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SMP-FOOD-2025-EURL-EURC-PJG-IBA 2025-2027

**Activities of the EU Reference Laboratories
and EU Reference Centres in 2025-2027**

SUBMISSION FORM: DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION
(Annex 1 – Description of the action (part B))

SMP-FOOD-2025-EURL-EURC-PJG-IBA 2025-2027

**Activities of the EU Reference Laboratories
and EU Reference Centres in 2025-2027**

Applicant shall provide information on each question contained in the Form. The information filled in the Form, shall be clear, concise, consistent and complete.

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Applicant - COORDINATOR (Name of EURC)	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences PO Box 7024 SE-750 07 Uppsala Sweden European Union Reference Centre for the welfare of Ruminants and Equines (EURCAW <i>Ruminants & Equines</i>)
Topic	
Implementation period	01/01/2025 – 31/12/2027

CONTACT PERSON for the programme :

Name	Harry Blokhuis
Function	Professor
e-mail	harry.blokhuis@slu.se Phone: +46 18 67 1627 / Mobile: +46 70 24 64 255

ASSOCIATED PARTNER 1 (Name EURC)	Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale"
Contact person :	Silvia D'Albenzio
e-mail :	s.dalbenzio@izs.it

ASSOCIATED PARTNER 2 (Name EURC)	Institut National de recherche pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et l'environnement
Contact person :	Isabelle Veissier
e-mail :	isabelle.veissier@inrae.fr

ASSOCIATED PARTNER 3 (Name EURC)	University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU)
Contact person :	Christoph Winckler
e-mail :	christoph.winckler@boku.ac.at

ASSOCIATED PARTNER 4 (Name EURC)	University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Dublin
Contact person :	Alison Hanlon
e-mail :	alison.hanlon@ucd.ie

ASSOCIATED PARTNER 5 (Name EURC)	Ellinikos Georgikos Organismos - Dimitra/Veterinary Research Institute
Contact person :	Evangelia Sossidou
e-mail :	sossidou@elgo.gr ; sossidou@vri.gr

CONTENT

1.	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND KEY WORDS	5
2.	INTRODUCTION	6
3.	WORK PACKAGES / ACTIVITIES	11
3.1.	WORK PACKAGE 1 - COORDINATED ASSISTANCE	11
3.2.	WORK PACKAGE 2 - ANIMAL WELFARE INDICATORS	17
3.3.	WORK PACKAGE 3 - SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL STUDIES	21
3.4.	WORK PACKAGE 4 - TRAINING COURSES	24
3.5.	WORK PACKAGE 5 - DISSEMINATING RESEARCH AND INNOVATIONS.....	29
4.	REMARKS.....	31

1. List of abbreviations and key words

BOKU	University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna
BTSF	Better Training for Safer Food
CA	Competent Authority (including official inspectors and policy workers)
CoP	Community of Practice
DG SANTE	Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety
Dossier	A central source of scientific and technical information and documents on a particular welfare topic, on the EURCAW-Pigs website. A dossier contains the scientific review of a welfare topic, thematic fact sheet, welfare indicator fact sheets, inspiring examples (demonstrators), and resources on training.
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
ELGO-VRI	Ellinikos Georgikos Organismos-Dimitra/Veterinary Research Institute
EURCAW <i>Aqua</i>	European Union Reference Centre for Animal Welfare – Aqua
EURCAW <i>Pigs</i>	European Union Reference Centre for Animal Welfare - Pigs
EURCAW <i>Poultry & SFA</i>	European Union Reference Centre for Animal Welfare - Poultry and other small farmed animals
EURCAW <i>Ruminants & Equines</i>	European Union Reference Centre for Animal Welfare – Ruminants and Equines
Indicator	An indicator is a quantitative, measurable parameter (potentially) indicating an animal welfare aspect which is dealt with in the legislation.
INRAE	French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food, and Environment
IZSAM	Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale"
MS	Member States of the EU
MT	Management Team
NCP	National Contact Points (Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Art 20 (2) on welfare at slaughter) and Regulation (EC) 1/2005, Art 24 (2) (on welfare during transport).
NRC	A National Reference Centre for animal welfare, officially designated by a Member State.
Official inspector	Representative of the Competent Authority carrying out official controls related to animal welfare issues
Open norm	Requirement in the EU legislation which does not unambiguously translate into qualitative or quantitative criteria that can be used to check/verify compliance.
Policy worker	Representative of the Competent Authority working on policies related to animal welfare issues.
Q2E	Question to EURCAW
SB	Support bodies. Organisations that support CAs (including Official Inspectors and Policy Workers)
SCAW	Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare
SLU	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UCD	University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Dublin
WP	Work Package

2. Introduction

1. General

This is the third Work Programme of the European Union Reference Centre for Animal Welfare *Ruminants & Equines* which covers the period 01/01/2025 – 31/12/2027. In this document we will refer to the European Union Reference Centre for Animal Welfare for Ruminants and Equines as 'EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines*'.

To use possible synergies and to avoid duplication of efforts, the work programme will be carried out in collaboration with the EURCAWs on Pigs, on Poultry & other small farmed animals (SFA) and on Aquatic Species (Aqua).

2. Activity area and role

The role of Reference Centres for Animal Welfare is closely connected with the enforcement of EU animal welfare rules by developing and disseminating knowledge and tools to assist Competent Authorities (CAs) in performing better official controls. The main target groups are therefore CAs, Official Inspectors and Policy Workers and their 'Support Bodies' (SBs). The Centres also help stakeholders understand the rules, how to comply with these rules as well as the possible control methods used by CAs. Thus, the Centres' role is strategic and longer term, and they are not acting as an 'emergency service'.

The activities of EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* consider the welfare of ruminants and equines and concern the following animals:

- Ruminants, meaning
 - Domestic animals of the family *Bovidae* such as bovine (including *Bubalus* and *Bison* species), ovine and caprine,
 - Other farmed ruminant species such as deer (e.g. *Cervus elaphus*);

and

- Equines, meaning domestic species of the *Equidae* family such as horses (*Equus caballus*), donkeys (*Equus asinus*) and their crossings.

The Centre's activities also cover domestic camelids such as llamas and alpacas.

The Centre's focus is on production animals as well as animals kept for scientific purposes and for leisure. The Centre addresses the entire life cycle including housing and management, transport, slaughter and killing (e.g. for disease control purposes).

The general requirements for the welfare of all farmed animals, whatever the species, are covered by Directive (EC) N° 98/58 concerning the protection of animals kept on farms, Council Regulations (EC) N° 1/2005 and N° 1099/2009 concerning their protection during transport and at slaughter, respectively, and Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council for the protection of animals used for scientific purposes. For animals that are covered by EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* specific legislation to ensure adequate farming conditions was only established for calves (Council Directive 2008/119/EC).

The recommendations of the Council of Europe in the European Convention for the protection of animals kept for farming purposes (ETS No. 087, 1976) are also relevant here, as they are part of the EU *acquis* and, consequently, EU Member states must implement them.

3. The consortium

EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* is a collaboration between partners from six Member States: Sweden, Italy, France, Austria, Ireland and Greece. The work is carried out by the scientific and technical staff of the following institutions:

- Sweden, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) including the Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare (SCAW).
- Italy, Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale" (IZSAM).
- France, French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food, and Environment (INRAE).
- Austria, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU).
- Ireland, University College Dublin (UCD).
- Greece, Ellinikos Georgikos Organismos-Dimitra/Veterinary Research Institute (ELGO-VRI).

