



# On farm animal welfare self-assessment tool for dairy goats

M. Romero-Huelva<sup>1</sup>, A. Gomez<sup>1</sup>, I. Rivelli<sup>1</sup>, J. Fernandez-Alvarez<sup>2</sup>, D. Yanez-Ruiz<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Estación Experimental del Zaidín (EEZ, CSIC, Granada (Spain))

<sup>2</sup> Caprigran, Cortijo Peinado, 18340 Fuente Vaqueros, Spain

\*E-mail: manuel.romero@eez.csic.es



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Dairy goat farms have experienced a strong process of **intensification** in Spain in the last decade, which, in many aspects, could compromise optimal **animal welfare (AW)**. **Caprigran** (the largest dairy goats breeding association in Spain, 500,000 dairy goats) have implemented a **precision farming tool** based on individual animal data collection (RUMIA®) to improve farm management, however *i)* the tool is used by a low number of farmers and *ii)* so far only includes a limited number of variables, related to breeding purposes, but not other issues that are critical for **livestock sustainability**, such as **animal welfare**.

**AIM:** to develop and test an **AW assessment tool** for dairy goat systems in collaboration with relevant stakeholders in the sector.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

1



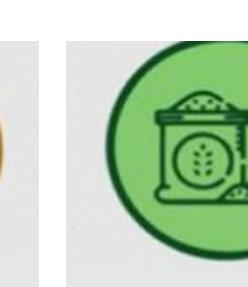
**Discussion** with stakeholders and **literature review** to identify relevant issues and indicators to be considered

2

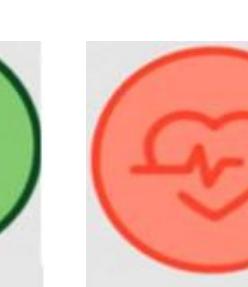
Four AW domains:



