



RIBMINS network during the project Conference in Copenhagen (Denmark) in November 2019

A word from the RIBMINS leaders

Welcome and thank you for reading the RIBMINS Newsletter. RIBMINS is an acronym for a four-year COST Action CA18105: «Risk-based meat inspection and integrated meat safety assurance» (2019-2023).

This issue is the first of a series of newsletters that aims to update project members and stakeholders on progress and key outputs from the project, together with news on activities organised.

We sincerely hope you will find this way of communication useful and be able to join some of our future events.

Bojan and Lis



Bojan Blagojevic, Chair
University of Novi Sad, Serbia.



Lis Alban, Vice-chair
Danish Agriculture and Food Council,
University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

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Upcoming events 2021

3-5th February 2021

**Online Training School on
Future Meat Safety**

Read more about the event [here](#)



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About RIBMINS

Traditional meat inspection systems cannot necessarily be able to detect current public health hazards but can increase the risk of cross-contamination through physical examination. The current meat inspection criteria of meat inspection are under revision in the light of the knowledge of food science, and there is an urgent need to modernize the meat safety systems through a risk-based approach.

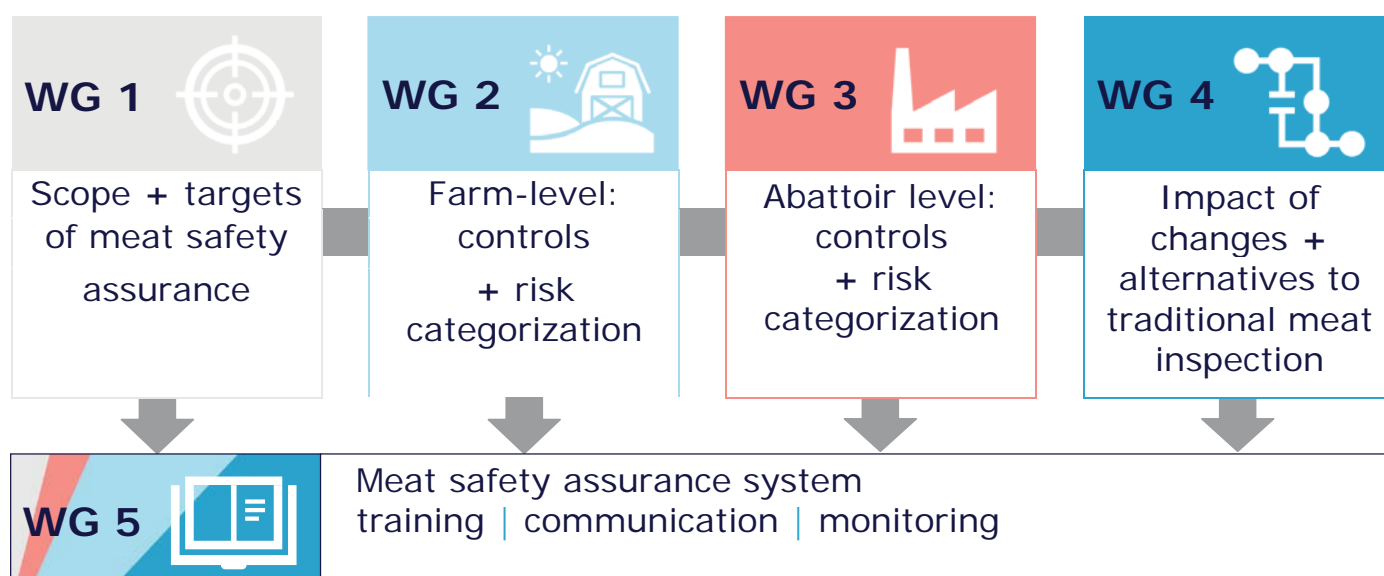
The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has proposed a generic framework for a modern, flexible and dynamic risk-based meat safety assurance system. The new EU COST action "Risk-based meat inspection and integrated meat safety assurance" (RIBMINS) aims to develop a network to combine and strengthen European-wide research efforts on modern meat safety control systems in line with EFSA's proposal.