The consortium is coordinated by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) including the Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare (SCAW). The partners have complementary expertise in animal welfare of ruminants and equines with a focus on knowledge creation and dissemination, expert advice and training.

Partners are involved in international collaborative efforts and have extensive European and global networks in the area of animal welfare. They are/were for instance involved in many research projects financed from European framework programmes (e.g. LayWel, Welfare Quality, EconWelfare, EUWelNet, AWARE, HENNOVATION, PATHWAYS, BROILERNET, Re-LIVESTOCK, European Partnership Animal Health & Welfare) and grants funded by DG SANTE such as High-Quality Control Posts, Animal Transport Certification, Animal Transport Guides and Care4Dairy.

Two of the partners (IZSAM and SLU) are members of the WOAHA Collaborating Centre Consortium for Animal Welfare, and individual experts are members of high-level advisory bodies (e.g. EFSA scientific panel/working groups or committees advising national governments or companies).

The differences between partner countries as well as the extensive international networks allow the partnership to build on broad and complementary experience with relevance for policy and practice on animal welfare within the EU.

4. Way of working

As described above, EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* covers a number of species (cattle, other ruminants, and equines) and various husbandry systems and types of animals (e.g. meat, milk, leisure).

The work is carried out in close collaboration with EURCAW *Pigs*, EURCAW *Poultry-SFA*, EURCAW *Aqua* and with the existing National Reference Centres (NRCs). The Management Teams of the four EURCAWs have regular meetings to exchange information on ongoing work and progress and align activities. Once every year, the four Centres also meet with the existing National Reference Centres and representatives from the 'support bodies' (SBs) in the Member States.

The Centre's Coordinator is Professor Harry Blokhuis from SLU, Sweden. The deputy coordinator is Dr. Silvia D'Albenzio from IZSAM, Italy. They are senior scientists with complementary experience in research and advising/training CAs in the domain of animal welfare. They - together - speak five European languages, having one in common. As Project Coordinator, Harry Blokhuis is the interface with the European Commission services and is responsible for monitoring the scientific activities, for maintaining the communication flow within the Consortium as well as with specific partners identified through Europe and for managing financial and legal issues. He chairs the Management Team (MT)

meetings. In executing administrative, legal and financial tasks, he will be assisted by SLU/SCAW competent officers. The deputy coordinator, Silvia D'Albenzio, is involved in all main decisions and is able to replace the Coordinator at any time, when needed. She is aware about the whole EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* functioning and able to liaise with the Commission at any time on request. This organisation will guarantee that the Commission always has a link to the Centre, and that it is able to take decisions and make recommendations on request.

The consortium partners in the different Members States are represented in the MT that is responsible for the overall management of the Centre. The main task of the MT is to manage and coordinate the Centre to ensure quality of deliverables within the constraints of timeframe and budget.

The MT has monthly meetings (generally via conference call (ZOOM meetings) but a yearly in-person meeting is pursued), to discuss progress of key activities (planned versus actual) and output, timing, resources and performance and to take corrective action if required.

The members of the MT are:

- Sweden: Prof. Harry Blokhuis (coordinator), SLU
- Italy: Dr. Silvia D'Albenzio, IZSAM
- France: Dr. Isabelle Veissier, INRAE
- Austria: Prof. Christoph Winckler, BOKU
- Ireland: Prof. Alison Hanlon, UCD
- Greece: Dr. Evangelia Sossidou, ELGO-VRI

Other participants in MT meetings are responsible for the secretariat (SLU/SCAW) and are content managers (BOKU, INRAE) for Q2E, the Centre's fact sheets, reviews and training documents and responsible for publishing the documents on Zenodo.

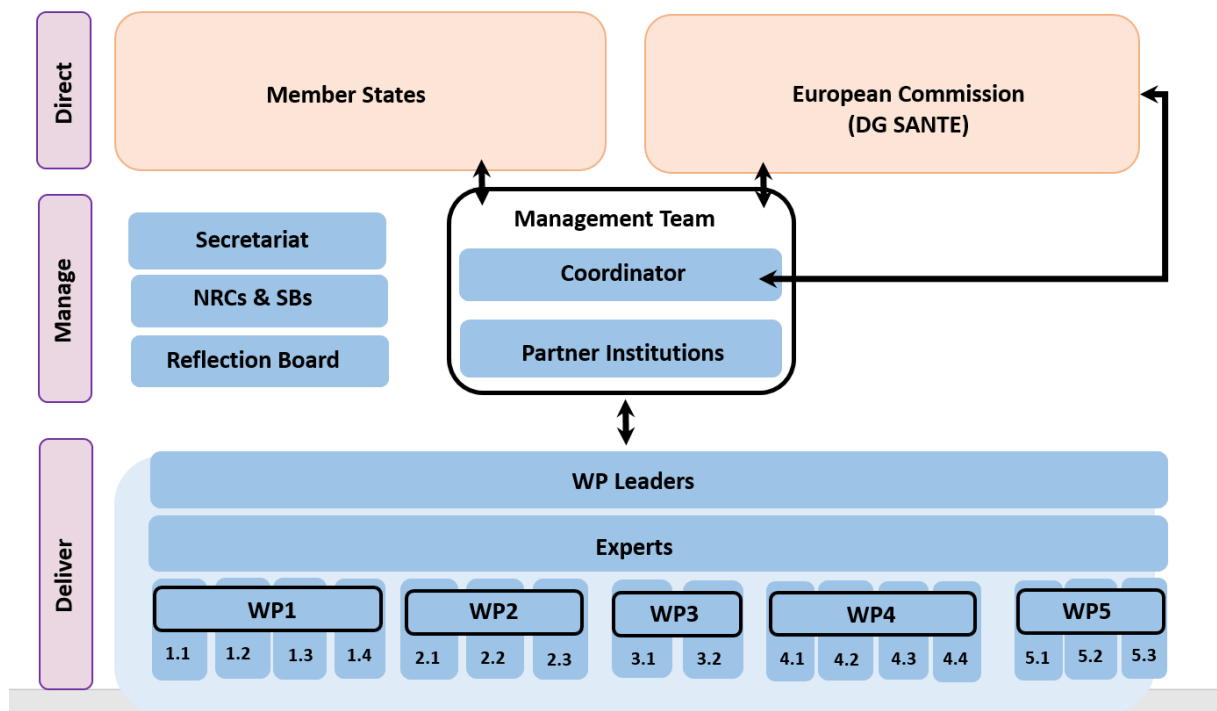
Together with the three other EURCAWs, the MT has regular meetings with the European Commission (DG SANTE) to discuss progress and priorities.

