Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

PUBLIC

Brussels, 31 July 2026

WK 11100/2026 INIT

LIMITE

VETER
AGRI
AGRILEG
CODEC

REDACTED DOCUMENT
ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
(07.09.2026).
ONLY MARGINAL PERSONAL DATA
HAVE BEEN REDACTED.

This is a paper intended for a specific community of recipients. Handling and further distribution are under the sole responsibility of community members.

MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	Presidency
To:	Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Questions (Animal Welfare)
N° Cion doc.:	16405 2023 + ADD 1
Subject:	Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Questions (Animal Welfare) on 1 and 2 September 2026 - Presidency flash

In view of the above meeting, delegations will find in Annex the Presidency flash.

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

PUBLIC

PRESIDENCY FLASH

Meeting of the Working Party on Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Questions

1 – 2 September 2026, 10:00

Member States attendance will be limited to 2+2

When	Where	Format
1 September 2026 10:00	LEX 2	2+2
2 September 2026 10:00	LEX 2	2+2

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to invite you to the second meeting of the Animals and Veterinary Questions (Animal Welfare and Husbandry) Working Party under the Irish Presidency. The meeting takes place on 1 and 2 September 2026 in Brussels.

It is our great pleasure to also invite you to join us for an evening reception on Tuesday 1 September 18:00 – 20:00 in the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union located on Rue Froissart 50, 1040 Brussels. Please register by 17:00 on 27 August at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/working-party-on-animal-welfare-irish-presidency-reception-tickets-1995652867448?aff=oddtdtcreator

Firstly, we would like to thank Member States, the General Secretariat of the Council and the European Commission for their support and collaboration on our objective to progress this file to date.

The Working Party will continue the examination of the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals during transport and related operations. The meeting will examine the clean consolidated text circulated in documents ST 12192/26 INIT & 12193/26.

Adoption of EU Livestock Strategy

The Presidency would like to acknowledge the adoption of the EU Strategy on Livestock on 7 July 2026, which represents a significant milestone for a resilient, competitive and sustainable livestock sector. As noted by the Strategy, livestock farming provides high-quality food, supports millions of

PUBLIC

jobs, maintains landscapes, contributes to biodiversity and helps sustain the vitality of rural areas across the European Union.

The Strategy recognises that Europe's livestock systems are as diverse as its territories, from mountain grazing systems and Mediterranean pastoralism to mixed family farms and specialised production systems, each contributing in different ways to food security, territorial cohesion, climate resilience and the European bioeconomy. This diversity is especially important for farmers in peripheral regions including mountainous and northern areas and Eastern border regions, where livestock farming is often the sole viable economic activity and where its loss would risk depopulation and reduced resilience to crisis.

As outlined in the Strategy, the Union's response to an increasingly hard-edged global economy is to make the objectives of resilience, competitiveness, sustainability, territoriality, and excellence mutually reinforcing as the European way of livestock farming. This will serve to protect the livelihoods of these farmers and preserve the essential contribution they make to their communities and to the Union as a whole. The text of the Strategy can be viewed here: agriculture.ec.europa.eu/overview-vision-agriculture-food/eu-livestock-strategy

Agenda

The Working Party will continue the examination of the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals during transport and related operations. The consolidated Articles in document ST 12192/26 and the consolidated Annexes in document 12193/26 will serve as the basis for discussion during the meeting.

The Presidency has worked to enhance the clarity and readability of the compromise text. Amendments made to the structure, wording and contents are aimed at producing a text that can be better understood by all stakeholders. A clearer text will promote consistent interpretation, harmonised application and effective enforcement, resulting in improved animal welfare outcomes.

In circulating the clean consolidated text, the Presidency wishes to acknowledge that, following consultation with Member States, several issues require further consideration. These relate in particular to Chapter VI and Chapter VII of the Articles and Chapter VII of Annex I, in respect of which the most comments were received.

PUBLIC

We understand that it is a considerable exercise for delegations to reflect on the clean consolidated Articles and Annexes in advance of the meeting. We have undertaken this effort as we wish to be ambitious in terms of our programme, and we know that delegations share our ambition to drive progress on this file. In that spirit, we would ask that you raise your most critical issues in advance of or during the meeting so that we may consider them and reflect on the way forward.

