



# BETTER

COST ACTION CA20103

Biosecurity Enhanced Through  
Training Evaluation and Raising Awareness

# Newsletter

Issue 03 | April 2023



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## 01. Some Words from the Chair

Dear all,

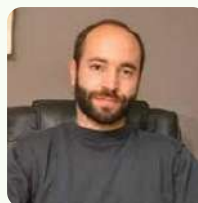
We have been able to engage a big network with an interest in biosecurity and several interesting tasks are on the way. I would just like to thank all of you for your great effort and to encourage you to maintain your motivation during this interesting project.



**Alberto Allepuz**  
Chair

Autonomous University of  
Barcelona

 Spain



**Illias Chantziras**  
Vice-Chair

Ghent University

 Belgium

02.

# Recent event update: Ghent meeting

(7th – 8th of February 2023)



**BETTER**



On day 1 of the meeting, a plenary session was held on the topic of challenges on implementation of biosecurity and training needs, with views from the European Commission (Jean–Charles Cavitte, EC), the field veterinarians (Nancy De Briyne, FVE), the farmers (Alain Cantaloube, FESASS) and academia Jeroen Dewulf (UGent). All presentations are available on the repository of the action’s website. A brief presentation of each of them follows.

## Jean–Charles Cavitte

(DG AGRI F2 – Research and Innovation, European Commission) presented an overview of past and running EU R&I projects linked to animal health. Specifically focusing on biosecurity, he presented the objectives of three projects, NETPOULSAFE MA (Oct2020 – Sep2023), BIOSECURE MA (Jan2023 – Dec2026) and HE–FARM MA (Nov2022–Oct2025). Mr Cavitte also shared the results of an EIP–AGRI workshop on biosecurity at farm level<sup>1</sup>. From the workshop, it was concluded, among others, that any lack of information and/or motivation among the farmers should be addressed to improve biosecurity.

## Nancy De Briyne

(FVE Executive Director) gave a presentation focusing on the regular veterinary advisory visits and the challenges on implementation of biosecurity and training needs of veterinarians. Ms De Briyne stressed the fact that, according to the EU Animal Health Strategy (2007–2013), promoting biosecurity should be an essential part of veterinary advisory visits. She also described the benefits of preventive, risk–based animal health visits, by referring to the Animal Health Law (Art. 25 AHL) and the FVE position paper (adopted 10/2021)<sup>2</sup>. Finally, Ms De Briyne presented results of the second FVE survey on regular animal health visits in 2022.

Some results include the biggest obstacles to implement preventive visits and opinions on whether more training or guidance is needed for veterinary practitioners to implement preventive visits, such as the lack of legislative pressure and

1. [https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/sites/default/files/field\\_event\\_attachments/2015–ws–biosecurity\\_report\\_20150618\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/sites/default/files/field_event_attachments/2015–ws–biosecurity_report_20150618_0.pdf)

2. [https://fve.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/061–AHL–visits\\_adopted.pdf](https://fve.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/061–AHL–visits_adopted.pdf)

the need for more training or guidance for veterinary practitioners to implement preventive visits.

## Alain Cantaloube

(FESASS Secretary General) presented views from the farmers regarding the implementation of biosecurity and training needs. He expressed that despite some key constraints (i.e. no zero risk exists, thus there is need to keep curative means), biosecurity is an important investment and an economic driver.

Regarding biosecurity implementation, Mr Cantaloube stressed that what is most difficult to implement are the measures to avoid closer contact between wild populations (e.g. badgers, boars) and farmed animals. Moreover, he highlighted the needs of farmers’ understanding and ownership, which can be ensured through information and training, and a pragmatic biosecurity approach (flexibility, cost).

## Jeroen Dewulf

(Prof. Veterinary Epidemiology, UGent) presented a view from academia regarding biosecurity implementation and training needs. He highlighted the need for evidence based, cost effective, applied biosecurity, that is adapted to the current and future production systems.

He presented the BIOSECURE MA (Horizon Europe Farm2Fork Project, Jan2023 – Dec2026) project and its main objectives. Prof Dewulf stressed that the focus of training and education should be on health and prevention using a proactive approach. This training should be available for all stakeholders (incl. veterinary education, agricultural education, veterinary services, breeders) and include different aspects (e.g. training on principles, development of biosecurity plan, application of measures).



JC Cavitte



J. Dewulf, JC Cavitte, N De Briyne, A Cantaloube



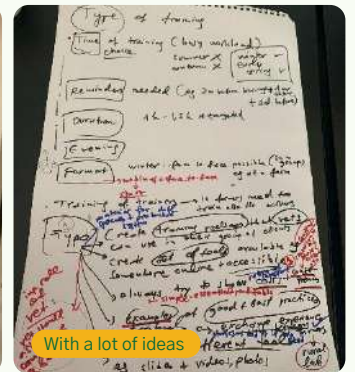
## World café on stakeholder’s engagement

A World Café was organized under WP4. A total of 78 participants were involved in the World café with 4 tables of discussion in order to emerge ideas on needs and expectation related to livestock biosecurity training. Each table considered a type of actors (i.e. private veterinarians, farmers, veterinary students, and other stakeholders).

