

54th FP Meeting

Location: European Food Safety Authority, Parma

Attendees: Chair Victoria Villamar

Countries	Attendance		
Austria (AT)	Johann Steinwider		
Belgium (BE)	Tom Storms		
Bulgaria (BG)	Lilyana Polihronova	Ekaterina Koeva	
Croatia (HR)	Jasenka Petrič		
Cyprus (CY)	Georgios Stavroulakis		
Czech Republic (CZ)	Petr Beneš		
Denmark (DK)	Vibe Beltoft		
Estonia (EE)	Piret Priisalu		
Finland (FI)	Kirsi-Maarit Siekkinen		
France (FR)	Coralie Bultel	Samuel Contreras	
Germany (DE)	Phoebe Young		
Greece (EL)	Foteini Tzoumanika		
Hungary (HU)	Renáta Prisztóka	Tamara Tamas	
Iceland (IS)	Grímur Ólafsson		
Ireland (IE)	Gráinne Redmond		
Italy (IT)	Alessandra Perrella		
Latvia (LV)	Inese Sikсна	Ilva Lazda	
Lithuania (LT)	Agnė Vilkoicaitė		
Luxembourg (LU)	Miriam Fougeras		
Malta (MT)	Giannella Pisani		
Netherlands (NL)	Timme Van der Lugt		
Norway (NO)	Gisle Solstad		
Poland (PL)	Justyna Baraniak	Liliana Jurczyńska	Monika Kołodziejczyk
Portugal (PT)	Filipa Melo De Vasconcelos	Carmen Sarogini Monteiro	
Romania (RO)	Simona Radulescu		
Slovak Republic (SK)	Gabriela Dringušová		



Slovenia (SE)	Sara Prošek	
Spain (ES)	Beatriz Martinez Llarena	
Sweden (SE)	Anneli Widenfalk	Emma Patterson
Observers and others	Attendance	
Albania (AL)	Valbona Paluka	
Bosnia & Herzegovina (BA)	Dalibor Vidacak	
Kosovo*¹	Sara Preniqi	
Montenegro (ME)	Mirjana Lekic	
Republic of North Macedonia (MK)	Jasmin Hadji Vasilev	
Serbia (RS)	Nadezda Dukic	
Switzerland (CH)	Stefanie Strauch	
Türkiye (TR)	Serap Hanci	
EFSA Representatives		
Bernhard Url (ED)	Victoria Villamar (Chair)	Sérgio Potier-Rodeia (CM)
Elina Ciekure (FP Team)	Martina Mannis (FP Team)	Tiago Rebelo (FP Team)
Bernard Bottex (KNOW)	Sanja Ilieva (IPA Coordinator)	Maria Chiara Petrolini (CORSER)

34 participants attended the meeting in Parma, representing both Focal Point (FP) Network Members and Alternates, and observers.

15 participants joined online.

Apologies: No apologies were noted for this meeting.

New nominations since the last 53rd FP Meeting held on 15-16 November 2023:

Lithuania: Agne Vilkoicaitė (FP Member)

Sweden: Anneli Widenfalk (FP Alternate)

Latvia: Ilva Lazda (FP Alternate)

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.



I. Opening of the Meeting

The **Chair Victoria Villamar** opened the 54th Focal Point Network Meeting by welcoming all in Parma and inviting to raise any agenda items for AOB. No additional items were raised. The floor was given to EFSA Executive Director **Bernhard Url** for a welcoming speech, during which he highlighted the achievements of tailor-made activities (TMA) in their first year of implementation and the crucial role of FPs in accessing the resources of MS. He emphasized how collaboration contributes to the integration of the EU and stressed the importance of reflecting on past achievements and identifying areas for improvement. Url also underscored the value of working with IPA countries to foster closer relations with neighbouring regions. He mentioned that the upcoming fair would be an opportunity to elevate collaboration to the next level. The speech concluded by extending a warm welcome and expressing gratitude for the commitment to food safety in the EU.

• Action points from the 53rd FP meeting

The **Chair Victoria Villamar** gave the floor to **Elina Ciekure**, who provided a short recap on the nine action points (APs) stemming from 53rd FP meeting in 15-16 November 2023. Completed APs include the final version of the guidance on joint working between FP and CEN, the kick-off regarding the planning exercise for certain TM activities and the raising of awareness among relevant parties regarding the EFSA Webinar on funding opportunities. Ongoing APs comprise sharing examples of best practice materials, increasing the visibility of EFSA G&P calls and promoting the Risk Communication Summer School. Lastly, APs to be addressed in this meeting included evaluating the possibility of organizing a session on DICO2 and analysing the bottlenecks and success factors in applying for G&P calls.

II. Focal Point Framework – First Year of Implementation

The **Chair Victoria Villamar** gave the floor to **Sérgio Potier Rodeia** and **Martina Mannis**. The presentation highlighted the main high-level findings from the first year of the FP framework's implementation. The data shows a trend of positive impact in all areas of Focal Point work and on EFSA's strategic objectives. For instance, on the management of the Competent Organisation list, sharing of the national risk assessment plans, networking and capacity building events organisation. As the 1st year experience, possible evaluation of the framework performance indicators could be performed to ensure their relevance and accuracy. Additionally, a visual overview of data for performance indicators from FP activities is currently in preparation. Moving forward, key next steps involve the continuation of the consolidation and future sustainability assessment of the operational framework, which may include an external audit in 2025.