The activities of the Centre are organised in five Work Packages (WP, also referred to as 'activities') defining the Work Programme. Each WP is coordinated by a MT member:

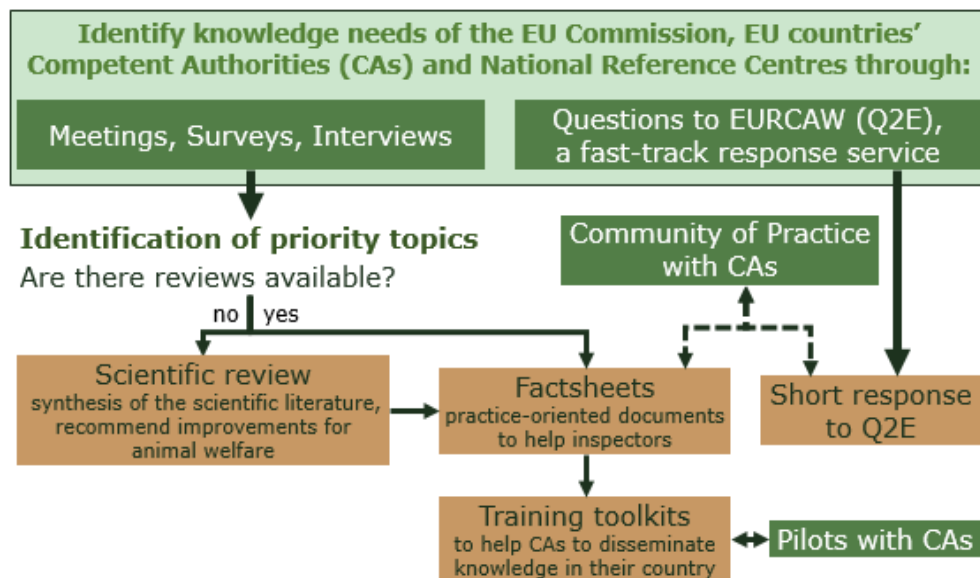
1. Coordinated assistance
2. Animal welfare indicators, methods for assessment and improvement
3. Scientific and technical studies
4. Training courses
5. Dissemination research findings and innovations

Under each WP, concrete objectives and expected outputs are described in so-called Sub-activities. These Sub-activities are also coordinated by MT members. MT members are responsible for ensuring that the work is of suitable academic rigor and that deliverables are produced in a timely manner.

The figure below shows the organisational structure of EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines*.



Welfare issues may be addressed through Q2Es, fact sheets or reviews. The below scheme illustrates the decision process through which it will be decided what form will be used.



5. Preparation of this Work Programme

Priority topics for this Work Programme were selected based on indications regarding the most pressing welfare issues from the CAs and their SBs as expressed in an inventory carried out by EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* (2022) and during direct contacts between CAs and SBs and the Centre. Additional priority areas were selected based on indications from DG SANTE. Also views expressed by National Reference Centres (NRCs) and the Centre's Reflection Board were taken into account.

Further guidance regarding priorities was received from discussions with sector representatives in the Care4Dairy project and with official inspectors during an event of the BTSF programme.

The MT then made a first prioritisation of issues also taking into account ongoing projects (to prevent doubling of effort), how general an issue occurs (on farms and in countries) and the relevance for different species and types of animals within the remit of the Centre, where issues with relevance for different species and types of animals were prioritised. Obviously, available capacity and budget were also taken into account.

To prevent doubling of effort, recent reports and ongoing projects/working groups, covering welfare issues relevant in the context of this Work Programme were considered. These include the best practice guides for the welfare of dairy calves, heifers, cows and end of career cows produced by Care4Dairy, ongoing work in projects like Re-Livestock, PATHWAYS, TechCare and in projects developed by the European Partnership Animal Health & Welfare. Current and future EFSA mandates as well as in thematic sub-groups of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare were considered. Last but not least, the ongoing and planned work in the WOA (formerly OIE) Platform on Animal Welfare was taken into account (both SCAW/SLU and IZSAM participate in the Steering Group of this Platform).

Every year, an evaluation will be performed together with the European Commission to analyse the match of the current priorities with the concerns of the target groups (Sub-activity 1.3). On the basis of this analysis, the priorities of the Work Programme may be adjusted and new topics may be included.

3. WORK PACKAGES / ACTIVITIES

[Regulation \(EU\) 2017/625](#) - Article 96

The **European Union reference centres for animal welfare** shall be responsible for the supporting tasks described under section 3 below, insofar as they are included in the reference centres' annual or multiannual work programmes that have been established in conformity with the objectives and priorities of the relevant work programmes adopted by the Commission in accordance with Article 16 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/690.

3.1. Work Package 1 - Coordinated assistance

Article 96 (a): Providing scientific and technical expertise within the scope of their mission including, where appropriate in the form of coordinated assistance, to relevant national support networks and bodies in the area governed by the rules on the welfare requirements for animals.

Sub-activity 1.1 Maintaining a central contact point for technical information requested by Competent Authorities (CAs) and coordination of the Centre's work.

Introduction:

The work in this Sub-activity focuses on providing scientific and technical expertise to the CAs and their SBs. In order to effectively answer such technical and scientific requests EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* developed and maintains efficient response routines.

This Sub-activity also coordinates the work of the Centre through the development and implementation of effective management and coordination structures and practices. By doing so, this Sub-activity provides the basis for the functioning of the Centre.

Objectives:

- To provide CAs with scientific and technical information on their request (Q2E).
- To maintain a systematic and easily accessible repository of questions and responses through the functionality of the Centre's website and the Zenodo platform.
- To coordinate the work of the Centre.

Lead partner: SLU

Achievements so far:

The Centre can be approached through the EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* functional email address info@eurcaw-ruminants-equines.eu. Procedures to receive, handle and answer requests for scientific and technical information from CAs (Q2E) are developed and implemented. To support the efficient selection of experts, a database of experts has been developed.

The MT has had monthly meetings via conference call (ZOOM meetings). During these meetings, the progress of key activities is monitored, tasks are divided and other emerging issues discussed. Various procedures have been developed and described in Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Procedures used in the four EURCAWs are harmonised as much as possible.

Description:

This Sub-activity aims to give CAs access to scientific and technical information necessary for the correct application of EU animal welfare legislation. The combined knowledge and expertise of the Centre's partners and their scientific and technical networks assures that updated, reliable and consistent technical data, research findings, new techniques and expertise are available. These are made accessible for CAs, Policy Workers and their SBs through a functional e-mail addresses (i.e. info@eurcaw-ruminants-equines.eu) to which requests for technical and scientific advice on animal welfare, which are referred to as 'Questions to EURCAW' or Q2E, can be directed. There is a SOP for handling incoming requests. The Q2Es should be considered a fast-track service and the final answer will be sent to the requestor and DG SANTE and published on the website. Responses are made available for use by all members of the target groups through the Centre's website and the Zenodo repository. Since questions may have a generic character (not linked to a specific species), similar questions may be addressed to EURCAW *Pigs*, EURCAW *Poultry-SFA* and EURCAW *Aqua* and a collaborative approach will then be developed.

In cases where issues related to slaughter and killing are involved, the Centre contacts the national scientific support functions (often referred to as National Contact Points, NCPs) in possession of relevant knowledge and information, in the countries with well-known expertise in relation to the nature of the question. It will also be possible for the Centre to discuss various slaughter-related questions with the entire NCP 1099/2009 network, which is currently organised by EFSA, to complement activities already taking place in that constellation.

The Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare (SCAW within SLU) acts in a similar way at a national level in Sweden and is also the National Contact Point for slaughter (Article 20 of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing). SCAW also builds on international coordinating experience as a leading partner in NordCAW, a Nordic and Baltic collaboration of national centres for animal welfare (technical support bodies on animal welfare).