At the end of each round of discussions, the participants ranked the most important needs and expectations by each type of actors. A restitution was organized to share information between all COST Action members.



“Serious” brainstorming



With a lot of ideas

03.

# Work in Progress


**BETTER**

## What are the different working groups doing at this moment?

### WG1

#### “Mapping biosecurity measures applied on farms and transport across Europe”

A data collection tool created to capture biosecurity practices applied in animal production systems was presented and discussed with participants during recent meeting in Ghent. Moreover, discussion related to the second WG1 objective, related to biosecurity measures implemented in extensive livestock systems has been initiated. In addition to the active subgroups for terrestrial animals (pigs, cattle, poultry), a new subgroup for aquaculture has been integrated in WG1.

Further info contact WG leaders:

Jasna Prodanov-Radulovic (jasna@niv.ns.ac.rs) or Telmo Nunes (tnunes@fmv.ulisboa.pt)

### WG2

#### “Scaling-up the knowledge and experience of stakeholders”

Preliminary results on the survey for consumers to assess their perception of biosecurity and the role they could play in disease spread were presented in Ghent. The survey has been reopened to gather more responses. The literature reviews on the social, economic, and psychological factors affecting the decision-making to implement biosecurity measures by farmers, veterinarians and traders are progressing. We hope to present preliminary results in our next meeting.

Further info contact WG leaders:

Maria Costa (maria.costa@sruc.ac.uk) or Giovanna Ciaravino (giovanna.ciaravino@uab.cat)

### WG3

#### “Methods for evaluation of biosecurity and benefits of its implementation”

The data collection through the online survey about methods currently used in different countries to assess biosecurity is still open and being filled in by representatives in the participating countries. We plan to finish data collection before summer 2023. The literature review on methods to assess biosecurity and to demonstrate the benefits of implementing biosecurity has begun with a calibration of the participating reviewers in Ghent. Before summer we will proceed with reviewing the 4000 abstracts identified in the systematic search.

Further info contact WG leaders:

Lena-Mari Tamminen (lena.mari.tamminen@slu.se) or Miroslav Kjosevski (miro@fvm.ukim.edu.mk)

### WG4

#### “Training and dissemination”

WG4 participants are working on the identification of training needs on biosecurity among different stakeholders. A new online survey has been created and a collaboration with the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe has been established to map existing training, research projects and training needs.

Further info contact WG leaders:

Claude Saegerman (claude.saegerman@uliege.be) or Tarmo Niine (tarmo.niine@emu.ee) or Niemi Jarkko (jarkko.niemi@luke.fi)

## Science communication

To increase the communication and visibility of our work, together with the development of the [Action's webpage](#), a LinkedIn and a Twitter account have been set up: COST BETTER (LinkedIn) and BETTERbiosecurity (Twitter). We are happy that the number of followers of these accounts keeps rising and counts over 400 followers in total (03/2023).

We invite you to follow these pages, so that you stay updated for useful and interesting information linked to the activities of the Action and biosecurity! We also invite all of you to share information about activities linked to the Action and biosecurity! You can easily do this by typing @COST BETTER in your LinkedIn post, and @BETTERcost in your Twitter post.



Marilena Filippitzi  
Science Communication Coordinator  
(mefilippi@vet.auth.gr)

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH)  
Greece

## Webinar series

Our COST action BETTER will launch (May 2023) a series of webinars focusing on various topics related to farm biosecurity, please, if you are interested on participating as a speaker or you have ideas of relevant topics to be covered, you can express your interest or suggest the topic.



FURTHER INFO CAN BE FOUND HERE

## Dissemination activities

Marco De Nardi, Ilias Chantziaras, Maria-Eleni Filippitzi, Carla Stoffel and Alberto Allepuz introduced EU COST Action BETTER in the [ECVPH Annual Scientific Conference](#) held in Greece between 28 and 30 September 2022

Alberto Allepuz introduced EU COST Action BETTER and invited delegates to join the action at a Webinar for the World Animal Biosecurity Association (WABA) on the 17<sup>th</sup> february and the 16<sup>th</sup> march 2023.

Jasna Prodanov-Radulović, Telmo Nunes, Ilias Chantziaras, Branislav Kureljušić, Alessandra Piccirillo, Giuditta Tilli and Alberto Allepuz will present some results related with WG1 activities (“Mapping biosecurity measures applied on different animal production systems across Europe – Progress of COST Action BETTER”) in the [15<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of EPIZONE](#) that will be held in Serbia next 26 – 28 of April

## 04. Upcoming Events



### MEETING

## Next meeting location

Our next BETTER meeting will be conducted in Tirana (Albania) from the 20 to the 21st of June 2023. Further details will follow, but please, for the moment **SAVE THE DATE**. You can begin to explore Tirana by clicking the button below.



