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VETER 126

'I' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee
Subject:	Attendance of representatives of the EFTA countries and the Chief Veterinary Officer for Northern Ireland at the Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Questions (Chief Veterinary Officers) on 15 and 17 September 2026 in Kilkenny, Ireland <i>- Approval</i>

The Presidency would like to invite the following third parties to attend the meeting of the Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Questions (Chief Veterinary Officers) on 15 and 17 September 2026 in Kilkenny, Ireland:

- representatives of the member countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA countries)
- a member of the Governance Review Committee (GRC) of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)
- Chief Veterinary Officer for Northern Ireland
- a representative of Animal Health Ireland (AHI)
- a representative of University College Dublin Centre of Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis (UCD CVERA)

The purpose of the attendance of the representatives of the EFTA countries is to contribute to the discussion and share information on risk communication, biothreats and managing animal diseases at the wildlife-livestock interface, which are cross-border challenges and core themes of the Presidency's agenda. Inviting the EFTA countries to share their experiences will facilitate the exchange of best practices, strengthen regional cooperation and enhance preparedness for and resilience to One Health challenges across Europe.

Additionally, their attendance will facilitate the alignment of the EFTA countries' positions related to WOAHP with those of the EU.

The purpose of the attendance of the member of the GRC is to report back on the Committee's 11th meeting and to share information on the preparations for its 12th meeting.

The purpose of the attendance of the Chief Veterinary Officer for Northern Ireland is to contribute to the discussions on risk communication and managing animal diseases at the wildlife-livestock interface. His attendance should be understood in the context of North-South cooperation under the Good Friday Agreement and on the specific and limited subject of technical veterinary collaboration on shared animal health risks.

The purpose of the attendance of the representatives of AHI and UCD CVERA is to contribute to the discussion on risk communication.

The Presidency considers that the attendance of these third parties is in the interest of the Council and complies with the framework applicable to the occasional presence of third parties at meetings of the Council or its preparatory bodies, as set out in the comments on the Council's Rules of Procedure.

In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to approve the attendance of the representatives of EFTA countries, of the member of the GRC, of the Chief Veterinary Officer for Northern Ireland and of the representatives of AHI and UCD CVERA at the meeting of the Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Questions (Chief Veterinary Officers) on 15 and 17 September 2026 in Kilkenny, Ireland.