The RIBMINS network allows for the exchange of ideas, experience and results of country-level research studies that emphasise improving meat inspection. Overall, the network aims to help the full development and implementation of the new meat safety assurance system across Europe for the benefit of consumers and industry, and protection of animal health and welfare.

To ensure the ability of RIBMINS to maximise full and effective implementation of the new meat safe system, five working groups (WG) have been established that work on different aspects of RIBMINS. In WG1, the scope and targets of meat safety assurance are mapped. In WG2, farm-level controls and risk categorisation of farms as well as potential improvements in the food chain information are assessed. In WG3, the effectiveness of new tools and

methods for the detection of carcass contamination and performance of food safety management systems in abattoirs are documented and discussed. The impact of changes and alternatives to traditional meat inspection are addressed in WG4. The core activities of WG5 are meat safety assurance system training, communication and monitoring, which will all ensure that our Action has the largest possible outreach.

The optimal benefits of all WGs will contribute to moving from the traditional meat inspection system towards a modern, flexible and dynamic risk-based safety assurance system. The implementation of research-based measures will contribute to improving food safety and animal welfare.



Work progress 2019-2020

► **WG1 - Scope and targets of meat safety assurance system (MSAS)**

Leader: Ivar Vågsholm (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SE), vice-leader Milen Georgiev (Food Standards Agency, UK)

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 be accelerating these changes.

► **WG2 - Controls and risk categorization at farm level**

Leader: Diana Meemken (Freie University of Berlin, DE), vice-leader: Truls Nesbakken (Norwegian University of Life Sciences, NO)

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 & harmonised 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 and risk categorization of abattoirs**

Leader: Dragan Antic (University of Liverpool, UK), vice-leader: Kurt Houf (University of Gent, BE)

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, pigs 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 traditional meat inspection**

Leader: Ole Alvseike (Animalia, NO), vice-leader: Miguel Prieto-Maradona (University of Leon, ES)

There is a wide interest in updating, harmonising 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 recognised. Our members and stakeholders will continue exploring the strengths and opportunities, and curtailing weaknesses and threats in updating meat inspection.

► **WG5 - Meat safety assurance system, training, communication and monitoring**

Leader: Sophia Johler (University of Zurich, CH), vice-leader: Claudia Guldemann (Ludwig-Maximilians Universität München, DE)

European stakeholders from the industry, authorities and the academia have been mapped and engaged into the RIBMINS network. Social media accounts for the project are active on different platforms such as LinkedIn, Research Gate and Twitter, which allow dissemination of the project development updates and discussion of food safety challenges and news with an interested audience.

Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM)

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) are funded institutional visits that aim at supporting mobility and collaboration between individuals and institutions. A STSM should contribute to specific objectives of the project. STSM grantees gain the opportunity to learn new techniques as well as access data, instruments and/or methods that are not available in their own institutions.

► *STSM guidelines for RIBMINS are accessible [here](#).* ► *To check for open STSM call, please check [here](#).*

STSM experiences

Gunvor Elise Gravning

Animalia, Norway

*STSM at the University of Liverpool
2nd–7th February, 2020*



"The main purpose of the STSM was to contribute to the systematic review of available literature on the scientific research in intervention measures for sheep, to obtain quantitative information on the reduction of bacterial loads in the sheep production chain.

For me, the STSM was a very effective way to learn, increase my network and contribute to future collaborations on further research with results being applicable to both the UK and Norway but also with a wider relevance for other countries. I can warmly recommend others to apply and attend a STSM; it was an inspiring experience that added enthusiasm to my daily work tasks!"

