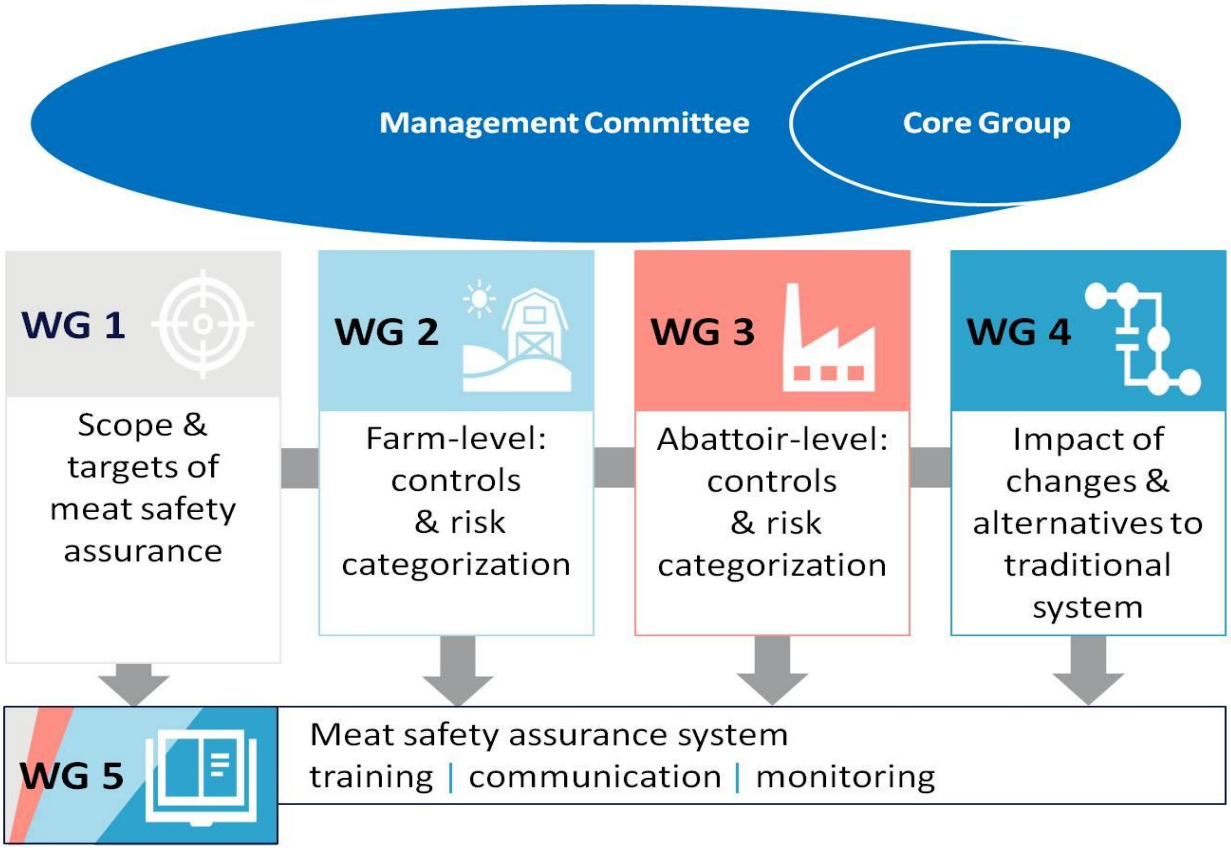
Modernisation of meat inspection coming to the agenda world-wide

This was clearly shown by the **1st Scientific Conference on Risk Based Meat Inspection and Integrated Meat Safety Assurance**, held online on October 15 and 16, 2020 under the umbrella of the EU COST Action RIBMINS (2019-2023). More than 200 people from 40 countries and 5 continents actively attended. The two keynote speakers, directly involved in the modernisation of meat inspection, stressed the importance of the work done in RIBMINS:

Kris De Smet, EU Commission: *"The RIBMINS activities indeed contribute to the scientific and technological developments envisioned in the recent changes of the EU legislation as referred to in Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/627"*

Blaise Ouattara, FAO: *"RIBMINS activities can be very useful to the Low- and Medium income countries. Many of them are just starting to put emphasis on the integration of risk-based approaches into their food control systems - including identification of risk factors associated with meat slaughtering establishments. I see opportunities for partnership with RIBMINS in the capacity building and improvement of the meat value chain "*

The keynote lectures were followed by presentations of the different RIBMINS working groups WG1 - WG4:



Each WG session included several brief presentations of the scientific work conducted in line with the scientific scope of RIBMINS. All talks gave rise to lively discussions with the audience, and we would like to share with you the progress and conclusions in some key areas:

WG1: Scope and targets of meat safety assurance

It appears the time is ripe for a more risk-based meat safety assurance system after 80 years of discussion. A novel insight is that impetus is global rather than European. The Covid-19 pandemic appears to accelerate these changes.

WG2: Farm-level: controls & risk categorization

As meat inspection must be risk-based, an exchange of relevant and meaningful information between all stages of the production chain is indispensable. Within the RIBMINS COST Action, exchange of information (e.g. food chain information & harmonized epidemiological indicators) between farmers, official veterinarians and food business operators as well as improvement of the content and the application of information have been investigated. The possibility for interventions targeted at zoonotic agents at herd level is being taken into account.

WG3: Abattoir-level: controls & risk categorization

Some of the key components of a risk-based meat safety assurance system at abattoir level are systems to detect contamination and interventions to control meat safety. The RIBMINS COST Action covers both these components. Some interventions to reduce microbiological hazards in beef, sheep, pork and broiler chickens have been identified as highly effective. Computer based vision systems for meat inspection have been developed and used predominantly for broiler chicken inspection.

WG4: Impact of changes and alternatives to the traditional system

The presentations revealed a wide interest in updating, harmonizing and innovating the way we approach meat safety, animal health and welfare. How culture, systems and technologies have an impact on our work and contribution to our society has been recognized. Our members and stakeholders will continue exploring the strengths and opportunities, and curtailing weaknesses and threats in updating meat inspection.

You can download the proceedings, posters and presentations given at the conference: **https://ribmins.com/ribmins-conference-and-mc-meeting-online/** Recorded talks with presentations will be on the same web page online after editing.

RIBMINS is open to all interested parties and we encourage anyone with a lively interest in meat safety assurance to become a RIBMINS member. Please refer to the RIBMINS homepage for additional information: **www.ribmins.com**