III. Progress Report on Tailor-Made Activity Related to NAMs

The **Chair Victoria Villamar** gave the floor to **Gisle Solstad** (Norway), who presented on the development of Collaboration to Harmonise the Assessment of Next Generation Evidence (CHANGE). The project, implemented under TMA, contributes to regulatory acceptance and implementation of NAM data through identification of factors that impact its lagging implementation. The speaker provided an overview of the project participants (including experts from USA and Australia) and explained the main objectives of the project. It was emphasized that system related factors, such as structural and cultural issues e.g., shaping people's behaviours, perceptions, and decisions, may be of importance for slow transition



from animal studies to NAMs. Besides, other system-related barriers were mentioned, and the organisational structure of the work was illustrated.

Lastly, the speaker asked for assistance in disseminating the invitation to relevant stakeholders – risk assessors, risk managers and researchers - for the upcoming face-to-face workshop on 18 – 20 June, Oslo.

IV. Focal Point Activities – Main Findings from the Reporting and Perspective for 2024 and Beyond

The **Chair Victoria Villamar** gave the floor to **Elina Ciekure**, who provided a debrief to the plenary on the key aspects of the 2023 PA and TMA reporting. Her presentation covered a general overview of the reporting timelines, comparing planned activities with those that were partially or fully executed. She highlighted factors impacting reporting and activities implementation, noting that 2023 was the pilot year of the new framework. The presentation emphasized activities where EFSA performs extensive follow-ups, such as analyzing and utilizing results to identify bottlenecks and success factors for grant and procurement applications, as well as identifying training needs. Additionally, a new proposal for FP-to-FP support in sharing best practices on PA implementation was introduced.

V. AOB

5.1 Capacity building activities under TM activity on ImproRisk

The **Chair Victoria Villamar** gave the floor to **Georgios Stavroulakis** (Republic of Cyprus), who provided information on the TMA on ImproRisk and specific capacity building activities included in the project. It was mentioned that the relevant invitation email regarding the annual training workshop would be sent by the end of May. The objective of this workshop is to provide 'hands on training' on the ImproRisk Model and includes the following key topics: Data management, Dietary exposure methodology and Final outcomes. Subsequently, FPs were reminded about the possibility/availability of on-site visits to/from countries on demand, in relation to training on the use of ImproRisk. Moreover, FPs were invited to disseminate the above-mentioned information to the relevant risk assessment experts of national food safety authorities and other relevant organizations.

5.2 Crisis Preparedness Training

The **Chair Victoria Villamar** gave the floor to **Bernard Bottex**, who announced the 2024 EFSA external crisis preparedness exercise that will take place in Ireland from the 10th to the 12th of September. EFSA's overall crisis preparedness training theme for the 2021-2024 period is "Trusted Transparent Response". To ensure proper distribution of the exercises over a 4-year cycle and taking into consideration that the 2021 and 2022 crisis exercises were organised by Member States from South and Eastern Europe (Italy and Bulgaria), it was decided that the 2024 CPE should be organised by a MS of North or West Europe (Ireland). The workshop will be a simulation exercise on implementing Article 20 (Public Health Assessment) of Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 on serious cross-border threats to health. The exercise will involve 5 MS, the European Commission, EFSA, and several EU Agencies. The objectives are to test the participants' ability to produce a rapid risk assessment within a limited timeframe, manage the crisis, and handle crisis communication simultaneously. Furthermore, the speaker mentioned that participating MS have already been identified through the Advisory Forum and more information will be conveyed to them via email.



5.3 Preparation for the FP-EFSA networking fair

The **Chair Victoria Villamar** gave the floor to **Elina Ciekure**, who introduced operational aspects on the FP networking fair of the following day. This is the first time when part of the FP plenary meeting was allocated for an interactive networking event, bringing together FP and EFSA scientific and engagement officers. FP were informed that they will attend the thematic stations divided in groups and there will be a dedicated time slot for each station during which EFSA officers will give short introduction on the topic, will initiate discussions, and reply to FP questions. Event will close with an allocated slot for networking and free time around the thematic stations.

6. FP Networking Fair

The EFSA and FP networking fair, held on April 25, 2024, and officially opened by ENGAGE HoD **Barbara Gallani**, successfully achieved its goal of connecting EFSA scientific and engagement officers with representatives and observers from the Focal Point Network. EFSA experts hosting different thematic stations delivered presentations on EFSA's ongoing and upcoming partnership, cooperation and engagement opportunities of interest to the FP community. The fair included 10 thematic stations: The DiCo2 Project; One Health and Research; Career Opportunities at EFSA; Novel Foods; Plant Health; Partnerships & Art. 36 Competent Organisations; Strategic Engagement; Outsourcing opportunities and collaboration; Capacity Building; and Meet IPA. Additionally, ED **Bernhard Url**, along with EFSA colleagues from various units and teams, participated in the networking timeslot to meet and greet the FP. In the closing remarks, ENREL HoU **Victoria Villamar** emphasized the hope that FP have gathered valuable takeaways to share with their national experts: a deeper understanding of EFSA scientific and risk assessment priorities, ideas for TMA, and strengthened and new perspectives on partnership opportunities. As closing remark **Victoria Villamar** noted that next FP meeting in September will be organized in Albania.



Summary of Action Points

<u>Action 1</u>	<u>EFSA</u>	to explore the possibility of creating a dashboard with an overview to track the progress of tailor-made activities
<u>Action 2</u>	<u>France</u>	to consider sharing examples and best practices on solutions implemented regarding the subcontracting and task allocation for TMA.
<u>Action 3</u>	<u>FP</u>	to support expert nominations for event on NAMs organized by Norway and Norway to provide follow up feedback from workshop to AF and FP.
<u>Action 4</u>	<u>EFSA and FP</u>	to evaluate and discuss lessons learned and possible improvements for TMA submission window.