Housing



Feeding



Health



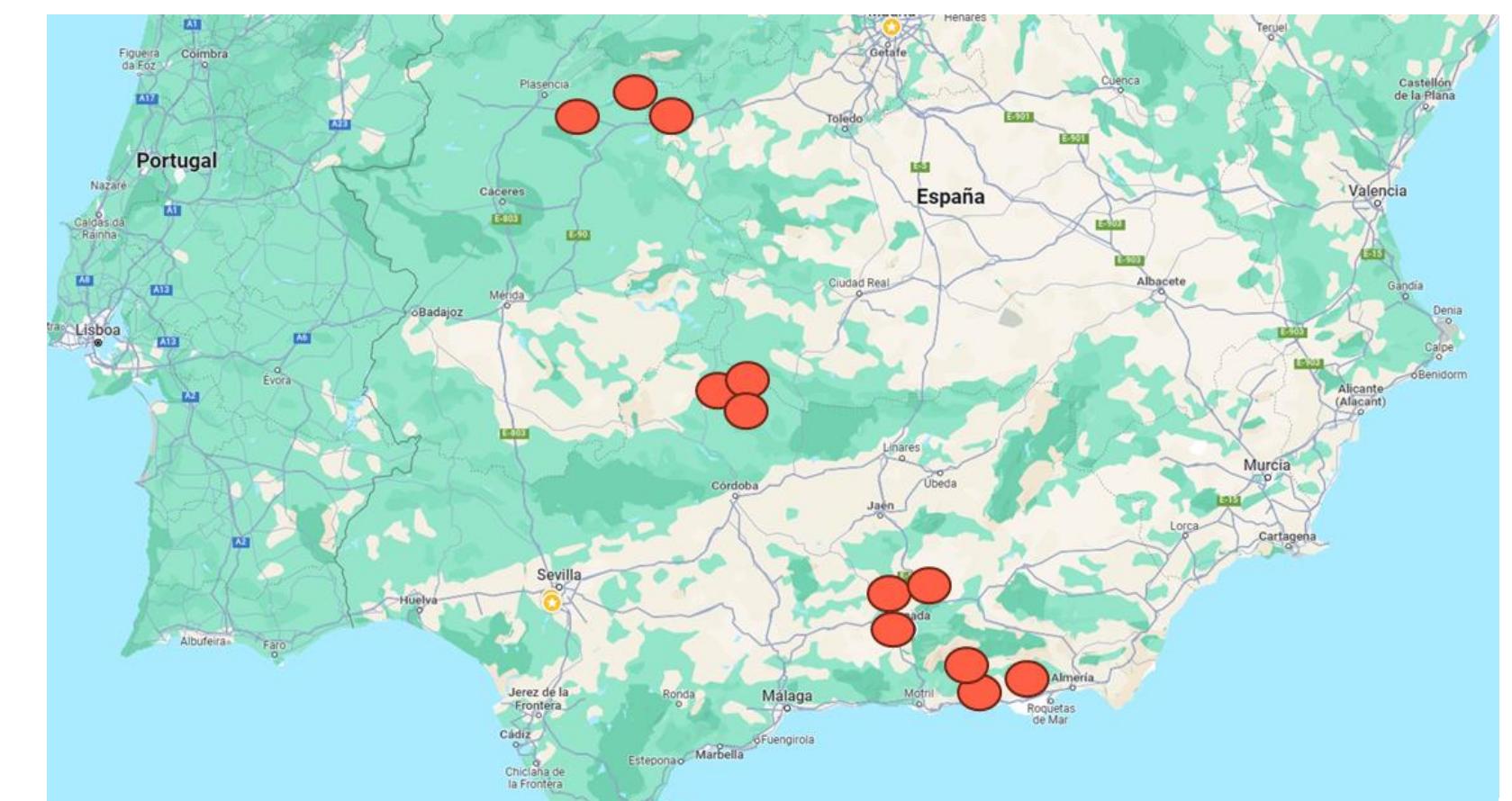
Behaviour

Number of **indicators** assessed: 23 19 14 3

Scoring system: 1-10

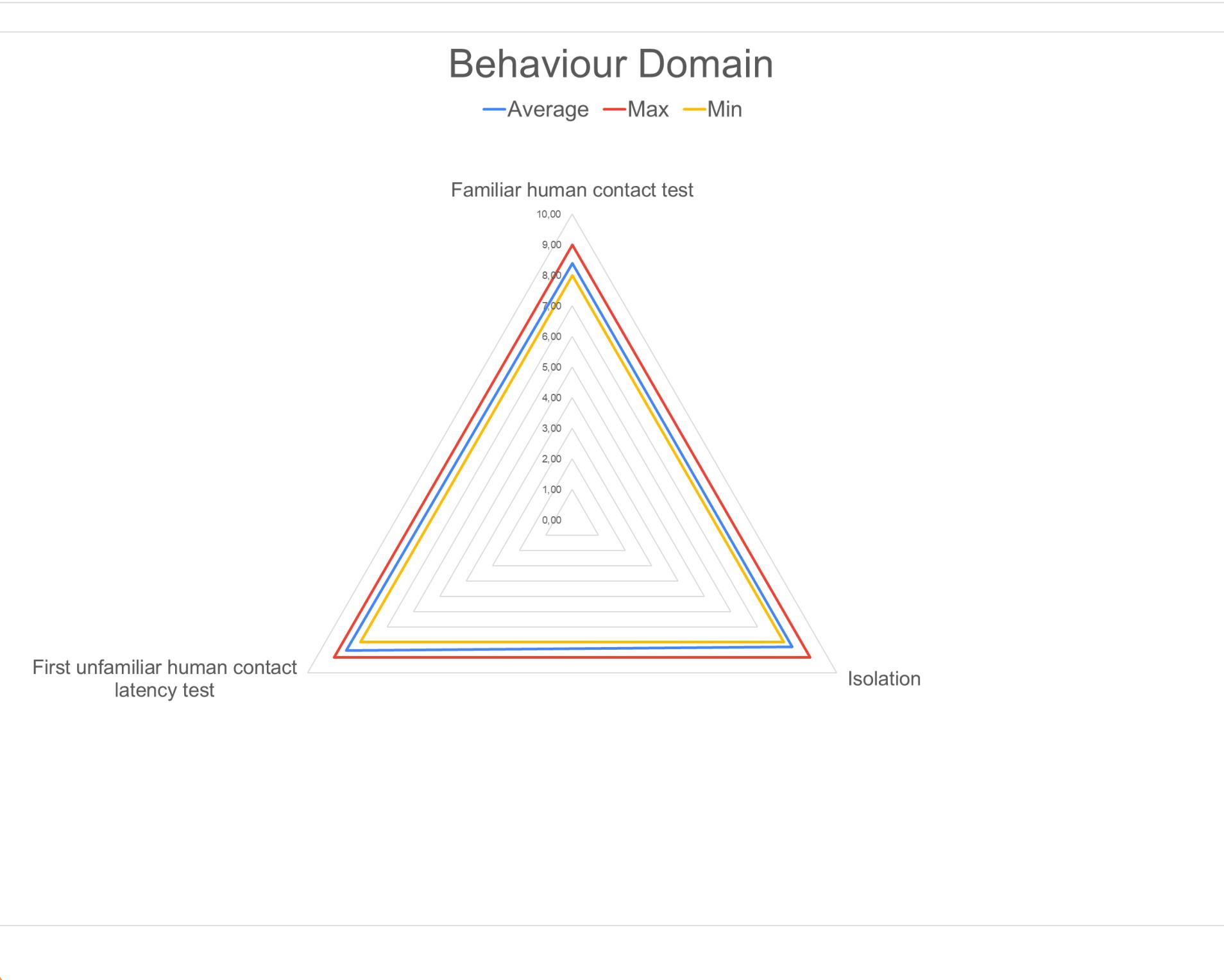
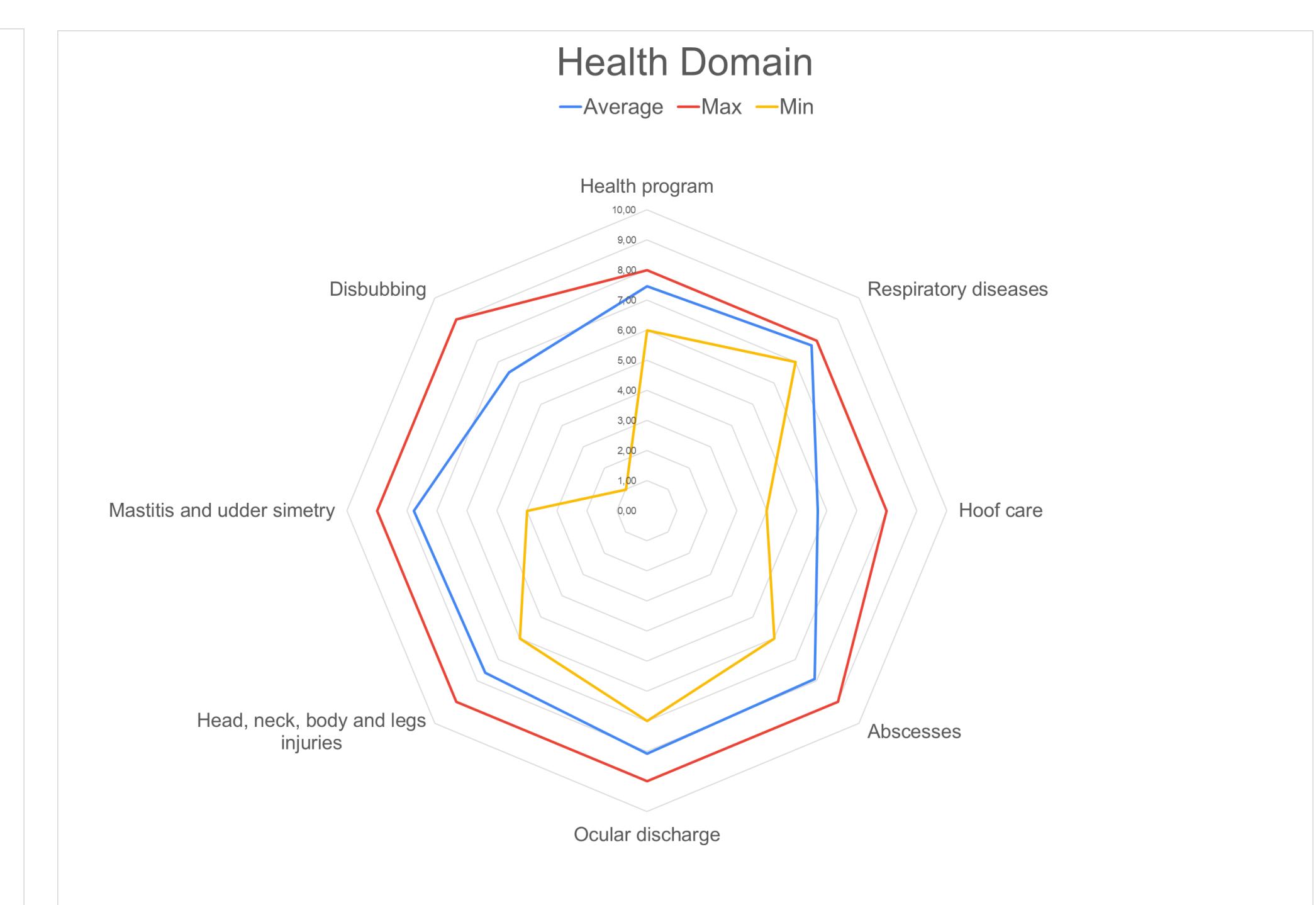
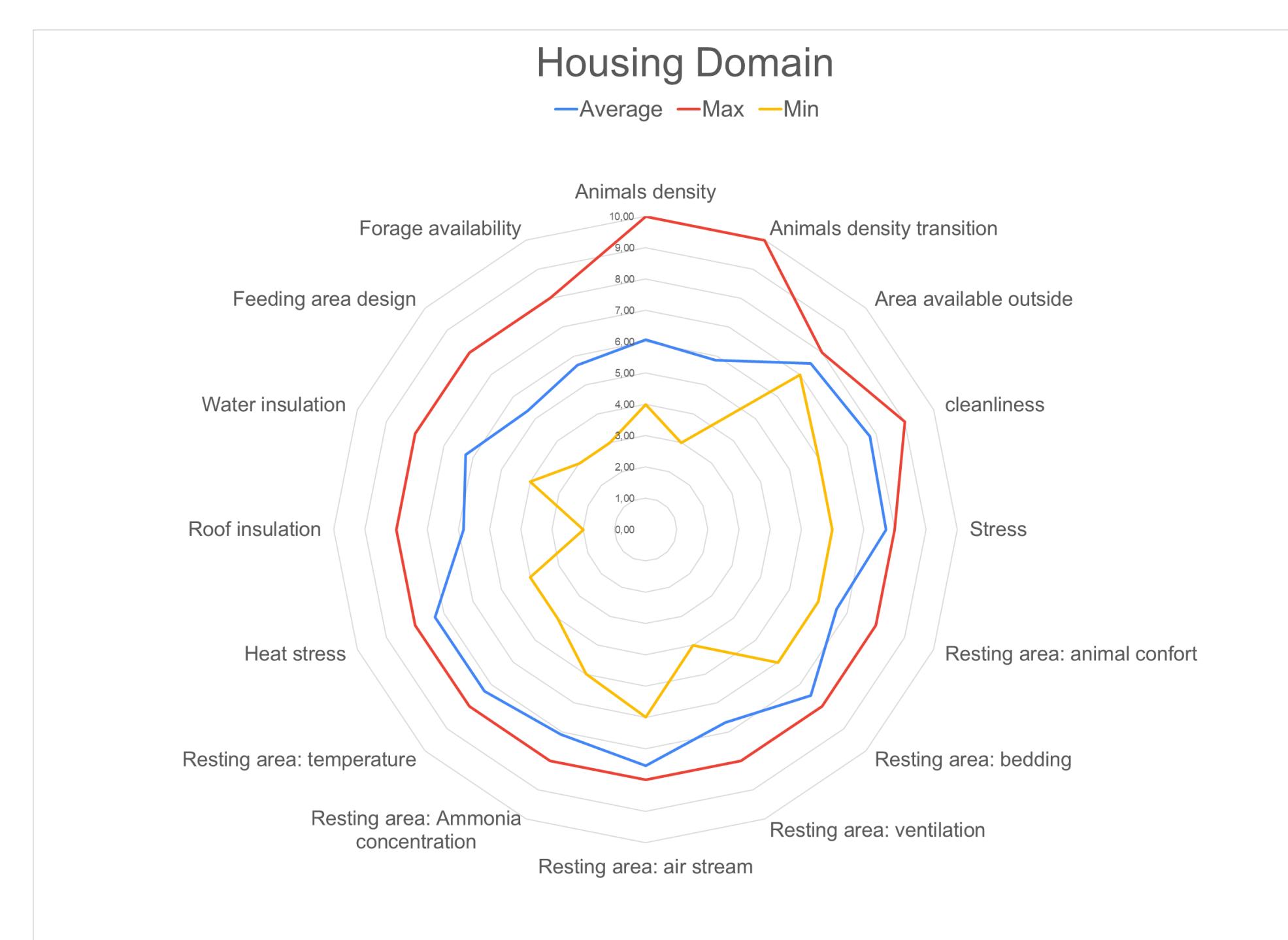