Expected output and timing:

- Coordination of Centre activities.
- Maintenance of effective procedures for coordinated assistance (and dissemination of updates).
- Maintenance of database of experts.
- Maintenance of repository of expert responses to requests for scientific and technical information.
- Development of an online form for Q2E's to harmonise with EURCAW *Poultry-SFA*.

This Sub-activity will run continuously.

Sub-activity 1.2 Effective networking across CAs, supporting bodies and policy workers

Introduction:

Effective networks across CAs, SBs and policy workers are essential to share and harmonise scientific and technical expertise among these actors. Such networks and meetings with DG SANTE are also relevant to align the Centre's activities with the main concerns and expectations of the target groups and to inform its work planning.

Objective:

To maintain effective interactive networks across CAs, SBs, policy workers and DG SANTE.

Lead partner: BOKU

Achievements so far:

An inventory of contact persons in the Member States regarding CAs, SBs and NRCs is kept up-to-date. EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* was presented at national level, e.g. at a workshop with CAs in Greece (June 2022), at the annual meeting of the Italian National Reference Centre (June 2022) and at a national stakeholder meeting in Austria (September 2021).

In collaboration with EURCAW *Pigs* and EURCAW *Poultry-SFA*, the fourth common EURCAW meeting with the NRCs and the SBs was organised in June 2023. A physical meeting of CAs with EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* was organised on 20-21 November 2023 in Vienna, Austria.

Regular online meetings between the EURCAWs and DG SANTE took place and a progress reporting system was established, in order to record key activities and allow more time for discussion during the meetings.

Description:

The inventory of the persons involved in CAs, SBs, and policy making for the various species in the Member States as well as their structural relations is regularly updated. This also includes existing networks involving these actors, for example NordCAW, a well-established communication platform between animal welfare centres in the Nordic and Baltic region, the network of contact points for Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 (stunning and killing) and thematic sub-groups established within the EU Platform on Animal Welfare (e.g. on animal transport). The possibilities and effectiveness of participation of the Centre in such networks is evaluated in the light of the Centre's remit.

A yearly meeting is organised with national representatives of the CAs to evaluate the ongoing work and identify the main concerns and expectations of the target groups. Every second year, this meeting is a physical meeting, while the other meetings are web-based. A similar practice is followed in EURCAW *Pigs* and EURCAW *Poultry SFA*. Physical meetings are scheduled for 2025 (Sweden) and 2027 (France) for EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines*.

Web-based meetings with NRCs and SBs are organised each year together with the other Centres. This meeting may be combined with the first meeting described in Sub-activity 1.3 to identify the main concerns and expectations of the target groups.

EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* will meet digitally every three months with DG SANTE and the other Reference Centres (EURCAW *Pigs*, EURCAW *Poultry SFA*, and EURCAW *Aqua*), resulting in 4 meetings per year. The meetings will be hosted alternately between the Centres. The host will be responsible for the agenda, the chairing and the minutes of the meeting. The meetings will last approximately 2 hours. The aim of these meetings is to exchange experience, mutually inspire each other's work, and to report on progress to DG SANTE. The exact dates to be agreed with DG SANTE and the other Centre(s), and will be in February, May, September and November of 2025-2027.

Expected output and timing:

- Up-to-date map of persons and structures involved in CAs, SBs, and policy making for the various species in the Member States.
- A yearly meeting with CAs.
- A yearly meeting with NRCs and SBs.
- Effective interactive networks across CAs, SBs and policy workers.
- Minutes of the meetings

Duration: months 1-36.

Sub-activity 1.3 Identification of concerns of target groups

Introduction:

Identification of concerns of target groups is essential to align the Centre's activities with the main expectations of the target groups and to inform its work planning.

Objective:

To identify and prioritise the main concerns and expectations of the target groups.

Lead partner: SLU

Achievements so far:

A questionnaire was sent to CAs during spring 2022, to explore the future expectations from EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines*. The draft Work Programme 2025-2027 was sent to the CAs to comment on the priorities defined in this programme. No suggestions for change were received.

The draft Work Programme 2025-2027 was also presented to the Reflection Board and their reflections were taken into account.

Description:

After each year of the Work Programme 2025-2027, an evaluation will be performed to analyse the match of the current priorities with the concerns of the target groups. On the basis of this analysis, the priorities for the next year of the Work Programme may be adjusted and new topics may be included.

An inventory of the main concerns and expectations of the CAs, policy workers and their SBs will be organised in the third year of the Work Programme 2025-2027. Further discussions in meetings with the target groups (as described in 1.2), the NRCs and the SBs, and DG SANTE will be organised. On the basis of the results of the inventory and the discussions, the priorities for the next Work Programme will be defined.

In this context also meetings with the Reflection Board will be scheduled once a year. This Board does not represent the main target group of the EURCAW but consists of well-respected representatives of civil society and business or professional organisations whose collective interests cover most facets of the EURCAW. The Board is established to reflect on technical aspects of EURCAW's activities and provide strategic guidance and support to the MT in such issues.

Expected output and timing:

- An overview of the target groups' main concerns and expectations.
- A half-time evaluation of the match of defined priorities with the concerns of the target group and a proposal for priorities in the next Work Programme.

Duration: months 1-36.

Sub-activity 1.4 Collaborative efforts between the four EURCAWs

Introduction

The four Centres will actively search and identify possibilities to collaborate and harmonise their approaches. This Sub-activity aims to keep focus on collaborative efforts and common approaches between the four EURCAWs.

Objectives:

To strengthen the collaborative efforts and common approaches between the four EURCAWs.

Achievements so far:

The Management Teams of the four Centres meet four times a year to discuss ongoing activities and deepen their collaboration. In addition, the current EURCAWs met physically in the summer of 2024 to discuss and exchange ideas on concerns and topics raised by the target group, across species.

Concrete examples of common approaches are the agreed Quality Assurance process, the common 'Code of Conduct' for meetings with our target groups and stakeholders (Reflection Board), the common Terms of Reference for the Reflection Boards and the intensive collaboration across the Centres via working groups on Training, and on Communication. The members of the latter working groups meet periodically, to share experiences and identify areas for collaboration in view to adopt common approaches and develop common outputs.

Description:

Common topics

The four Centres will actively search and identify possibilities to collaborate and harmonise their approaches. This Sub-activity aims to keep focus on collaborative efforts and common approaches between the four EURCAWs. The four EURCAWs will jointly work on a new common topic led by EURCAW *Poultry SFA*, 'Guidance for the assessment of stunning equipment'. EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* will lead a common pilot activity aiming to improve accessibility to fact sheets and other practice-ready documents for official inspectors by creating downloadable audio versions in multiple languages, based on current translations.

Another new common topic will be the 'Development of a pilot of an APP for on-field inspectors' led by EURCAW *Pigs*. To achieve this common goal and optimise the use of the financial resources of this work programme, the EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* will explore, together with the EURCAW *Pigs*, the possibility to partially reuse already available tools for further development, in particular, the CARE4DAIRY APP and its source IT systems.

Meetings with the other EURCAWs

The Centres will meet every three months without DG SANTE, either to prepare for the DG SANTE meetings (see Sub-activity 1.2), or to discuss operational issues, or both. These meetings, of which one is a physical meeting, will take place in February, May, September and November of 2025-2027. The four EURCAWs will take turn in hosting those meetings.

