Scientific Network on Chemical Occurrence data
Minutes of the 9th meeting

Held on 10-11/03/2015, Parma
Meeting room: Umberto I (Palazzo Ducale)
Time: 9:00-first day – 13:00 last day
(Agreed on 30 April 2015)

Participants

- **Network Representatives of Member States (including EFTA Countries):**

Country	Name
Austria	Elke RAUSCHER-GABERNIG
Belgium	Kathy BRISON
Bulgaria	Snezhana TODOROVA
Cyprus	Eleni IOANNOU KAKOURI
Croatia	Sandra BASIC
Czech Republic	Irena REHURKOVA
Denmark	Jens Hinge ANDERSEN
Estonia	Kadi PADUR
Finland	Johanna SUOMI
France	Jean-Cédric RENINGER
Germany	Michael JUD
Greece	Leonidas PALILIS
Hungary	Laszlo MESZAROS
Ireland	Eileen O'DEA
Italy	Augusto PASTORELLI Michele DE MARTINO
Latvia	Dzintars ZACS
Lithuania	Agnietė GRUŠAUSKIENĖ
Luxembourg	Elisa BARILOZZI
Malta	Ingrid BUSUTTIL
Netherlands	Jacqueline CASTENMILLER
Poland	Andrzej STARSKI
Portugal	Luisa OLIVEIRA
Slovakia	Angela SVETLIKOVA
Slovenia	Marko LUCI Metka PRVINSEK
Spain	Victoria MARCOS
Sweden	Petra FOHGELBERG
United Kingdom	Sara HARDY
Norway	Per BRATTERUD

- **Hearing Experts**

N/A

- **European Commission:**

Thomas Wenzl (European Commission Joint Research Center – Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (JRC-IRMM))

- **EFSA:**

DATA Unit: Francesco VERNAZZA (Chair), Mary GILSENAN (HoU)*, Annette Cecilia FORSS, Stefano CAPPÈ*, Alessandro CARLETTI*, Petra GERGELOVA*, José Angel GOMEZ RUIZ*, Mario Monguidi*, Chiara GUESCINI, Doreen Dolores RUSSELL, Enikő VARGA*, Citlali PINTADO (LRA Unit) *

*(*presented only partly in the meeting)*

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

Apologies from Romania were received.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

The administrative aspects of the meeting were presented and discussed (Chiara Guescini).

3. Topics for discussion

3.1. Circle of trust – update

Francesco Vernazza gave an update about the status of the 'Circle of Trust'. Norway asked who can be the participants of the pilot. Francesco Vernazza explained that potential participants are the main data provider to EFSA, in most cases the representative in the Scientific Network on Chemical Occurrence Data and/or other governmental institution nominated by the Advisory Forum national member(s). However for the purpose of the pilot, not only the organisation will be defined, but also the contact point inside the organisation. The suggested preferred contact point was the Chemical Occurrence Network member. Germany asked about the general access right to the Data Warehouse (DWH). Francesco Vernazza replied that the document on the access rules has been recently published and is available on EFSA's website[1]. Norway asked whether their contractor from other institutions can be granted access to the DWH. France requested access also for ministries which are the owner of the zoonoses and pesticides data collections.

Ireland highlighted that the pilot is a learning phase of a process and will run only until December 2015; therefore, it is too early to make changes before the end of the pilot study. Mary Gilsenan agreed that the changes should be implemented in January 2016 after the pilot study.

Croatia asked whether it is allowed to search the DWH for analytical methods used in different countries in Europe for a certain substance and present this analysis at national level. In general, the participants did not foresee any issues with Croatia's request. France expressed their preference to involve more governmental institutions even in the pilot. The United Kingdom also underlined that they can agree with limited permissions only in the pilot but then involvement of other departments would be necessary.

[1] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/doc/768e.pdf.

