Quality requirements: Written deliverables should be original work of a high standard of English (C1 equivalent[2]), and the EQA reports should be of a quality (content and format) suitable for publication

2.3.3 Lot 3- EQA for *L. monocytogenes*

General tasks (GT) in Lot 3

GT 1. Coordination and communication

- Invite the laboratories to participate in the EQA using a letter drafted by the contractor and approved by ECDC (see DL1). The invitation letter should indicate the rationale and objectives of the EQA, the reporting requirements and timelines, including the minimum requirements for obtaining an EQA certificate, the provisions for intellectual property, data ownership and sharing, planned post-EQA activities such as reports and publications.

- Collect the answers and compiles a final participant list (name of the laboratory, contact person, address, telephone number, email) of these laboratories to be shared with ECDC (DL 2).

GT 2. EQA preparation and material distribution

- In collaboration with ECDC, select the set of test strains and set of sequences suitable for the EQA scheme (see DL3). The pool of strains used for the EQA should include the most commonly reported as well as rare serotypes of *Salmonella enterica* and should be regularly updated according to the changing epidemiological situation in Europe. The selected strains should primarily be isolated from clinical cases. The set of genomes should include manipulated raw reads of cluster and non-cluster isolates with different characteristics;

- Provide the technical expertise and capacity to organise the EQA schemes following the recommendations in the international guidelines and standards (ISO/IEC 17025:2005, ISO/IEC 17043:2010, ISO 15189:2012 and ISO13528:2015). Plan the EQA scheme with tasks and deliverables (see DL3);

- Prepare selected specimen panels, perform quality control and organise confirmatory testing (see DL3);

- Provide the protocols for ECDC approval and the methods to be used in the EQA rounds, including the performance indicators (see DL3);

- Prepare the safety instructions on how to handle and store the EQA samples. The final protocols and safety instructions should be shared with ECDC before sending the EQA specimens (see DL3);

- Prepare all EQA specimens for each panel in one package per each participating laboratory (to a maximum of 36 laboratories and 36 countries). Each package should contain the EQA

[2] Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (http://www.coe.int/lang-cefr)