On the first day of the Working Party meeting, we intend to discuss Chapters I to V and X to XII of the Articles. On the second day, we intend to discuss Chapters VI, VII, VIII and IX of the Articles and Chapter VII of Annex I. We would ask delegations for flexibility in this approach depending on the rate of progress as we work through the text.

Please note that in the circulated documents, changes with respect to the Commission proposal have been marked in bold and italics for insertions and strikethrough for deletions. We look forward to guiding productive discussions on the proposed text over the two days.
In relation to the outstanding Annexes, Annex III and Annex V, these are at an advanced stage and will shortly be ready to publish for the views of the Working Party. To reflect and account for the progress that has been made on these Annexes, changes have been made throughout the consolidated Articles to update the previous references to templates or forms in either Annex.

For example, in cases where certain certificates are required, the text of the Articles may read that the relevant certificate shall be completed "using *column X* of *template Y* of Annex V".

Chapter I

With regard to Article 1, and as mentioned during the July Working Party meeting, the Commission will deliberate on the possibility of issuing guidance on the definition of "transport in connection with an economic activity" to assist Member States in achieving a harmonised approach.

In Article 2, the exemptions now cover transport by farmers or **their own staff** of their own animals, with an increased 75km threshold. Exemptions have been introduced for the transport of reindeer, transport for the purpose of exercising public authority, and transport in case of natural disasters or catastrophic events, where there is an immediate threat to the welfare of the animals.

PUBLIC

The exemption for the exercise of public authority encompasses the previous exemption for military and police dogs but is expanded to take into account broader situations where the transport is taking place in connection with the exercise of public authority, for instance border control or prison services where these are not categorised by Member States as police services. The exemption for the transport of purebred horses has now been limited to a narrower scope, in that it only applies in cases of transport for the purpose of breeding or sale at auction.

In Article 3, the definitions of attendant (point 13) and animal welfare officer (point 15) have been amended. This is to require the presence of animal welfare officers as the persons in charge of animal welfare on well-boats, as well as on livestock and container vessels. The change is made to ensure consistency with Articles 19 & 21. Additionally, the change reflects the need for a supervisory role to oversee crew members involved in animal handling. It should be noted that the training requirements for animal welfare officers and attendants remain the same.

The definition of break period has been moved next to the definition of rest period at Article 3(30). The term "post-peak laying" has replaced "end-of-lay" in the definitions at Article 3 and throughout the text due to concerns about the term "end-of-lay". The definition of "owner of a livestock vessel" at Article 3(33d) has been revised using a definition already established elsewhere in Union law, namely in Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 336/2006.

Article 4(2)(i) has been amended so that "hydration" now covers water and gels for poultry. The sentence on the responsibility of the organiser where several journeys converge at a single livestock vessel, formerly in Article 4a(3), has been moved to Article 14 to clarify matters and avoid confusion. In addition, Article 4a(3) no longer applies to air transport due to the practical difficulties this would pose. It now only applies to legs of journeys by livestock vessel. A consequential change has been made to Article 15(2a) as a result, with the reference to air transport deleted there as well.

Chapter II

Minor amendments have been made throughout the Chapter to improve the readability of the text. Article 5 now covers transport to **and from** third countries. In Article 6(3) the requirement to provide the "report provided for in Article 33 when relevant" has been removed, since conformity assessment bodies are now used only on a risk basis and Article 33 already requires reports to be sent directly to the competent authority, making this provision unnecessary.

PUBLIC

At Article 7(2a), the requirement to provide evidence of an adequate contingency plan as part of the Type 1 transporter authorisation application has been removed, since it would be disproportionate to require the transporter to submit a contingency plan with both the authorisation application and the journey log for short journeys to or from third countries. Article 8 has been amended to add "**or from** third countries" for Type 2 transporter authorisation applications, since Article 21 of the Official Controls Regulation already provides for checks at border control posts on whether transporters hold valid authorisations, meaning the procedure for obtaining such authorisations needs to be made clear in this Regulation. Article 9 has had the words **"or from** third countries" added as well, for the above reason.

Chapter III

Extensive work has been done on Chapter III to progress the exercise begun by the Cyprus Presidency on responsibilities and obligations, with some provisions reworded to make clear where responsibilities and obligations lie and who must comply with them or carry them out. This exercise has been greatly assisted by the table of responsibilities and obligations accompanying the Cyprus Presidency Flash of 3 June, Doc No. WK 7875/2026 INIT, for reference.