Finally, it was decided to amend the rules for the pilot with a note to better explain the concept of 'data provider': 'data provider' means both the national organisation in charge of transmitting the chemical occurrence data to EFSA and the national organisations providing the data to be transmitted to EFSA. Consequently, the national organisations complying with this definition will be granted access to the Circle of Trust pilot study.

3.2. Summary and discussion of data collection 2014

Alessandro Carletti gave an overview of the 2014 data collection and summarised the strengths and weaknesses of the collected data. In the presentation, it was highlighted that in 2014 the majority of the transmissions (66%) were received by EFSA by the deadline of 1st of October. Mary Gilsenan asked about the reasons for the delay in data transmission which resulted in five months of unplanned work at EFSA. During the discussion, apart from the lack of resources, which is a general issue in many countries, it was explained that the data from the laboratories are often received very late. The deadlines of data transmissions for the laboratories are established at national level, independently from EFSA's deadline of 1st of October. In some cases the data are owned by different governmental organisations, collected in different formats, which also hinders the timely delivery of the data. Portugal noted that this year some business rules have been changed, causing unforeseen difficulties and pointed out that all changes, which might affect the data transmission should be communicated well in advance. Ireland noted the importance of engaging with national laboratories to show how the data that they are generating are being used at European level. Currently, national laboratories do not see how their data are contributing to European risk assessments. This would help to encourage timely data transmission from national laboratories. EFSA promised to support Member States to address both issues.

Portugal highlighted an issue in reporting marine biotoxins: marine biotoxins are strictly monitored by the countries producing and selling molluscs and similar products, and a product never goes to the market if the level of marine biotoxin is exceeding the maximum limit. Francesco Vernazza explained that EFSA is aware of this issue and proposed to keep these targeted data at national level, and that EFSA might collect targeted data to perform risk assessment when needed. Random monitoring data should be collected regularly. Ireland was in favour of submitting all data collected on marine biotoxins.

Portugal asked EFSA's help to encourage industry to submit data to the national authority, preferably in Standard Sample Description (SSD) format. Mary Gilsenan answered that the Stakeholder Platform discussion group, managed by the DATA unit, might be a good possibility to open discussion with them; she explained also that from this year on EFSA will prepare yearly a technical report on chemical contaminants data collection so that member States can see an overview of the contaminant data submitted annually to EFSA's database.

3.3. Update on specific requirements and discussion

Enikő Varga presented an update of the specific requirements defined for chemical contaminants data submission and underlined the importance of its annual update in order to reflect the evolution of relevant legislation and in response to recommendations relating to data in EFSA's scientific opinions. The latest version of the specific requirements document[2], which is available on EFSA's homepage, was published on 20th May 2014 and it will be updated by end of May 2015.

[2] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/604e.htm.

Ireland remarked that it would be more useful update the specific requirements document before the end of the year preceding each reporting year giving more time to the countries to implement the changes. Enikő Varga confirmed that enough time will be given to the countries to implement the updated specific requirements document, and in the update of the document the deadlines for implementation will be also clearly indicated. It was confirmed that the current rules in the specific requirements document are valid for SSD1 data reporting. The specific requirements for SSD2 will be one of the outputs of the on-going SSD2 pilot project. Francesco Vernazza confirmed that the Acrylamide codes can be added as a facet in the FoodEx2 code. Ireland requested statistics from EFSA on the proportion of Irish data which are not deemed to be at a sufficient level of detail (i.e. with respect to FoodEx), so that this can be addressed with national data providers.

The participants were asked whether their organisation is responsible also for monitoring food additives: Network members from all countries except the United Kingdom, Malta, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Latvia, France and Finland confirmed that their organisation is also responsible for collecting data on food additive occurrence. France noted that it is envisaged that ANSES will start collecting data on food additive occurrence soon.

