

Mandate of sub-group established under the EU Platform on Animal Welfare to support EU activities on "pig welfare"

As provided in Article 8 (1) of Commission Decision of 24 January 2017 establishing the Commission Expert Group 'Platform on Animal Welfare'¹ and in its Rules of Procedure², the Chair of the Platform may set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the Commission.

The Commission and the members of the EU Platform on Animal welfare (the 'Platform') agreed to establish a sub-group dedicated to improve the enforcement of EU legislation on pig welfare (the 'pig sub-group').

1. SCOPE

The aim of the Platform on Animal Welfare is to assist and advise the Commission on issues relating to EU animal welfare legislation and to facilitate the exchange of information, experience and good practices in the area of animal welfare legislation.

The pig sub-group shall promote the exchange of information, experience and good practices and facilitate cooperation in this area, with the purpose of supporting the Platform's work and contributing to the achievement of its objectives.

The activities related to transport and slaughter of pigs are excluded from the scope of this sub-group, as they do not fall into the scope of Council Directive 2008/120/EC.

The pig sub-group shall initially consider how the risk of tail biting can be reduced through meeting the relevant legal requirements included in Directives 98/58/EC, 2008/120/EC and taking into account Commission Recommendation (EU) 2016/336. The pig sub-group shall take into account, coordinate and complement any ongoing activities in this area in order to avoid duplication of tasks, promoting and complementing the existing Commission's activities such as:

- The activities on pig welfare of the first EU Reference Centre for animal welfare ;
- The three-year Project on reducing systematic tail-docking of piglets in Member States;
- Pilot project on market harmonisation of pig meat from non-castrated pigs.

2. OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the pig sub-group is to assist the Platform in areas within the scope of Council Directive 2008/120/EC³, by delivering information, recommendations and proposals for practices which help bring about better pig welfare.

¹ Commission Decision of 24 January 2017 establishing the Commission Expert Group 'Platform on Animal Welfare' C/2017/0280 OJ C 31, 31.1.2017, p. 61

² <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=3504>

³ Council Directive 2008/120/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs

The priority areas for the subgroup are:

1. Tools and means to improve implementation and enforcement of EU legislation.
2. Technical innovations which could improve the welfare of pigs (e.g. equipment and facilities, management and IT tools, etc.);
3. Policy indicators which could be set up and followed up at national and EU level, in order to measure trends in the implementation of the legislation and consider future actions, as relevant;
4. Knowledge transfer to farm staff, veterinarians and industry advisors, and identification of better practices not only through training courses but other ways of raising awareness of legal requirements.

3. STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

The sub-group shall be composed of a maximum of 20 members of the Platform with a balanced representation of each member type.

The composition of the sub-group would therefore have a maximum of:

- Member States, EEA members and international organisations: 8 seats
- Business and professional organisations: 6 seats
- Organisations from civil society: 3 seats
- Independent experts: 3 seats

The Commission may decide to alter the number of seat allocated to each group if insufficient applicants are received from one member type and an excess of applications is received from other types.

4. CRITERIA TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE SUBGROUP:

In order to be selected, Members of the Platform of Animal Welfare must complete the application in the Annex and where appropriate provide evidence of their work on pig welfare and more specifically regarding:

- technical aspects related to the equipment and facilities and management of pig farms;
- development of policy indicators to measure trends in the implementation of the legislation;
- knowledge transfer to farm staff, veterinarians and industry consultants, including training courses, formulating information which is easily understandable for farm staff and campaigns for promoting compliance. Experience with social psychology to effect behavioral change as well as disseminating information to reach a clear target group would be beneficial.
- Investigation and analysis of the pig production sector which may include, experience with self-regulation, evaluation of inspections and enforcement

- practices and approaches to deal with problems identified;
- Economic aspects of pig production.

For Member States seeking a position in the sub-group, consideration will also be given to the significance of the pig production in their territory.

Consideration will also be given to proven expertise and targeted activities on pig welfare during the different production stages of housed intensive pig production.

Finally experience of working in groups with different actors/groups to reach consensus will be considered.

5. OVERALL TIMELINE AND WORKING PROCEDURES

Applications to become a member of the sub-group should be sent to the Commission no later than 31 of July 2018 to the following e-mail address:

SANTE-IRL-F2-AW-P-SUB-GROUP@ec.europa.eu

Applications should follow the template in Annex I.

The pig sub-group will operate in compliance with the Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups⁴ and the Commission Decision establishing this Platform.

The sub-group will be chaired by the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) representatives. Meetings of the sub-group will be held, in principle, at the Commission's premises in Grange, Co. Meath (Ireland) with one meeting to be held in 2018 and two in 2019.

The pig sub-group will support the Platform's work in this area for the duration of its mandate (i.e. until the end of 2019) and will report to the Platform.

The working language for the sub-group will be English.

DG SANTE will provide secretarial services. Minutes will be drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the chair.

DG SANTE will publish all relevant documents of the sub-group, including the agenda, the minutes and the participants' submission, either on the Register of expert group or via link from the Register to a dedicated website, where this information can be found.

⁴ C(2016) 3301, article 14(1)