At Article 11(1b) the text excluding day-old chicks has been deleted as the same requirements for containers apply in their case as with the transport of poultry. As day-old chicks are included in the definition of poultry, the specific exclusion here is no longer necessary. The reference to journey times by land over 12 hours has been removed as Chapter VI of Annex I has now clearly attributed the relevant responsibilities directly to attendants and transporters as appropriate.

Article 13a has been revised to clarify the process for the approval of a livestock vessel: a conditional certificate of approval must be obtained, followed by a final certificate of approval.

Chapter IV

Article 14(1) has had text moved from Article 4a to make clear where responsibility lies for planning and coordinating livestock vessel journeys where animals converge. Where several journeys converge and animals are loaded onto a single livestock vessel for a leg of their journey by sea, the single organiser referred to in paragraph 3 of Article 4a is responsible for planning and coordinating the legs

PUBLIC

of the journey by road or rail and the leg by sea. Dogs and cats have been moved in front of breeding animals of the equine species to make clear that these are separate categories.

Article 14a has been updated to cover documentation for journeys to **or from** a third country, since this is required by the wording of Article 35(1a), which requires the organiser of a journey from a third country to the Union to submit a journey log. This requirement has to be reflected in this Article and at Article 15.

Article 14b, subparagraph (c) has been deleted because the point it referred to in Annex 1, point 5.8 of Chapter III, has been deleted from the Annex, as flagged during the June Working Party meeting, because Annex I deals only with terrestrial animals.

Article 15 has also had the words "**or from** third countries" added, consistent with Article 14a as mentioned above. Article 15(2a) has had the references to transport by air removed, as with Article 4a, due to the practical challenges its inclusion would pose.

Article 15(3) has been updated to expand on how control post reservations will work, to align with what is foreseen in the updated journey log template in Annex III.

Article 16a is a new article continuing the work of the Cyprus Presidency on responsibilities and obligations, setting out the responsibilities of operators at places of departure. Article 17 has been amended to include attendants, as they also have obligations at places of departure that need to be set out, and to clarify which obligations relate to terrestrial animals and which to aquatic animals. New language has also been added reflecting the obligation on keepers and attendants to load terrestrial animals into means of transport or containers in compliance with the space allowance and ceiling height requirements set out in Chapter VII of Annex I.

Chapter V

Article 18's title has been changed, as it deals with the responsibilities of transporters. It now specifies which activities the transporter is responsible for overseeing and has been put into the active voice. Articles 18(2b) has been amended to add a new requirement for the transporter to include likely risks during the journey in the contingency plan. Article 19(4) has been clarified to make clear that not all ports need handling facilities: animals can be transferred from one means of transport to another at

PUBLIC

ports, but airports through which animals are transported must have handling facilities in order for transfers to take place. Wording has been added to clarify which provisions apply to terrestrial animals and which to aquatic animals.

Article 19a(1)(a) has been amended to require a secondary source of power, since this requirement needs to be set out in the Regulation to form part of EU law, even though it may already be required under certain international conventions. Article 20 has been clarified by putting all obligations into active voice, making clear which apply to terrestrial animals and which apply to aquatic animals. Article 20a has been added to clarify the responsibilities of operators, set out in the active voice; these responsibilities are also replicated in Article 22 for operators at assembly centres. The provision in Article 21 on transporters overseeing staff who handle animals has been moved to Article 18(1a)(c) and simplified.
Article 21(3)(aa) has removed the exception from checks on terrestrial animals between 21:00 and 06:00, to reduce the risk that this could be interpreted to require only one check per day. Language has also been added referring directly to the relevant section of the Annexes for the responsibilities of Animal Welfare Officers. Article 22 has had minor changes to set out responsibilities in the active voice.

Article 24 has a new line inserted at 24(1), based on the results of the Commission external study and to address Member State concerns about the use of the mobile app as a positioning system over the use of a fleet management system. At Article 24(4), the phrase "border crossings between Member States" has been deleted, as it would be extremely difficult to implement in TRACES - it would not be possible to compile a list covering all border crossings between Member States. A new provision at Article 24(8)(e) concerns the technical parameters for establishing when a deviation has taken place. These parameters will need to be developed further so that Member States have set criteria to determine that a deviation from the planned journey has in fact occurred.

