



Terms of reference of the OIE Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe¹

CONSIDERING

1. That animal welfare, including the key component animal health, is the subject of OIE standards and guidelines,
2. That the Technical item of the 25th Regional Conference of the Regional Commission for Europe held in Germany on 17-21 September 2012 was: «Regional steps towards common Animal Welfare approach in Europe»,
3. The [Concept Note](#) “Proposed action to support OIE Member Countries in Eastern Europe in the implementation of the OIE standards on animal health and welfare”, which was drafted and eventually officially endorsed in May 2013,
4. The subsequent launch of the “OIE Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe” (further referred to as “the Platform”), the full implementation of its action plan 2014-2016 and the ongoing implementation of the second action plan 2017-2019,
5. The continuous need to improve the efficiency of veterinary services in the countries of Eastern Europe particularly with respect to the effective implementation of the OIE standards and guidelines on animal welfare, including the key component animal health,
6. The regular movement of animals between the OIE region of Europe and other OIE regions and the need to seek to ensure a consistent and seamless approach by veterinary services along the whole journey,
7. The opinion expressed by the Regional Core Group of the Regional Commission for Europe during the seventh meeting of the Platform in Bern, 17-18 December 2018 and the conclusions of the external evaluation of the Platform conducted in January-April 2019,

The Terms of Reference of the OIE Platform are established as follows.

Objectives of the Platform

The long term objective of the Platform is to improve animal welfare in Europe through activities which will assist Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, particularly in Eastern Europe, to progressively comply with OIE standards on animal welfare and, where relevant, animal health.

¹ Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe during 29th Regional Conference, 9-10 November 2020

Specific outcomes and outputs, responding to regional needs, are defined by the Steering Group and approved by the Regional Commission for Europe for each Action Plan. Regardless of the defined outcomes, the general areas of activities of the Platform are:

- (i) capacity building on animal welfare through workshops, seminars and training programmes;
- (ii) engagement and partnership with stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations and industry associations e.g. through coordination meetings and implementation of projects;
- (iii) transparent exchange on best practices and knowledge on animal welfare and, as appropriate, animal health and veterinary public health.

In order to achieve the long term objective of the Platform, Member Countries to which support is provided are committed to develop, resource and implement appropriate action plans and to feedback to the Platform on their progress towards achieving their specific objectives.

Governance and arrangements of the Platform

The Platform is governed by a Steering Group, under the supervision of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe.

The Secretariat of the Steering Group (further referred to as “the Secretariat”) is ensured by the OIE Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels, with the support from other OIE offices in the region and, when appropriate, from the OIE headquarter.

Responsibilities of the Steering Group

The Steering Group is tasked with

- (i) Providing guidance to the Secretariat for the drafting of the Action Plan, assessing and approving the draft Action Plan before it is submitted to the OIE Regional Commission for Europe for validation;
- (ii) Monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan, providing guidance and recommendations on the activities and, where necessary, approving adjustments;
- (iii) Providing support in terms of methodology, data, resources, fund raising, or any other need expressed by the Secretariat;
- (iv) Liaising with the other members of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe to explain and promote the activities of the Platform and to collect their comments and suggestions.

Responsibilities of the Secretariat

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- (i) Proposing dates, venues and *ad hoc* participants for the Steering Group meetings, ensuring the logistical organisation in coordination with the hosting parties, drafting the agendas and preparing the reports;
- (ii) Drafting the consequent Action Plans of the Platform;
- (iii) Implementing the approved Action Plan of the Platform, including the organisation of activities and the drafting of relevant documents in conjunction with the Steering Group;
- (iv) Monitoring the financial resources and expenses incurred in the implementation of the activities;
- (v) Maintaining and updating the website of the Platform;

- (vi) Reporting to the Steering Group and Regional Core Group of the Regional Commission for Europe.
- (vii) Liaising with civil society, NGOs, professional organisations and potential resource partners to support the objectives of the Platform.

Composition of the Steering Group

- (i) a member of the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe as Chairperson
- (ii) representatives of three Member Countries not part of the European Union or of the European Free Trade Association²,
- (iii) representatives of two Member Countries of the European Union or of the European Free Trade Association¹
- (iv) a representative of the OIE headquarters,
- (v) a representative of the European Commission / DG SANTE,
- (vi) a representative of the OIE Animal Welfare Collaborating Centre in the region,

The Steering Group shall invite resource partners from organisations and Member Countries as Observers and, on an *ad hoc* basis, any other interested parties, notably from the civil society, the industry, professional organizations and NGOs.

Appointment and renewal of the Steering Group members

The Members are selected, for a three-year renewable mandate, by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (during the OIE General Session), considering the sub-regional balance and current priority topics addressed by the Platform. A progressive rotation of the Member Countries is advisable.

Functioning of the Steering Group

The decisions of the Steering Group are based on consensus, with final endorsement by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe.

Member Countries should be represented by their OIE Delegates. On exceptional occasions, where the delegate is unavailable and cannot attend, he/she may be represented by their national focal point on animal welfare or another empowered representative.

The Steering Group meets at least twice a year. Should the Chairperson not be able to attend a meeting of the Steering Group, the chair would be held by the representative of a Member Country approved by the Steering Group.

The participation of the Chairperson and the representatives of the Members Countries is funded by the OIE, provided resources are availability.

Resources of the Platform

The OIE raises the funds needed for the development and implementation of the Action Plan. Funds collected are managed by the OIE Engagement and Investment Department through the OIE World Animal Health and Welfare Fund.

² The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) includes Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

Final provision

The provisions of the present Terms of Reference supersede and replace those provided in the Concept Note³ relating to the same matters.

³ [Concept Note: Proposed action to support OIE Member Countries in Eastern Europe in the implementation of the OIE standards on animal health and welfare. \(Final version endorsed during the 81st OIE General Session in May 2013\)](#)