► [Read more about Gunvor's experience](#)

Ian Woolsey

Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway

*STSM at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
13th–17th January, 2020*



"The work conducted was highly relevant to the project I am involved in at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) and considering an emphasis on animal welfare in the RIBMINS Cost Action I deemed it worthwhile applying for the STSM.

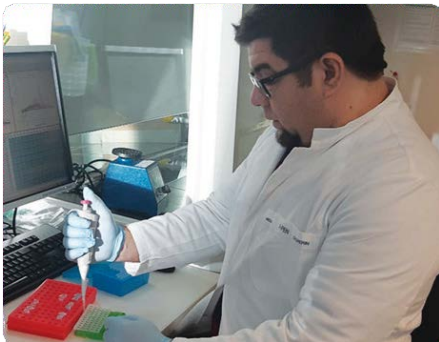
This trip was incredibly useful for me for several reasons: I connected with numerous researchers in a field that I was relatively new to, which will no doubt be beneficial in the coming months and years when I am working on my current project, and of course longer term, in light of project applications and so on. Secondly, I received a very good introduction to ddPCR, a technique that is likely to be highly relevant to numerous fields, including parasitology for at least the next decade but most likely longer."

► [Read more about Ian's experience](#)

Nevijo Zdolec

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb, Croatia

STSM at the University of Helsinki
2nd-9th February, 2020



"My STSM activities resulted in improving my skills in epidemiological sampling and analyses, sampling design in relation to population size (farm), prevalence/incidence estimation, categorization of pig farms related to main biological hazards..."

..."

► [Read more about Nevijo's experience](#)

Egon Andoni

Agricultural University of Tirana, Albania

STSM at the University of Perugia
5th-24th February, 2020



"The focus of the STSM was a Microbiological risk assessment (MRA) on poultry processing at

the slaughterhouse. To identify the most important steps in the slaughter process, from a risk perspective, a flow diagram for a poultry slaughtering plant was constructed. An accurate survey of poultry carcass at different slaughtering stages was performed at an industrial abattoir, evaluating the microbial loads on the carcass and equipment surfaces."

► [Read more about Egon's experience](#)

Nikola Tuneski

The Saints Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, Republic of Macedonia

STSM at the University of Belgrade
5th-17th December, 2019



"The focus was to study the possibilities for application of modern statistical techniques for meeting

one of the main objectives of market surveillance in general, that is perform appropriate checks on the characteristics of products on an adequate scale."

► [Read more about Nikola's experience](#)

Dragan Antic

University of Liverpool, United Kingdom

STSM at the University of Novi Sad
8th-27th December, 2019



"The main aim of this STSM was to perform a systematic review of available literature on the scientific

research in intervention measures for beef, to obtain quantitative information on the reduction of bacterial loads in the minced beef production chain. The review looked at the outcome of interventions on a range of bacterial indicators and foodborne pathogens. It provides a robust estimate of interventions' effectiveness that can deliver more evidence-based data for risk management decisions."

► [Read more about Dragan's experience](#)

RIBMINS Scientific Conference

On October 15 and 16, 2020, the first scientific conference of the RIBMINS COST Action was held in online format due to the current COVID 19 pandemic. More than 200 participants from 40 countries and 5 continents attended the conference.

towards the modernisation of meat inspection, described the main outcomes of the EFSA scientific opinions on this topic published over the period 2011-2013 and addressed the most recent revisions of the EU legislation in this specific context.

and posters were presented under the topics of the different WGs. Grantees of STSMs over the last year shared their experiences with the audience. Overall, STSMs were a unique opportunity for networking, developing new skills and implementing new projects.



It was a valuable occasion to stimulate the discussion among participants about different aspects related to the modernisation of meat inspection and to summarise all the activities carried out in the framework of the RIBMINS project over its first year of implementation.

Kris de Smet (EU Commission) was the first keynote speaker, who illustrated the EU process

The day after, **Blaise Ouattara** (FAO), the second keynote speaker, stressed the worldwide need to adopt risk-based meat inspection practices, which are essential processes to trigger the global success of meat inspection systems.