Article 24a now contains the equivalent requirements for livestock vessels, moved here from Annex IV so that all sensor related requirements sit in one place. It would not have been coherent to have temperature monitoring for road journeys in the Articles and temperature monitoring for livestock vessels in the Annexes. This necessitated a change to the title, with "livestock vessel" added there and throughout the Article. Article 25's provision on the monitoring of indicators has been moved to Article 26, since otherwise there would be no requirement to monitor indicators where transport ends

PUBLIC

at an assembly centre. Article 25a has been added to set out and clarify the responsibilities of operators at places of destination.

As mentioned above, Article 26 has a new first paragraph, moved here from Article 25, to ensure the requirements to monitor indicators also applies at assembly centres where animals are distributed. In the case of aquatic animals, a requirement to record the biomass of the aquatic animals dead on arrival has been added. This indicator has been added because while the Commission will have the power to adopt delegated acts to set additional indicators for aquatic animals in due course, it is necessary to have at least one indicator established by the date of application of the Regulation. Mortality in aquatic animals, measured in biomass, is already routinely monitored on arrival. Annex II requires dead aquatic animals to be removed on arrival and so a requirement to weigh them at that stage should not present a significant additional burden.

Chapter VI

Several structural and grammatical amendments have been made throughout this chapter to improve the legal clarity and readability of the text.

References in Article 26a(3) have been updated to include points 1.1, 1.2 and 5 of Chapter V of Annex I which are relevant to this article. Similarly Article 28(2) has been updated to state the appropriate annex references.

An additional provision has been added to Article 29(2)(c) which aims to clarify the rest periods after animals are unloaded at control posts. The amendment means that after rest periods in controls posts as outlined in Article 30(2c), the break period resets and the next break must take place after a maximum of 9 hours of journey time by land from the control post. This is to prevent cases where animals that have travelled, for example, 8 hours of the initial 9 hours prior to the control post are required to take a break again 1 hour after leaving the control post.

An additional provision has been added to Article 30(2c) requiring unweaned terrestrial animals, other than poultry, farmed lagomorphs, dogs and cats, to be unloaded and rested for 24 hours (unless the remaining journey can be completed within 4 hours by land) after disembarking a leg of a journey by a roll-on roll-off vessel that lasted more than 12 hours. This 12-hour increase is a positive welfare step which will allow greater time for rest, feeding and the changing of bedding.

Article 31(5) has been amended to require the Commission to provide a weather-forecast visualisation tool in TRACES. This change is in line with the Commission's digitalisation during

PUBLIC

transport study which recommended a single source of weather information for use in journey planning.

Chapter VII

An additional provision has been included in Article 32(3) outlining that for journeys, which include transport by livestock vessel, the organiser shall ensure that the Competent Authority at the third country has completed, signed and stamped the attestation set out in Annex IV and transmitted it to the competent authority at the start of the journey. The competent authority shall not approve the journey log if this attestation is not provided. The requirements remain the same for other journeys.

Article 32(4a) includes an additional provision to guide actions in situations where live animal exports are refused entry into a third country. In such cases, the competent authority that signed the journey log shall contact the competent authority of the third country that has refused entry of the consignment without delay and seek to resolve the issue.

For consistency Article 33(2)(d) has been added to ensure that where the journey ends at an assembly centre where animals are distributed from, the journeys from the assembly centre to the place of destination are not more than 4.5 hours.

Article 33(2)(ea)has been removed. This text referred to assessment of the fitness for transport at the place of destination which is inappropriate.

Article 33(3) has been updated to include the requirement for the conformity assessment body to send the report to the organiser and to the competent authority that granted the authorisation referred to in Article 5. Additionally, a provision is added stating the follow up action that is to be taken by the Competent Authority on foot of the report.

Article 34(3) has been updated to include a provision that when the European Commission are listing approved control posts, the animal species and categories, and maximum capacity are included in the listing.

Chapter VIII

PUBLIC

Article 36a(1) has been updated to remove the requirement for farm staff and staff catching and crating poultry and weaned farmed lagomorphs to have completed a basic training course. 'The place of destination' has been added to Article 36a(1) to ensure people handling animals at the place of destination have received the appropriate training as well.

Article 36a(7) has been updated to clarify who can be a provider of basic training courses and the approval process. In the revised text the competent authority may be a provider of a basic training course or alternatively, they must approve other entities in accordance with Article 37(1b). This requirement has also been amended in Article 36b(6) which relates to advanced training courses.