Expected output and timing:

Further collaboration and harmonisation of activities.

This sub-activity will run continuously.

List of Indicators WP1:

- Number of technical and scientific feedback provided by the **EURC** based on Commission queries.
- Number of queries requested from national support networks and bodies and competent authorities in the area governed by the rules on the welfare requirements for animals. Number and quality of replies provided by the **EURC**.

3.2. Work Package 2 - Animal welfare indicators

Article 96 (b): Providing scientific and technical expertise for the development and application of the animal welfare indicators referred to in point (e) of Article 21(8), i.e., the cases and conditions where official controls to verify compliance with animal welfare requirements may include the use of specific animal welfare indicators based on measurable performance criteria, and the design of such indicators on the basis of scientific and technical evidence.

Article 96 (c): Developing or coordinating the development of methods for the assessment of the level of welfare of animals and of methods for the improvement of the welfare of animals.

Sub-activity 2.1 Documentation on targeted welfare improvements (Thematic fact sheets)

Introduction:

Good and best practices are required to mitigate welfare problems and to prevent them in the long term. There is a substantial body of evidence regarding welfare hazards, but it requires a thorough review in terms of effectiveness and feasibility before interventions can be recommended and disseminated.

Objective:

To produce quick and easy overviews on welfare improvements.

Lead partner: INRAE

Achievements so far:

To date EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* has produced

- Three thematic fact sheets for calves: one on the frequency and quantity of feeding, one on colostrum provision, and one on improvement of welfare during painful procedures (castration, dehorning).
- Five thematic fact sheets on environmental enrichment (1 introductory fact sheet and 4 fact sheets per species: cattle, sheep, goats, equids).
- A review on confinement and restriction of movement and social contact in horses.
- A thematic fact sheet on hoof care to reduce leg and hoof disorders.

The thematic fact sheets are accompanied by Indicator fact sheets (see below).

Description:

CAs and inspectors need to engage in a dialogue with stakeholders to help them adhere to legislative requirements and to improve animal welfare. This task addresses welfare problems that need particular attention in farming, transport and/or slaughter and for which enough knowledge exists to propose remedial solutions. We will produce thematic fact sheets on ways to solve (or at least reduce) targeted welfare problems. The knowledge summarised in the fact sheets derived from reviews prepared in WP3 of the Centre or reviews from other sources (e.g. EFSA scientific opinions).

The thematic fact sheets are used to prepare training materials (WP4). They will be included in dossiers to be disseminated (WP5).

In 2025, we plan to address the following topics:

- quality of care to animals (from the review produced in Activity 3 in 2023-2024),
- access to pasture (from the review produced in Activity 3 in 2023-2024),
- thermal comfort (from the review produced in Activity 3 in 2023-2024),
- group housing of calves (from the review produced in the CARE4DAIRY project)

In 2026, depending on the yearly progress evaluation, we plan to address:

- working equids (from the review produced in Activity 3 from 2023-2024 and forthcoming EFSA opinion on horse welfare),
- painful procedure in equines
- maintenance of social bonds (from the review produced in Activity 3 in 2025)
- effective stunning at slaughter (from the review produced in Activity 3 in 2025)

In 2027, depending on the yearly progress evaluation, we may address:

- mutilation in small ruminants (dehorning/disbudding in goats, tail docking in sheep)
- on-farm emergency slaughter/killing
- tethering in cattle.

Expected output and timing:

At least six thematic fact sheets will be produced.

Duration: months 1-36.

Sub-activity 2.2 Identification of suitable welfare indicators (Indicator fact sheets)

Introduction:

There is specific EU legislation to safeguard animal welfare regarding husbandry of calves (Council Directive 2008/119/EC), transport (1/2005) and slaughter (1099/2009) of farmed animals. For the husbandry of other species and animal categories covered in EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* such as dairy cows, beef cattle or horses, the general rules laid down in Council Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes apply. Furthermore, the Council of Europe Convention on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes and its recommendations have to be taken into account.

The compliance with legislation can be checked using resource-based or management-based indicators directly referring to the minimum requirements provided in the specific regulations, but also using animal-based measures or welfare performance criteria. In addition, qualitative terms in the legislation (open norms such as 'appropriate bedding') require suitable indicators to evaluate compliance. Especially animal-based measures provide a valid tool to identify welfare problems and have already been developed for use on farm for the major species, in the course of animal transport as well as at the slaughterhouse (e.g. WQ, AWIN, EFSA), while for some species that are kept in low numbers (such as buffaloes, bison, farmed deer, camelids) less information on welfare indicators is available. However, a harmonised approach is needed to ensure a reliable implementation within as well as between Member States.

Objectives:

- To identify indicators that can help official inspectors identify welfare issues in ruminants and equines.
- To identify methods for assessment tailored for official inspections.

Lead partner: BOKU

Achievements so far:

To date EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* has produced

- Two indicator fact sheets on open norms which had been identified for calves which are each accompanied by an indicator fact sheet (Design of partitions for individually kept calves allowing direct visual and tactile contact; Provision of adequate feed and feeding frequency).
- One indicator fact sheet on environmental enrichment for ruminants and equines.
- Three indicator fact sheets on fitness for transport of bovine animals, horses and small ruminants.

Description:

Under this work programme we will address the topics for which thematic fact sheets will be produced within Subtask 2.1:

In 2025:

- Indicators to assess the welfare of animals on pasture
- Indicators of thermal comfort
- Indicators to assess group housing of calves

In 2026:

- Indicators to assess the welfare of working equids
- Indicators to assess the maintenance of social bonds
- Indicators to assess effective stunning at slaughter
- Indicators to assess the welfare during painful procedures in equines

In 2027:

- Indicators to assess the impact of mutilations in small ruminants
- indicators to assess the impact of tethering in cattle

The topics to be addressed in 2026 and 2027 are subject to modifications, depending on the yearly progress evaluations.

Identification of indicators will be based on scientific publications, as well as on existing guidelines and indicator schemes already in use in Member States. Preference will be given to animal-based indicators and emphasis will be put on validity, reliability and feasibility for use by official inspectors. Also, the use of existing databases (e.g. health records) or of sensor data generated from precision livestock farming approaches (e.g. activity measurements) will be scrutinised.

Furthermore, EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* will continue to identify and describe other relevant indicators for newly identified welfare topics for which welfare indicators are needed.

The outcomes will be discussed with CAs, policy makers and SBs identified in Sub-activity 1.2 and eventually provided for training activities in WP4 and dissemination in WP5.

Expected output and timing:

At least 7 indicator fact sheets will be produced.

Duration: months 1-36.

Sub-activity 2.3 Update of Care4Dairy fact sheets regarding legislative minimum requirements

Introduction:

The DG SANTE funded Care4Dairy project focused on best practices relevant to dairy production across EU Member States and produced a large number of fact sheets to support the welfare of dairy calves, heifers and cows and end-of-career animals. These fact sheets have been translated into seven languages and are available on a website (<https://care4dairy.eu/>), which will be maintained by EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* (see Work Package 5) to make the outcomes accessible beyond the end of the project period (June 2024).

Objective:

To update the Care4Dairy fact sheets with regard to amendments of the existing EU legislation (e.g. regarding calves) or the possible adoption of new EU legislation on other dairy cattle categories.