The leaders of each WG summarised the activities implemented during the first year of the project. Several presentations

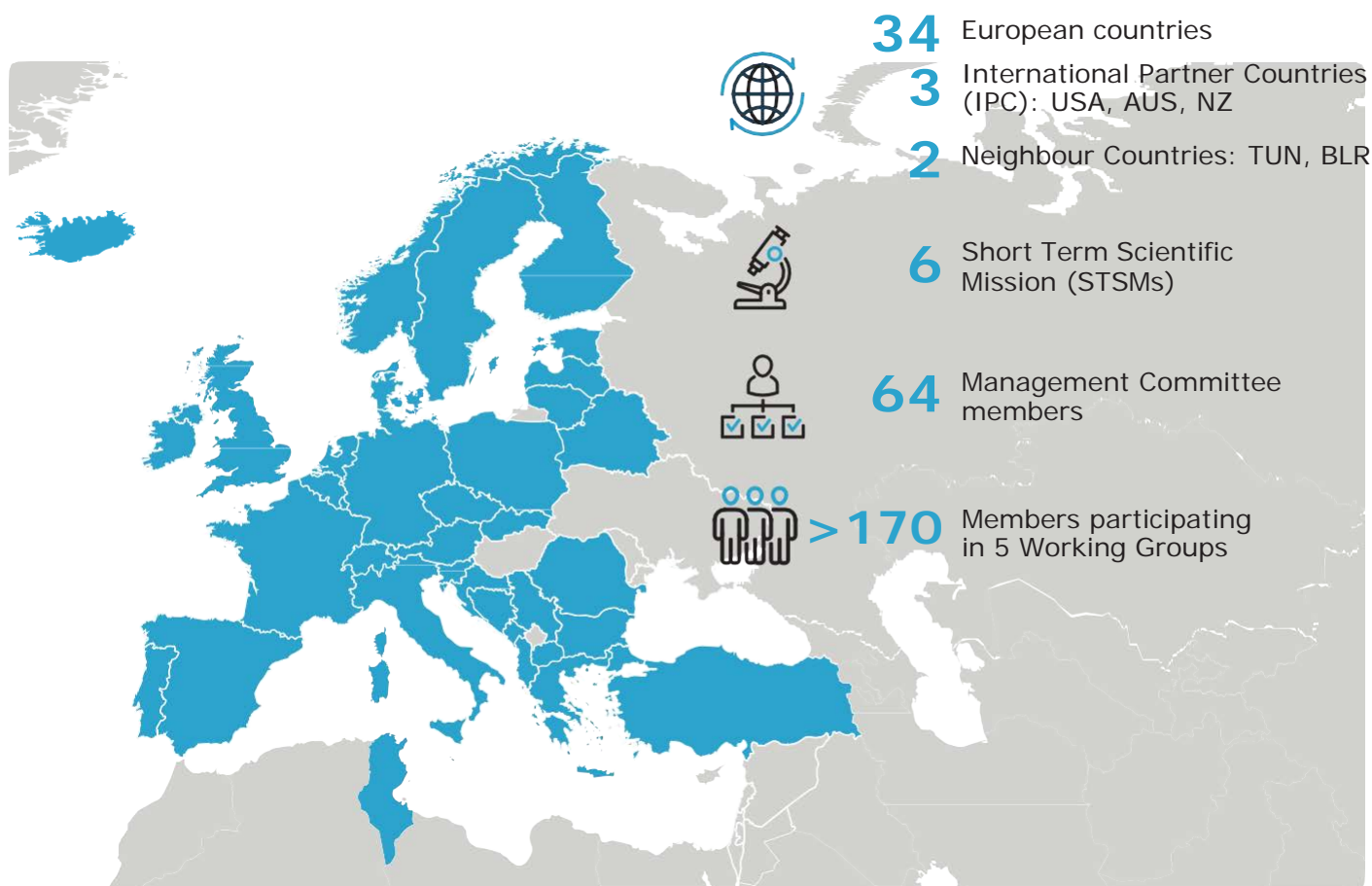
development of the meat production processes at different levels, and these technological developments are going faster than regulations.

