. While EFSA’s work is still in its initial phase of mapping member states activities, potential future contributions might include collaborations, partnerships and other types of input. The session ended with the invitation to the Focal Points to submit relevant reports, including links, using the RA Hub.

3.5 ENGAGEMENT IN THE AREA OF EMERGING RISKS/HORIZON SCANNING

The **Chair** gave the floor to **Bernard Bottex (EFSA) and Angelo Maggiore (EFSA)**.

This presentation provided context on the recently made request to Focal Points to provide information on horizon scanning/foresight activities on their national level. The initiative aims at further developing EFSA’s environmental scanning process, which contributes to strategic objective 2 – ensure preparedness for future risk analysis needs of EFSA 2027 Strategy. The topic of AI-designed proteins was presented as an example of the signals analysed under this process. The session further introduced the work done within foresight to anticipate the future food/feed safety landscape and the possible challenges for EFSA to perform its mission.

The presentation ended with the invite to the FP to report organisations involved in horizon scanning/foresight and interested to become part of EFSA’s global collaborative network for preparedness.

Chair Sérgio Potier Rodeia handed over the chairing role to **Cristina Alonso Andicoberry (EFSA)**.

4. FOCAL POINTS NATIONAL EVENT

4.1 NATIONAL EVENT - FRANCE

The **Chair** gave the floor to **Céline Bahuon (Focal Point France)**.

The French Focal Point presented the Annual Meeting of French participants in EFSA scientific networks, which took place on 19th December 2025, online. It presented the main agenda and outline of the event, showcasing the main discussion topics. The event was structured in six agenda items, highlighting its interactive structure and thematic scope.



4.2 NATIONAL EVENT – LITHUANIA

The Chair gave the floor to **Agnė Vilkoicaite (Focal Point Lithuania)**.

This presentation provided an overview of the Lithuanian event for Art. 36 organisation, which took place on December 10th, 2025, in Vilnius. The session introduced novelties on the setup of the meeting, showcasing improvements in interactivity and participants engagement, evident by the positive outcome of the satisfactory survey results.

The Focal Point highlighted several challenges within the environmental risk assessment sector, particularly the need to foster engagement with ministries. This is especially relevant in relation to two key initiatives concerning zoonotic agents' dissemination and vector dissemination, where further attention and support was indicated.

4.3 AESAN'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY AND SATELLITE EVENTS

The Chair gave the floor to **Vicente Calderon (Focal Point Spain)**.

This session announced the celebration of the Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition (AESAN) 25th Anniversary. To mark this milestone, six events in Spanish are planned throughout 2026. In addition, one international conference is envisaged with English translation. It will focus on models for producing Risk Assessment for use in Risk Management in Europe and Latin America. A range of topics will be covered, including science for monitoring, EU food safety regulations and communication and engagement methods. Considering the anniversary, several EFSA scientific network and panel meetings are also expected to take place in Spain in 2026.

Invitations for events have been forwarded to Member States.

5. AOB

5.1 EXPO AND FOCAL POINT MEETING IN MONTENEGRO

Chair Cristina Alonso Andicoberry gave the floor to **Sanja Ilieva (EFSA)**.

The brief presentation announced the block of events in Montenegro, taking place in May – IPA beneficiaries EXPO and 61st Focal Point meeting.

The IPA beneficiaries EXPO begins on the afternoon of 26th May and ends on the afternoon of 27th May. The event will host audiences and speakers from the EU Commission, Chapter 12 Programme managers from EU delegation office in the seven IPA beneficiaries, AF observers, FP members and observers, as well as representatives from the scientific/research community in the seven IPA beneficiaries. It presents an opportunity for direct engagement with diverse actors, support capacity building activities and alignments of future joint initiatives.

The 61st Focal Point meeting will take place two half days, starting after the EXPO event on the 27th and ending in the afternoon on 28th May.



The presentation concluded with the request to the Focal Points to register for the events as soon as the link is available in order to ensure appropriate logistical planning.



ANNEX I. SUMMARY OF THE ACTION POINTS

| Action reference | Who | Action |
|------------------------|-------------|---|
| <u>Action 1</u> | FP | FP to provide feedback on principal activity 3.3., Mapping of training needs, by end of August 2026, as requested by KNOW, to have their requests captured in 2027 EFSA training programme. |
| <u>Action 2</u> | FP | FP to keep providing information to EFSA about activities / potential contacts for follow up in the area of horizon scanning. Specifically for AI-generated proteins, by end of March. |
| <u>Action 3</u> | FP | FP to register themselves for the EXPO and 61st FP meeting in Podgorica, Montenegro, as soon as they receive the link. |
| <u>Action 4</u> | EFSA | EFSA will organise a dedicated meeting/session to facilitate sharing experiences related to engagement with Art 36. list organisations and the List update, and addressing areas where improvements are needed. |