Lead partner: BOKU

Description:

All Care4Dairy fact sheets will be amended if the existing EU legislation is amended or if new EU legislation on the dairy cattle categories addressed in the Care4Dairy project comes into effect. This does not include an update of the scientific content the Care4Dairy fact sheets refer to.

Expected output and timing:

All Care4Dairy fact sheets will be updated if there are legislative developments regarding dairy cattle including calves and heifers.

Duration months 1-36.

List of Indicators WP2 :

- Number of methods developed/coordinated for the assessment of the level of welfare of animals
- Number of methods developed/coordinated for the improvement of the welfare of animals

3.3. Work Package 3 - Scientific and technical studies

Article 96 (d): Carrying out scientific and technical studies on the welfare of animals used for commercial or scientific purposes.

Sub-activity 3.1 Identification of knowledge available and gaps regarding high priority farm animal welfare issues

Introduction:

CAs and especially their official inspectors are expected to have a good understanding of farming, transport and slaughterhouse practices and a good knowledge of the biology and needs of the various species. Inspectors can be supported by scientific knowledge on animal welfare, including the physiological and behavioural needs of animals, and the impacts of living conditions or practices. Such science-based information is a pre-requisite to develop more practice-oriented documents.

Objectives:

- To review the legislation in relation to prioritised issues and the knowledge available to propose remedial solutions to them.
- To identify gaps in knowledge preventing sustainable remedial solutions.

Lead partner: INRAE

Achievements so far:

To date EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* has produced several Reviews:

- An introductory review explaining enrichment, the different types of enrichment, and how to assess enrichment.
- A review on physical and occupational enrichment.
- A review on sensory and feeding enrichment.
- A review on relational enrichment, covering social enrichment, maternal enrichment, enrichment by the company of animals from other species, and human enrichment.
- A review on the quality/quantity of care to animals.
- A review on confinement and restriction of movement and social contact in horses.
- A review on restriction to or inadequate pasture and grazing access.
- A review on working equids.
- A review on thermal comfort.

The reviews are organised across species, highlighting common aspects and mechanisms.

Description:

The reviews provide background information describing the biological relevance of specific topics as well as legislative requirements (if any). The reviews are not directed primarily to inspectors. Their content is nevertheless used to develop more inspector targeted documents which describe areas for verification of compliance or provide help to identify room for improvement (fact sheets, training toolkits).

In addition, in reviews, inspectors can find evidence-base for fact sheets and can thus reinforce their capacity of dialogue with farmers, drivers and slaughterhouse staff, especially to explain the scientific background of legislation and to provide guidance on how to meet legislative requirements or, in more general terms, how to improve animal welfare. This is particularly important when dealing with 'open norms' in legislation.

Reviews are prepared on topics for which there is large scope for improvements from the actual practices. They are based on the most recent advances in science and take into account present practices and how they can be improved.

For each topic a group of experts from the Centre is put in place. The existing international, European or national legislation or recommendations regarding the topic is reviewed from the information available on the web. At the same time, a literature search of the available scientific knowledge is conducted on the Web of Science and PubMed. The technical knowledge is looked for by consultation with experts and browsing on the web.

The topics to be addressed in reviews in 2025-2027 are:

- Disruption of social bonds: this topic was raised by several CA during our 2022 survey. It concerns all ruminant and equine species. It may include bonds between dam and young as well as between animals of same age.
- Stunning at slaughter: slaughter was mentioned as a priority topic by several CA during our 2022 survey and by DG SANTE. Signs of consciousness and unconsciousness are described in the EFSA AHAW scientific opinion from 2013 (and later used in EFSA reports from 2020 and 2021). There are recent findings on animal signs of consciousness (and on signs of unconsciousness) that are important to take into consideration for appropriate stunning. The review will focus on signs of consciousness/unconsciousness.
- Species that received little attention so far in EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines*: to date specific reviews and fact sheets were produced for cattle and horses. We plan to conduct reviews on small ruminants. The exact topics to be addressed will be defined with CA and DG SANTE.

From the yearly progress evaluations, we will decide what new topics to be addressed. These may include topics specific to small ruminants or training of horses.

Expected output and timing:

We plan to produce three scientific reviews.

Each review will first provide background information describing the biological relevance of the topic as well as legislative requirements (if any). Reviews will be short (about 10 pp). They will highlight the most important issues, possibly visualising them with illustrations (figures, tables, pictures, infographics, etc.).

The content of the reviews will be used to develop inspector targeted documents which will describe areas for verification of compliance (indicator fact sheet, sub-activity 2.2) or provide help to identify room for improvement (thematic fact sheets, sub-activity 2.1). The reviews are not directed primarily to inspectors, although they will be available in dossiers for those who look for additional information.

Duration: months 1-36.

Sub-activity 3.2 Design of scientific and technical studies to fill in gaps in knowledge

Introduction:

Needs for further studies will be identified on the basis of gaps in knowledge identified during the production of reviews, fact sheets and Q2Es in Sub-activity 3.1 or Activity 2. Results will be communicated to research funding bodies, forming the basis of potential research programs.

Objective:

- To identify gaps in knowledge.
- To communicate knowledge gaps to funding bodies.

Lead partner: SLU

Achievements so far:

Needs for further studies on environmental enrichment were identified from reviews produced. A call was circulated among experts that worked on the reviews. Proposals for further studies were collected. Two studies are currently supported: one on maternal environment in goat kids and one on physical enrichment in sheep. The studies are being carried out.

From the reviews conducted in 2023-2024, several gaps in knowledge were identified. For instance, regarding thermal comfort, indices to define thermo-neutral zones vs. mild, moderate and severe thermal discomfort need clarification.

Description:

The groups of experts producing reviews, fact sheets and Q2Es in EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines*, will be asked to identify gaps in knowledge encountered when producing these documents. These gaps in knowledge will be briefly described to form a research agenda. This agenda will be regularly updated and communicated to funding bodies (EU, funders in Member States).

Expected output and timing:

- Up-to-date inventory of scientific and technical knowledge gaps (research agenda).
- Communication of the research agenda to funding bodies.

Duration: months 1-36.

List of Indicators WP3 :

- Number and quality of technical and scientific studies and materials developed and/or updated by the **EURC AW**

3.4. Work Package 4 - Training courses

Article 96 (e): conducting training courses for staff of the national scientific support networks or bodies, for staff of the competent authorities and for experts from third countries.

In the third work programme, the EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* intends to improve significantly the training offer, targeting competent authorities (policy makers, policy officers and official inspectors), national scientific support networks or bodies, and experts from third countries, all professionally engaged to assure the enforcement of the EU legislation on the welfare of the relevant animal species under the Centre mandate.

A combination of methodologies and tools already tested successfully to support capacity building on animal welfare in other European and international projects and initiatives will be applied, with the aim to facilitate the adult learning process, stimulate cooperation and networking, and promote cascade trainings. They will be tailored according to the topics, learning goals, and number of participants, while optimising the available resources.

At the end of the three-year cycle, the training catalogue of the Centre will be deeply increased and widely disseminated in Europe and selected non-EU countries.

Sub-activity 4.1 Table-top simulation exercises

Objectives:

To enhance the level of competencies expressed by the target audience regarding specific topics, such as animal welfare during emergencies, during long-distance transportation, and in ritual slaughter.