3.4. Needs for data in 2015 and overview of use in 2014

Enikő Varga gave an overview about the opinions adopted in 2014 using data submitted by Member States and those scheduled for 2015; planned ad-hoc calls for data were also presented. In 2015 EFSA will launch a call for data on (1) Erucic Acid (deadline 1st of August 2015), (2) Moniliformin and (3) Diacetoxyscirpenol (deadline 1st of October 2015). A call for data on Marine Biotoxins (Pectenotoxin and Okadaic acid) is also foreseen, but the exact date has not yet been confirmed. EFSA also plans to publish a call on food additives in summer 2015.

3.5. Update on the catalogue management system

Mario Monguidi gave a presentation on the new EFSA catalogue management system. One major catalogue release per year is envisaged. Portugal asked when the business rules will be available. Mario Monguidi answered that the business rules are already available on EFSA's website as an attachment[3] to the 'Guidance of Data Exchange version2'[4], but that their implementation in the Data Collection Framework (DCF) is foreseen only in June 2015. The new workflow will be initially used for the SSD2 pilot study.

Denmark asked about downloading the catalogues from the DCF. Mario Monguidi ensured the participants that from June 2015 the data providers will be able to download the entire set of catalogues related to each data collection.

3.6. Procurement projects supporting the harmonisation initiatives – 2015

Alessandro Carletti informed about a planned new call for tender to support Member States to implement SSD2 in their national systems; the progress of the procurement project linked to the first call for tender awarded in May 2014 was outlined together with an overview of the countries participating. Norway expressed an interest in the SSD2 implementation. Spain asked about the inclusion of Veterinary Drug Residues (VDR) in the new SSD2 call. Alessandro Carletti explained that the working group on VDR has

[3] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3945.htm (XML.zip)
[4] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3945.pdf

finalised the VDR data model based on SSD2 and that it is envisaged to include also VDR in the forthcoming SSD2 call.

EFSA promised that information will be presented about the VDR sample based data collection project during the next Network meeting. It was also highlighted that in a few years only sample based VDR data reporting will be accepted. Portugal asked if those countries, which are already participating in an SSD2 pilot can apply also for the next call, but only to the VDR domain. Alessandro Carletti indicated that this option is envisaged in the tender specifications.

In relation to the VDR data domain the members of the Network were asked to clarify which organisations of the Network also collect data on veterinary drug residues. In Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain (responsibility shared with agricultural department) and Sweden the same organisation is responsible for collecting occurrence data on contaminants and veterinary drug residues.

3.7. DMS sharing of data – short training and FAQ

The Chair asked if any expert experienced any problem in accessing and using the DMS. No problem was reported. It was also asked if the foreseen short training and questions session on the use of the DMS was needed or desired by any Network member and nobody requested it. Therefore, it was agreed to skip the training and FAQ session on the DMS use.

3.8. Data Warehouse demo: hands-on clinic

Stefano Cappè gave a live demonstration of the Data warehouse (DWH) in the context of the 'Circle of Trust' pilot study. Data quality in the DWH was discussed and the main issues around sample discrepancies were presented. Ireland outlined that the noticed discrepancies in laboratory accreditation may not be real discrepancies, since accreditation status can be changed in time. Denmark added that the accreditation rules are different for different data collections, e.g. pesticides data collection has special rules for accreditation (with legal references). Spain noted that a laboratory can be accredited for one substance but not another. Stefano Cappè promised to find solution for that issue. Ireland cautioned the need to maintain traceability of the submitted data and highlighted the need to receive country reports on the data as soon as possible so that any issues can be addressed in the same year as the data were collected.

Germany was interested in when the DWH will be available for use outside the 'Circle of Trust' pilot study. Stefano Cappè explained that the DWH will be open from July 2015 on the zoonoses and the pesticides data domain; stakeholders will have access in accordance with the published rules[5].

Austria presented some difficulties they experienced using the DWH. EFSA promised to address the listed issues.