## 05. STSM and VM Grants

We have prepared a very attractive number of STSM and VM with several opportunities to get involved in the project. Please, click the button below.

Deadline for application is the 28th of April.



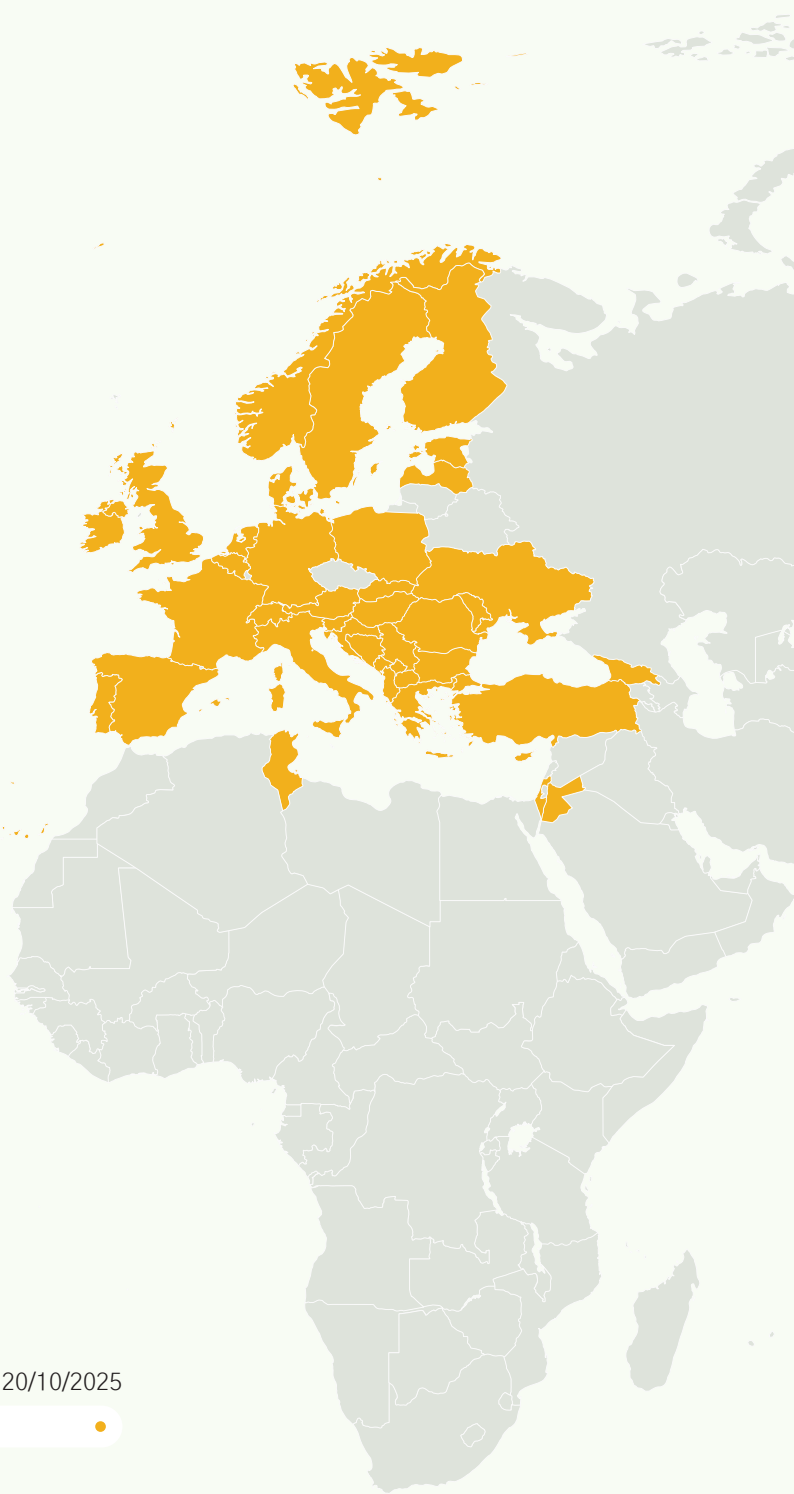


**BETTER**

06.

# BETTER in Numbers

- 45** Countries participating
- 35** Full COST Members
- 02** Near Neighbor Countries: Jordania, Tunisia
- 06** International Partner Countries: Australia, Argentina, Burkina Faso, India, Canada and New Zealand
- 01** COST Partner Member: Israel
- 296** Members participating in the Working Groups
- 54** Management Committee members
- 05** 2 Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) and 3 Virtual mobility grants conducted
- 01** Training School



**37.5% of Action time completed by April 2023**

Start date – 21/10/2021

End date – 20/10/2025



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