Lead Partner: Silvia D'Albenzio (IZSAM)

Achievements so far:

The training activities implemented by the Centre during the first and second work programmes have been based on eLearning and webinar formats, to present the main outcomes of the scientific and technical activities carried out by it, mainly focusing on the content of key deliverables, such as fact sheets and reviews. By literature and experience matured in adult training, especially in the framework of the BTSF Programme of the EU Commission, and EFSA, WOAH and EUFMD projects, it is demonstrated that basic knowledge can be easily transferred through eLearning modules, while different approaches facilitating dialogue, interaction, experience exchange and practices favour more capacity building. Having set and continue to set basic level training tools (the so-called "Training Toolkits"), the EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* intends to introduce a new, immersive methodology, the "tabletop exercise", to let the target groups acquire new competencies in simulation learning environments.

Description:

Tabletop exercises are discussion-based sessions where team members meet in a virtual professional setting to play a pre-defined role in a specific situation. During a tabletop exercise, one facilitator guides the participants through a discussion of one or more scenarios. The exercise will be divided into several sessions, in which part of the scenario will be presented, followed by discussion questions. Each session will correspond to a specific exercise objective or theme. During the exercise, the facilitator will keep the discussions on track and ensure that topics are covered as thoroughly as possible in the available time. The general plan is to organise a tabletop exercise on the web platform

on a yearly basis. This approach that combines distance learning and proactive engagement of the trainees will allow the best use of the financial resources to achieve the training goals. The Centre will work to prepare the scenario and all useful materials (including documents, pictures and videos), then the recruitment phase will start. One participant per EU Member State will be involved. After the opening briefing, they will be divided in sub-groups and, during the simulation, step-by-step, they will meet in plenary sessions to discuss about intermediate outcomes. A final debriefing session will close the event to wrap-up and provide the beneficiaries with take home messages.

Expected output and timing:

Tabletop exercise on animal welfare during long-distance transportation – 2025.

Tabletop exercise on effective stunning at slaughter – 2026.

Tabletop exercise on painful procedures – 2027.

Duration: months 4-36.

Sub-activity 4.2 Webinars and eLearning

Objectives:

To promote capacity building on the outcomes of Activities 2 and 3.

To increase the leadership and communication skills of the official vets during audits and inspections.

To promote capacity building on the Care4Dairy guidelines.

Lead Partner: Silvia D'Albenzio (IZSAM)

Achievements so far:

To promote capacity building through standardised training, aimed at disseminating the outcomes of the EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* activities in EU Member States, the Centre has already produced three Toolkits for cascade training:

- Frequency and quantity of milk feeding to dairy calves.
- Visual and tactile contact in individually housed calves.
- Environmental enrichment for ruminants and equines.

Furthermore, in 2024, webinars have been planned and delivered successfully.

In total about 200 people have been involved.

Description:

This Sub-activity will provide the European Commission and the EU Member States with a systematic approach to training in this field.

Different multidisciplinary working groups will be devoted to achieving the mentioned goals. They will involve both scientific and technical experts in order to balance the necessary expertise and to represent different perspectives and backgrounds.

Starting from the outcomes of Activities 2 and 3, different Training Toolkits will be developed to assist SBs and CAs to understand the rules, how to comply with these rules, as well as the possible control methods to be used by the CAs for the welfare of ruminants and equines.

Each Toolkit will be made of the following items:

- An example of a syllabus aimed at helping trainers to design training. It describes the specific learning objectives of the course, the beneficiaries, the suggested programme, the training methodologies, the assessment method, the list of speakers, and the contact details of the training organiser.
- A Power Point presentation to be adopted by the Trainers in English (the Master Version) or in the country mother tongue after translation.
- A Word file titled "Explanatory texts supporting cascade training" that provides the future Trainers with the narration accompanying each slide of the PowerPoint Presentation. It is structured to easily translate the content into the local mother tongue for customisation.
- The relevant fact sheets/reviews produced by the Centre.
- A knowledge assessment test to be used at the end of the training session. This assessment tool can also be translated by the course organiser. It includes the key points (model answers) to the assessment questions.
- A video recorded lecture for eLearning training, in English, that explains in detail the content of the related fact sheets/reviews to facilitate their adoption for the relevant purposes.

The content of the toolkits will be presented to selected groups of beneficiaries (SBs and CAs) during pilot training courses to be implemented adopting the Webinar format.

The final releases will be disseminated through the EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* eLearning platform.

Furthermore, 5 webinars will be organised as below described.

Expected outputs and timing:

- Training Toolkit and webinar on provision of colostrum to calves (2025.)
- Training Toolkit and webinar on hoof care to reduce leg and hoof disorders (2025).
- 4 Webinars on the welfare of dairy cows (one for each life stage) based on the Care4Dairy guidelines (2025).
- Training Toolkit on working equids (2026).
- Training Toolkit and webinar on quality of care (2026).
- Training Toolkit and webinar on access to pasture (2027).
- Training Toolkit and webinar on thermal comfort (2027).
- Webinar on leadership and communication during audit and inspections (2026).
- Multilanguage Training Toolkit on leadership and communication during audit and inspections (2027).

Sub-activity 4.3 Management of the EURCAW training IT tool

Objectives:

- To maintain and manage the platform for the training need assessment.
- To maintain and manage the platform to map training on animal welfare in the EU.
- To maintain and manage the tools for training quality and impact assessment.
- To maintain the Care4Dairy App.

Achievements so far:

The Centre has designed, developed and adopted a platform for the training needs assessment (TraNAP). It also designed and produced an IT platform to map training on animal welfare in the EU for the four EURCAWs and tools to assess quality and impact of training on animal welfare in Europe are going to be finalised, according to the work programme 2022-2024. Finally, the Care4Dairy Project produced an App that is complementary to training, and it requires maintenance.

Description:

It is necessary to assure maintenance to the mentioned IT tools that will be used in the framework of the 2025-2027 work programme.

In detail, a new training needs assessment will be launched in 2025 to focus on the priority issues identified in work packages 2 and 3. The system to map training on animal welfare (all species) will work permanently, to collect, as much as possible, the required information concerning all the training provider categories in the EU Member States and provide updated facts and figures. Furthermore, the tools to assess quality and impact of training will be adopted by the Centre and scaled to the other EURCAWs and training providers in the EU to promote a standardised approach. Finally, yet importantly, the Care4Dairy App will be maintained.

Expected output and timing:

- New training need assessment report.
- Updated map of trainings on AW in the EU.
- Assessment of quality and impact of training on AW in Member States.
- Updated Care4Dairy App.

This sub-activity will run continuously.

Sub-activity 4.4 Roadshows

Objectives:

- To open a dialogue with the official inspectors in MS working with them on priority topics
- Stimulate cascade training
- Identify controversial issues on which the Centre could further assist them to strengthen the enforcement of the EU legislation

The Roadshows will be also useful for the implementation of other EURCAW activities, e.g., pedagogical video footage, identification of members of the Community of Practice, speakers for podcasts, and interviewees for “Inspectors at work”.

Achievements so far:

The roadshow approach will be introduced for the first time by this EURCAW in the work programme 2025-2027, however the Centre has already had a successful experience in the organisation of roadshow events in Europe in 2024, in the framework of the CARE4DAIRY project. The lessons learned during such an initiative will be enhanced to assure the best results. Furthermore, the IZSAM professional background in the organisation of BTSF courses on animal welfare will be capitalised.