Article 36b(3a) has been moved to Article 38 to align with the logic of Chapter II.

Article 41a has been added to outline the minimum requirements for the availability of control posts at the exit points at ports which is currently in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/372. This is to ensure this requirement is maintained within EU law after 2023/372 is repealed.

Chapter IX

Article 43(1) has had the words "**administrative sanctions**" deleted. "**Alternatively, Member States may apply criminal sanctions**" has also been deleted. This simplifies the provision to clarify that Member States may apply either criminal or administrative penalties for infringements. Article 43(5) now refers to a person who commits a subsequent serious infringement, rather than the same serious infringement, to address situations where repeat offenders vary their offence to avoid higher penalties. A line has also been added specifying that Member States may, alternatively, apply non-financial criminal penalties.

Article 44 maintains the list of infringements to be considered "serious infringements" when committed deliberately or negligently. A recital will be drafted to clarify that other infringements may also be considered serious under national law. Article 44(a) has had the relevant percentage lowered to 20%.

More generally in Article 44, reference to the means of transport or container have been added where relevant, to clarify that limits should be measured against a specific means of transport or container where multiple means of transport or containers are used. This is to ensure that the limits are

PUBLIC

respected per means of transport and per container, rather than averaged across all the means of transport or containers used.

Chapter X

At Article 47(1), the Commission's empowerment to adopt delegated acts has been reduced as regards space allowance, ceiling height and stocking density requirements; and feeding, watering, hydration and fitness for transport requirements, since Member States have indicated a wish to retain oversight of these elements.

Chapter XI

Article 51 now includes a reference to the various certificates described in Chapter III, as these also contain personal data. Article 55a has been added, moving the provision on retaining journey logs in TRACES for six years here from Article 15, for coherence.

Chapter XII

At Article 57, a line has been added regarding the amendment of Council Regulation (EC) No 1255/97. Section B of the Annex of that Regulation is amended to require the relevant facilities to have suitable milking equipment for dairy cows, where applicable.

Article 59 includes a deferred application date for point 3.1 of Chapter IV of Annex I, which concerns the minimum ceiling height for transport by livestock vessels. The intention of the Presidency is to move point 3.1 of Chapter IV to become a new point 4 in Chapter VII of Annex I. This change would be to consolidate all ceiling height requirements in the same Chapter, namely Chapter VII of Annex I.

However, this change was not reflected in Article 59 of the consolidated Articles circulated to Member States and so, for the moment and to avoid confusion, the reference to point 3.1 of Chapter IV of Annex I remains in Article 59. This will be corrected when the consolidated texts are next revised.

Annexes - Overall Comments

As a general note, throughout the text of the Annexes the Irish Presidency has built on the efforts of the Cyprus Presidency to clearly assign responsibilities and obligations to the parties involved in the

PUBLIC

transport of animals. This work has been greatly assisted by the table accompanying the Cyprus Presidency Flash of 3 June, WK 7875/2026 INIT.

The Irish Presidency has broadly followed the approach of the Cyprus Presidency in assigning these responsibilities and obligations and delegations will note changes where the wording in the Annexes has been put in the active voice rather than the passive voice.

For example, "**the transporter** shall ensure that vehicles are clearly marked" instead of "vehicles shall be clearly marked". This has been done, where appropriate, to provide certainty as to who is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Regulation.

Annex I - Chapter I

On fitness for transport, a new point 1.2 has been added to clarify the responsibilities of keepers at places of departure, and the responsibilities of keepers at assembly centres, control posts, handling facilities at ports and airports, as regards the applicable criteria for assessing fitness for transport. Point 1.2 also underlines that attendants and animal welfare officers have a responsibility to monitor fitness for transport at the locations specified therein and sets out the criteria they must assess.

Point 3 of Chapter I now includes a reference to the abovementioned point 1.2 as well to point 1.1.

Annex I - Chapter V

Changes have been made to points 2.3 and 2.4 of Chapter V of Annex I. These changes have been made to clarify the appropriate intervals for the hydration and feeding of unweaned animals at assembly centres, control posts and handling facilities at ports, and for the leg of a journey at sea. The previous wording left open the risk of over-watering or over-feeding at shorter intervals. The points now provide that these unweaned animals must be provided with water ad libitum and fed species-specific milk or appropriate milk replacement at intervals of no less than 8 hours and no more than 12 hours from the previous feed.