► All the material about the conference (proceedings, presentations and posters) can be found at: <https://ribmins.com/ribmins-conference-and-mc-meeting-online/>

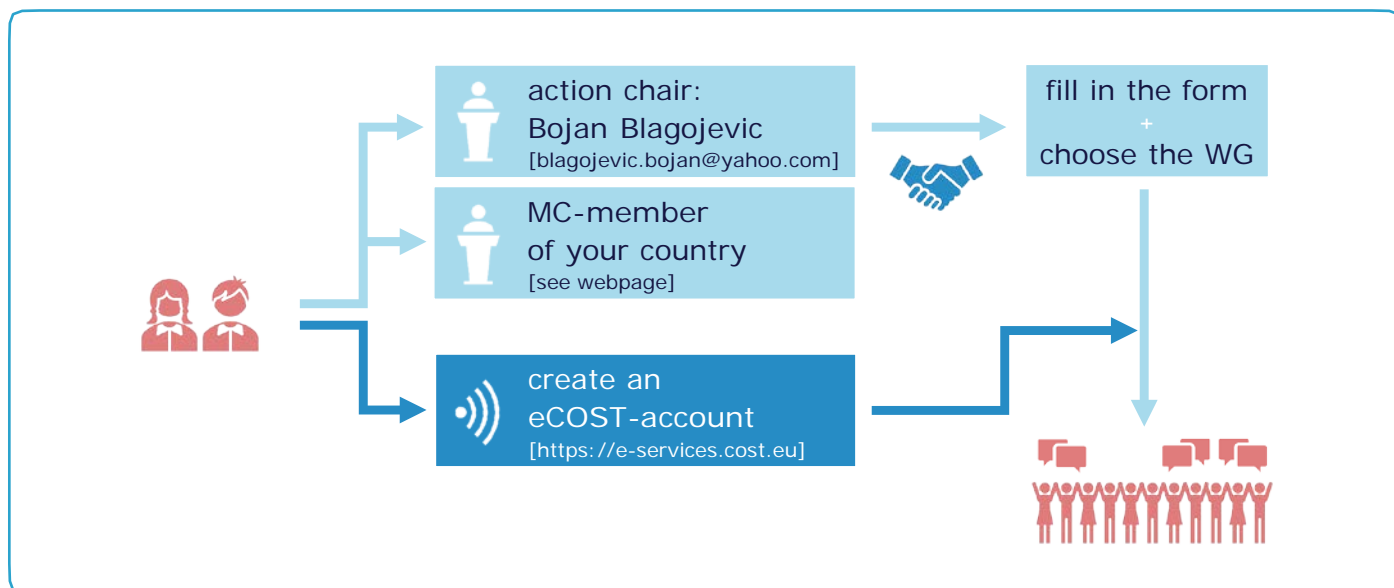
Past meetings

Dates	Who	Where
4 th March 2019	Management Committee (MC) (kick-off meeting)	Brussels, Belgium
25-26 th June 2019	WG4 meeting	Oslo, Norway
22-24 th October 2019	WG2 meeting	Berlin, Germany
7-8 th November 2019	WG meetings and workshops	Copenhagen, Denmark
21-22 nd January 2020	WG3 meeting	Belgrade, Serbia
4-5 th February 2020	WG1 meeting	Sofia, Bulgaria
5-6 th March 2020	WG5 meeting	Zurich, Switzerland

RIBMINS in numbers



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<http://www.linkedin.com/groups/8823148>



<https://www.researchgate.net/project/COST-Action-Riskbased-meat-inspection-and-integrated-meat-safety-assurance-RIBMINS-CA18105>