Description:

To pilot this approach, the roadshow will be made of 3 physical workshops, taking place in selected Member States (one per year). For cost effectiveness reasons we have provisionally selected partner countries of the Centre. Following annual review and if budget permits consideration will be given to replace one of the preselected locations with an alternative Member State for example in Eastern Europe. Participants will be maximum 25 delegates per event (official inspectors, policy workers, policy makers), identified with the support of the National Contract Point in the country where the event will be organised. Each workshop will be attended by 2-4 experts from the EURCAW. They will speak the native language of the participants. Each workshop will last one day or one day and a half depending on whether a field trip is included or not.

The topics will be identified and agreed in advance to provide the beneficiaries with targeted support. They should be as much as possible linked to the outputs and outcomes of the activities carried out by the Centre since the beginning of its mandate. The programme will be generally structured as follow:

- Introduction to the EURCAW activities
- Presentation of the latest scientific knowledge related to the topics chosen by the delegates
- Interactive discussions and case studies on chosen topics
- Suggestions for future activities or topics for the EURCAW Work Programme
- If possible, a field visit will be added to the programme in collaboration with local experts.

If necessary, translation of documents will be provided. Furthermore, a written summary of the topics discussed, concerns raised, advice given and agreed follow-up actions, will be provided in local language. The translated documents will be uploaded on the EURCAW website.

Expected outputs and timing:

- Roadshow event 1 - location: Italy (2025)
- Roadshow event 2 - location: France (2026)
- Roadshow event 3 - location: Ireland (2027)

List of Indicators WP4 :

- Number of training and collaboration activities with national scientific support networks and bodies and competent authorities
- Number of training and collaboration activities with third countries

3.5. Work Package 5 - Disseminating research and innovations

Article 96(f): disseminating research findings and technical innovations and collaborating with Union research bodies in the fields within the scope of their mission.

Sub-activity 5.1 Disseminating EURCAW

Introduction:

The aim of this sub-activity is to disseminate and communicate EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines'* outputs, research findings and technical innovations to CAs to support policy and practice in the implementation of legislation. In the 2025-2027 work programme, WP5 will comprise ongoing activities such as evaluation and updating of the website, cultivating and sustaining the Community of Practice (CoP).

The Centre will establish a LinkedIn account, as an additional platform to support professional networking and dissemination, as part of Activity 5.1.

In the new work programme, translation of fact sheets will be assigned to WP 5 (previously WP 2), with a focus on improving the availability of translations.

Continued consultation with the dissemination teams at EURCAW *Pigs*, EURCAW *Poultry-SFA* and EURCAW *Aqua* will ensure a cost-effective and consistent approach to dissemination and communication.

Objective:

- Ongoing updating, improvement and evaluation of the website
- Create a LinkedIn account
- Translation of fact sheets
- Cultivating and sustaining the online Community of Practice

Lead Partner: UCD

Achievements so far:

The website was launched in November 2022 and in August 2024 had received over 6,500 visitors. Metrics are provided to the MT in the monthly meeting reports, focusing on the total number of users and new users; web pages visited, and the demographic of visitors, namely country. News items are regularly published on the website (approx. 4 per month) and a shorter version posted on X. The newsletter is issued, on average, four times per year and has a subscriber base of 170.

The CoP is a password protected platform, contained within the website, for Official Inspectors and Policy Workers of Competent Authorities in EU Member States. The piloting of this initiative has helped to identify ways to improve, in order to cultivate and sustain the CoP.

Description:

Dissemination and communication of EURCAW activities and other relevant information will continue on the Centre's website and social media and impact will be evaluated using analytical tools such as google analytics. Following the example of EURCAW *Pigs*, a Linked In account will be created to disseminate the Centre's outputs and increase awareness of our activities. The 'create once and publish everywhere' (COPE) strategy will continue to be used as it is a cost-efficient approach.

Expected output and timing:

- Website analytics
- Quarterly newsletters
- Regular posting of news items on the website and Linked In
- Regular themed discussions on the Community of Practice

Duration: months 1-36

Sub-activity 5.2 Developing Innovative Ways to Communicate

Introduction:

Finding new ways to engage with our target audience is central to sub-activity 5.2. A key innovation in the new work programme is to focus on the spoken word, by creating audio versions of short documents such as fact sheets, Q2Es and mini reviews, which can be downloaded from the website.

Building on the success of the Inspector@work news feature in the 2023-2024 work programme, Series 2 will be part of this sub-activity, as a communication tool for Official Inspectors in EU Member States.

As outlined in sub-activity 1.3, a yearly evaluation will be performed to analyse the match of the current priorities with the concerns of the target group. Contingent on this review, if there are sufficient resources, a visually engaging approach will be developed, to dissemination of key points from the Centre's outputs such as fact sheets and Q2Es by designing infographics. The latter has been successfully piloted by EURCAW *Poultry SFA* in 2024.

Objectives:

- Continued cultivation of communication tools, namely inspector@work.
- Innovation in the communication portfolio to create audio and visually engaging versions of key points from Q2Es and fact sheets.

Lead Partner: UCD

Achievements so far:

Please note that the CoP was previously contained in this sub-activity and has now been moved to 5.1. The inspector@work series started in 2023. It provides real world insights and inspiring examples from Official Inspectors in EU Members States. Establishing a SOP for this series has enabled interviews to be conducted and published in the language of the Member State and therefore improves accessibility. For example, interviews have been conducted in Swedish and French and the article based on the latter has been published in both French and English. Four articles have been published to date in this series.

Description:

The second series of inspector@work will be developed, to further enhance knowledge sharing between official inspectors in EU Member States. In this work programme we will cultivate new communication and dissemination formats. EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* will pilot a new series of audio versions of practice-ready documents such as the Centre's indicator fact sheets for official inspectors to download from the Centre's website. These will include multi-language versions, based on fact sheets that have already been translated. The approach used to create this series will be prepared as an SOP and will be available to the other EURCAWs.

Following annual reviews of priorities and resources, visually engaging infographics of key points from Q2Es and fact sheets may be created and translated into the language capabilities within the Centre. This initiative is based on infographics published by EURCAW *Poultry-SFA*.

Expected output and timing:

1. Series 2 of inspector@work.
2. Publishing a pilot series of audio versions (including current languages) of key EURCAW outputs.
3. Creating a pilot series of infographics of key EURCAW outputs.

Duration: months 1-36.

Sub-activity 5.3 Management and updating of the Care4Dairy website

Objective:

To maintain the Care4Dairy website.

Achievements so far:

The management of the Care4Dairy project was entrusted to EURCAW *Ruminants & Equines* on 1 June 2024. The project developed a website and Smartphone APP and produced approximately 260 outputs (fact sheets, Best Practice Guides, Infographics, Podcasts and Videos) in 7 languages (English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Polish and Spanish) on the welfare of dairy calves, heifers, cows and end of career animals.

Description:

As part of the long-term management and sustainability of Care4Dairy, this sub activity will management the website, including publishing regular news items and a biannual newsletter. Updates regarding the Care4Dairy will be posted on LinkedIn, and the EURCAW website.

Expected output and timing:

Website analytics provided in the MT monthly reports.

Publishing news items (on average 4 per month).

Publishing a biannual newsletter.

Duration: months 1-36.

4. Remarks

N/A