

Report on the outcomes of a Virtual Mobility¹

Action number: CA17110

Grantee name: Ms Pureza Duarte Ferreira

Virtual Mobility Details

Title: SOUND control Virtual Mobility grant: applying the top-down approach in Portugal to better understand the decision-making process in the cattle trade.

Start and end date: 10/06/2022 to 10/07/2022

Description of the work carried out during the VM

The purpose of this COST Action was to develop methods for Standardizing output-based surveillance to control non-regulated diseases in the EU (SOUND control).

In this VM, I applied the top-down approach in Portugal, a questionnaire/interview script created by working group 4 (WG4) to better understand the role of different stakeholders in the cattle trade process throughout Europe. The questionnaire included open-ended questions aimed at determining the awareness level, motivations and contribution of a wide range of stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the decision-making process for the intracommunity cattle trade.

Firstly, the questionnaire was translated from English to Portuguese. Then, Prof. Jacinto Gomes (IP Portalegre, Portugal) established a first contact with the suitable candidates in which he explained the objectives of the project and invited them to participate. To those who showed interest in collaborating, I was responsible for contacting them by phone or email in order to detail the project goals and implement the questionnaire. Although telephone interviews were considered the best approach to gather more complete information, only 4 were conducted and were recorded for later transcription into an excel database. Thus, the e-mail response method was the preferred one by the candidates.

Breeding associations, animal health organizations, auction sale companies and laboratories were also targeted as potential participants. For this purpose, the various associations/organizations were contacted by email. Due to a low response rate, a reminder was issued in the form of a phone call.

From a total of 72 stakeholders that were approached, 22 responses were obtained and answers were inserted into an excel sheet and translated from Portuguese to English. The final

¹ This report is submitted by the grantee to the Action MC for approval and for claiming payment of the awarded grant. The Grant Awarding Coordinator coordinates the evaluation of this report on behalf of the Action MC and instructs the GH for payment of the Grant.

excel sheet was provided to the coordinators of the study in order to be used in the global analysis.

The number of stakeholders that were interviewed/answered the questionnaire per type is provided below:

- Beef industry - 2
- Dairy industry- 1
- Government- 1
- Private laboratory- 3
- National reference laboratory- 2
- Breeding association- 4
- Private practice veterinarian- 6
- Animal health organization- 3

Description of the VM main achievements and planned follow-up activities

This VM accomplished its goals. I was able to apply the top-down approach in Portugal and therefore contributed to the consortium efforts to collect data from multiple countries enrolled in this COST Action. The development of the database with the translation of the responses collected in Portugal contributes to the global analysis and the comparison of results of the top-down approach applied in different countries.

My participation in the project allowed me to get to know and interact with different types of stakeholders from whom I learnt about the decision-making process regarding the purchase of cattle in Europe. Their various perspectives allowed me to better understand the reality in Portugal, including positive and weak aspects and improvements to be implemented.

It also allowed me to broaden and maintain an extensive network with both national and international researchers and several stakeholders which may open opportunities for future collaborations.

I will remain involved in the project as it will be written a paper with the results of the top-down approach.