Annex I - Chapter VII

"Ceiling Height" has been added to the Chapter name. In point 1.4.3 the wording "in the animal compartment where the unshorn animals are located" has been added for clarity.

Annex II

PUBLIC

A new Point 2 is added to Chapter II. This provision states that after approval of a container for aquatic animals in accordance with Article 12a(2), the owner shall mark the container with a label indicating the approval number of the certificate of approval.

A new point 1.7a has been added in Chapter II. This text is taken from Chapter III 1.2, which has been amended accordingly. The amendment was made as this text is more suited to this Chapter as it relates to the design, maintenance and construction of means of transports and containers. Point 3.4 has been updated so that the attendant and animal welfare officer shall record the values monitored in accordance with point 3.2 in section 4 of the journey log in TRACES.

Annex Va

At Annex Va point 2, a line has been added to the list of contingencies that the contingency plan must address. Per point 2(n), the contingency plan should now cover "all other risks likely to be encountered on the route of the transport". This requirement has been added to cover risks or vulnerabilities where these become likely due to the circumstances of the transport.

Any other business

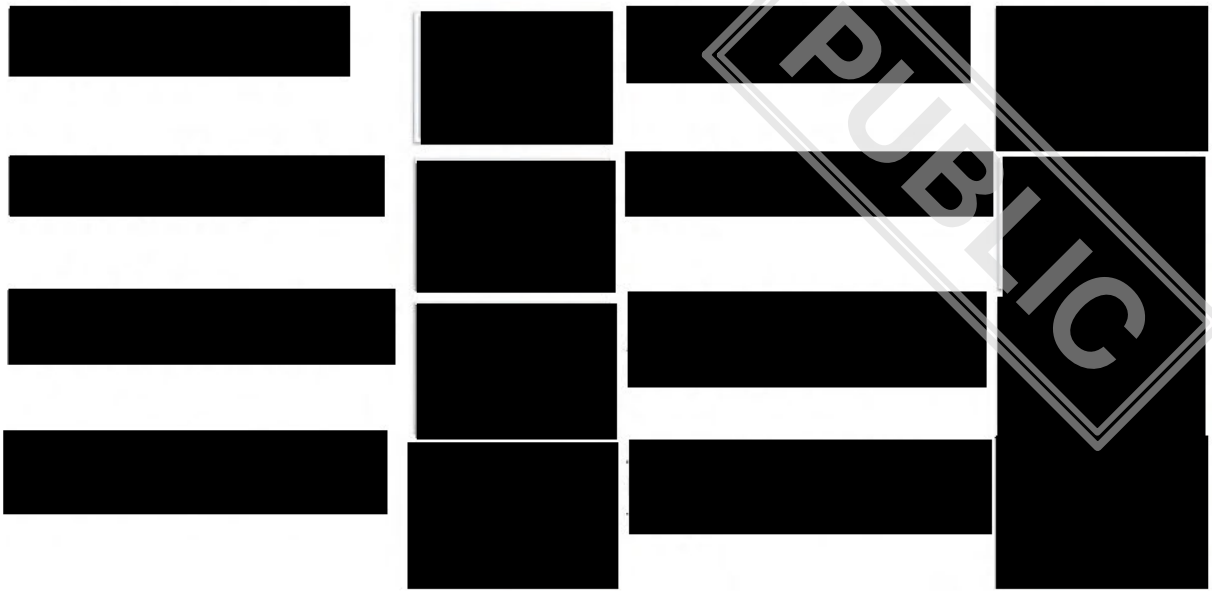
Delegations that would like to raise any other business during the meeting are kindly requested to inform the General Secretariat of the Council (LIFE.3@consilium.europa.eu) as well as the Presidency team, at presanimalwelfarewp@agriculture.gov.ie and Kevin.FoleyFriel@dfa.ieand Julia.Orr@dfa.ie in advance of the meeting. The helpful support by the General Secretariat of the Council is highly appreciated.

We look forward to seeing you in Brussels.

