



## **RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE EU PLATFORM ON ANIMAL WELFARE**

### THE EU PLATFORM ON ANIMAL WELFARE ('**THE PLATFORM**')

Having regard to Commission Decision setting up the Platform<sup>1</sup>,  
Having regard to the standard rules of procedure of expert groups<sup>2</sup>,  
HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES OF PROCEDURE:

#### *Point 1*

##### **Operation of the Platform**

1. The Platform is chaired by the Director General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE or his/her representative).
2. The Platform shall act at the request of the Chair, in compliance with the horizontal rules.

#### *Point 2*

##### **Convening a meeting**

3. Meetings of the Platform are convened by the Chair, either on its own initiative, or at the request of a simple majority of members after DG SANTE has given its agreement.
4. Joint meetings of the Platform with other groups may be convened to discuss matters falling within their respective areas of responsibility.
5. In principle, meetings of the Platform shall be held on Commission premises.

#### *Point 3*

##### **Agenda**

1. The secretariat shall draw up the agenda under the responsibility of the Chair and send it to the members of the Platform.
2. The agenda shall be adopted by the Platform at the start of the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Commission Decision of 24 January 2017 establishing the Commission Expert group 'Platform on Animal Welfare' (OJ C31, 31.1.2017, p.63)

<sup>2</sup> C(2016) 3301 (Annex 3).



*Point 4*

**Documentation to be sent to Platform members**

1. The secretariat shall send the invitation to the meeting and the draft agenda to the Platform members no later than fifteen calendar days before the date of the meeting.
2. The secretariat shall send documents on which the Platform is consulted to the Platform members no later than fifteen calendar days before the date of the meeting.
3. In urgent or exceptional cases, the time limits for sending the documentation mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 may be reduced to five calendar days before the date of the meeting.

*Point 5*

**Reports and Conclusions of the Platform**

1. As far as possible, the Platform shall adopt reports or conclusions by consensus.
2. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by simple majority of the members. The members that have voted against or abstained shall have the right to have a document summarising the reasons for their position annexed to the corresponding report or conclusion.

*Point 6*

**Sub-groups**

1. The Director-General for DG SANTE may set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the Commission. Sub-groups shall operate in compliance with the Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups ('the horizontal rules') and shall report to the Platform. They shall be dissolved as soon as their mandate is fulfilled.
2. The members of sub-groups that are not members of the Platform shall be selected via a public call for applications, in compliance with Article 5 of the Decision setting up the Platform and the horizontal rules<sup>3</sup>.

*Point 7*

**Invited experts**

The Chair may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the Platform or sub-groups, on an ad hoc basis.

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<sup>3</sup> See Articles 10 and 14.2 of the horizontal rules.



*Point 8*

**Observers**

1. Individuals, organisations or public entities may be granted an observer status, in compliance with the horizontal rules, either by direct invitation or as a result of a call for applications.
2. Organisations or public entities appointed as observers shall nominate their representatives.
3. Observers and their representatives may be permitted by the Chair to take part in the discussions of the Platform and provide expertise. However, they shall not have voting rights and shall not participate in the drafting of reports and/or conclusions of the Platform.
4. The Platform shall not have more than five observers.

*Point 9*

**Written procedure**

1. If necessary, the Platform's reports and/or conclusions on a specific question may be delivered via a written procedure. To this end, the secretariat sends the Platform members the document(s) on which the Platform is being consulted.
2. However, if a simple majority of Platform members asks for the question to be examined at a meeting of the Platform, the written procedure shall be terminated without result and the Chair shall convene a meeting of the Platform as soon as possible.

*Point 10*

**Secretariat**

The Commission services shall provide secretarial support for the Platform and any sub-groups.

*Point 11*

**Minutes of the meetings**

Minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and on the reports and/or conclusions delivered by the Platform or sub-groups shall be meaningful and complete. Minutes shall be drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the Chair.



*Point 12*

**Attendance list**

At each meeting, the secretariat shall draw up, under the responsibility of the Chair, an attendance list also specifying, where appropriate, the Member States' authorities, organisations or other public entities to which the participants belong.

*Point 13*

**Conflicts of interest**

1. The chair of each expert group or sub-group shall, at the first meeting of each calendar year, remind all members appointed in a personal capacity of their obligation to promptly inform DG SANTE of any relevant change in the information previously provided, including as regards upcoming activities, in which case they must immediately submit a newly completed declaration of interests describing the change, in order to enable DG SANTE to assess it in due course, in compliance with the horizontal rules.
2. Should a conflict of interest in relation to an expert appointed in a personal capacity arise, DG SANTE shall take all appropriate measures, in compliance with the horizontal rules.
3. Conflicts of interest shall be reported in writing, e.g. in the minutes of the Platform's meeting. Information registered must be adequate, relevant and not going beyond what is necessary for the purpose of the management of the conflict of interest.

*Point 14*

**Correspondence**

1. Correspondence relating to the Platform shall be addressed to DG SANTE, for the attention of the Chair.
2. Correspondence for Platform members shall be sent to the e-mail address which they provide for that purpose.

*Point 15*

**Transparency<sup>4</sup>**

1. The Platform and sub-groups shall be registered on the Register of expert groups.

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<sup>4</sup> Individuals who do not wish to have their names disclosed may submit a request to Directorate General for Health and Food Safety for derogation from this rule. A derogation shall be granted where justified on compelling legitimate grounds in relation to the specific situation of the individual, in particular where disclosure of the experts' name could endanger their security or integrity



2. As concerns the group composition, the following data shall be published on the Register of expert groups:
  - (a) the name of individuals appointed in a personal capacity;
  - (b) the name of member organisations; the interest represented shall be disclosed;
  - (c) the name of other public entities;
  - (d) the name of observers;
3. DG SANTE shall make available all relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants' submissions, either on the Register of expert groups or *via* a link from the Register to a dedicated website, where this information can be found. Access to dedicated websites shall not be submitted to user registration or any other restriction. In particular, DG SANTE shall publish the agenda and other relevant background documents in due time ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes. Exceptions to publication shall only be foreseen where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and Council<sup>5</sup>.

*Point 16*

**Access to documents**

Applications for access to documents held by the Platform shall be handled in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

*Point 17*

**Deliberations**

In agreement with the Chair, the Platform may, by simple majority of its members, decide that deliberations shall be public.

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<sup>5</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145 31.5.2001, p. 43).