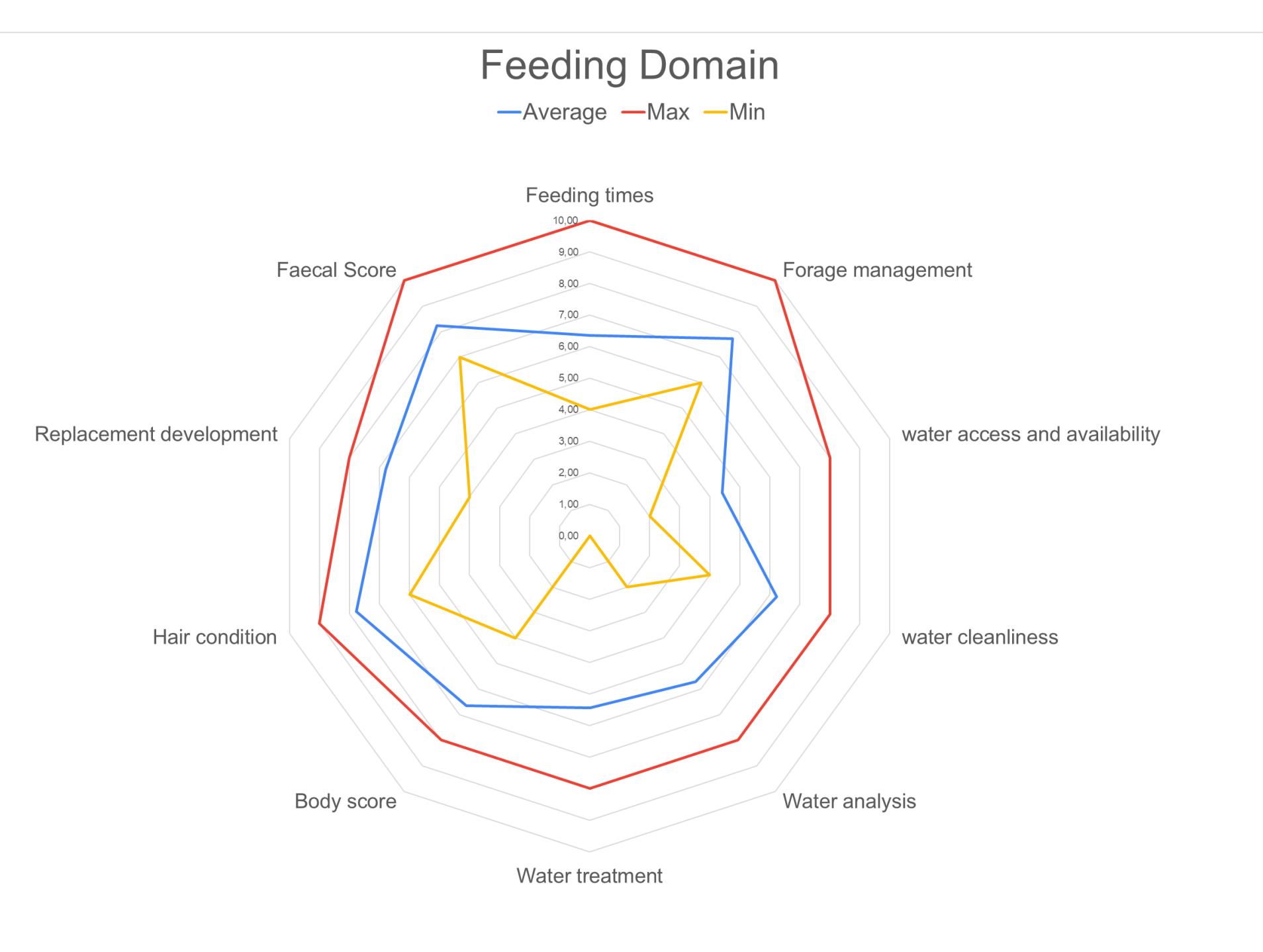
3

12 farms tested covering different regions and feeding systems



## 3. RESULTS

### Main AW indicators scores for the four Domains



The results showed that the categories that exhibit lower average scores and larger differences across farms were:

- **Feeding domain i) water availability and ii) management**
- **Housing domain: i) density of animals, ii) roof and water insulation of buildings and iii) feeding area design and forage availability.**
- **Health domain: hoof care .**

The rest of parameters averaged above 7-8 with very low variation across farms and no differences between the main feeding systems.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The questionnaire developed showed **potential** to be used as a tool to evaluate the **animal welfare status** in dairy goats' farms and identify '**hot spots**' for future actions.