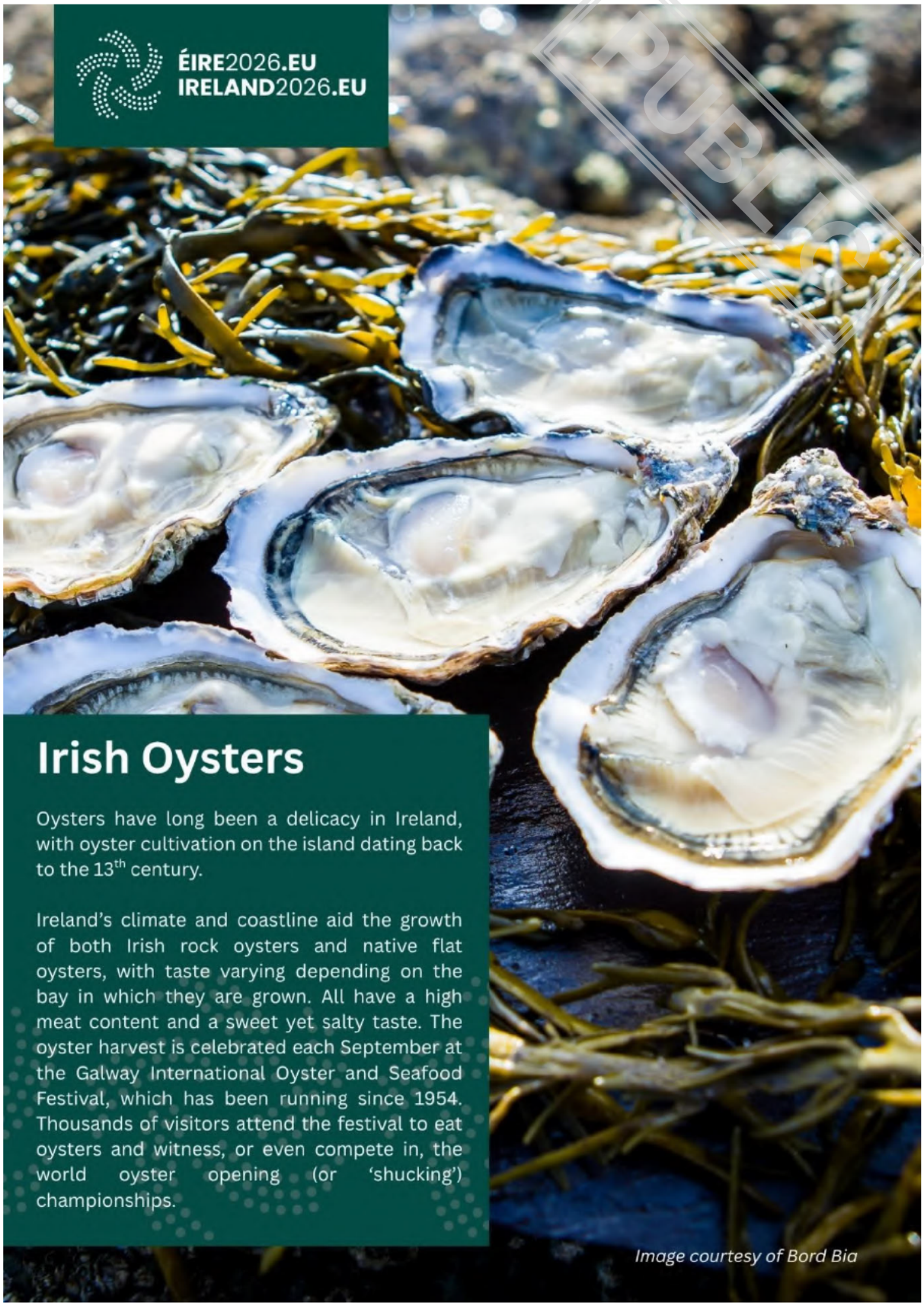
Kind regards,

The Irish Presidency team

Irish Working Party on Animal Welfare and Husbandry Team



PUBLIC



Irish Oysters

Oysters have long been a delicacy in Ireland, with oyster cultivation on the island dating back to the 13th century.

Ireland's climate and coastline aid the growth of both Irish rock oysters and native flat oysters, with taste varying depending on the bay in which they are grown. All have a high meat content and a sweet yet salty taste. The oyster harvest is celebrated each September at the Galway International Oyster and Seafood Festival, which has been running since 1954. Thousands of visitors attend the festival to eat oysters and witness, or even compete in, the world oyster opening (or 'shucking') championships.

Image courtesy of Bord Bia

PUBLIC