3.9. Use of data in 2014: ethyl carbamate

Francesco Vernazza gave an overview of an EFSA technical report on the occurrence of ethyl carbamate in food published in 2014[6]. He provided an overview of the data from reporting countries and levels of ethyl carbamate in food groups, focusing on the four

[5] See footnote 1 on page 2

[6] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/578e.htm

main food categories. The challenges with the data description in particular with respect to the food classification were also presented.

3.10. Training – on-site support – Guest scientist schema: planning of 2015 – Seconded National Experts

The Chair outlined the training sessions on FoodEx2 (Spain, Ireland, Hungary), SSD and data transmission (Croatia) that have been provided to some Member States in 2014 and which can be provided to others. The participants were reminded and encouraged to send a request to EFSA, if there is a training need. France expressed an interest for having training on FoodEx2.

Network members were also reminded about additional channels for exchange and co-operation that are in place as well as deadlines for expressions of interest, in particular the Guest Scientist Scheme[7], the Seconded National Experts[8] and National Experts in Professional Training[9]. Members were also alerted to the call for trainees in 2015 on EFSA's website[10].

3.11. 2015 data collection - deadlines / future of data collection and discussion

Enikő Varga provided a short presentation on the feedback given by EFSA to the data providers on data transmission and the difficulties encountered by the data collection helpdesk in providing the feedback due to the changes in the document sharing platform of EFSA. A proposal for a new procedure was presented to members of the Network as follows: EFSA will send only the Word file and summary statistics rather than the entire cleaned dataset. The Excel file will be still created automatically, but it will be sent only if specifically requested by the data provider. The participants agreed with the proposal, and highlighted the importance of receiving the feedback document. It was also agreed that the cleaning reports should be sent by EFSA to data providers within two weeks after the cleaning procedure and that the data providers will also have two weeks for approval; in the absence of feedback EFSA will consider the cleaning report as agreed.

During the discussion, there was a question on the standardisation of the measurement Unit to microgram/kilogram; Ireland requested clarification on the conversion in the case of marine biotoxins like the Saxitoxins (STX) group of toxins that is normally reported as STX equivalents. EFSA noted that STXs are reported as micrograms STX equivalents/kg a unit substantially corresponding to micrograms/kg but referred to a specific molecule of the group. EFSA will consider whether any additional action is needed in terms of data conversion.

3.12. New developed methods for 2-, 3MCPDs and glycidol esters

Thomas Wenzl gave a presentation on the recently developed modified analytical methods for 2-, 3MCPDs and glycidyl esters and the test survey[11] that will be used in the ongoing risk assessment on these substances by the Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM Panel)[12]. The work was commissioned by EFSA as a Service Level Agreement (SLA/EFSA-JRC/DCM/2013/01). The importance of the work done by the JRC

[7] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/567e.htm
[8] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/jobs/callforsecondednationalexperts.htm
[9] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/jobs/callfornationalexpertsinprofessionaltraining.htm
[10] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/jobs/traineeship.htm
[11] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/779e.htm
[12] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionsListLoader?mandate=M-2014-0209

for the future monitoring in the Member States laboratories of these process contaminants was highlighted.

3.13. Transmission of data to World Health Organisation - additives and discussion

Enikő Varga explained how the process[13] of the transmission of data to the World Health Organisation WHO has been updated in 2014. In particular, it was explained to the Network Members that now raw data are transmitted with the country name (instead of a generic EU origin) and without confidentiality flag, as requested by WHO. The main differences between the EFSA DWH access rules[14] and those proposed by WHO[15] were also presented. Network Members were asked about their opinions on raw data transmission from EFSA to WHO and also about data transmission of data such as food additives, which are not covered by the agreement in 2010 of the former Standing Committee on the Food chain and Animal Health (SCFCAH)[16] now called Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (PAFF Committee) concerning use, disclosure and re-use of contaminant data sent to EFSA.

Network participants expressed different opinions on whether to transmit all raw data or only those used in EFSA Opinions or reports. Nevertheless, there was agreement on the following points: (1) in order to avoid double reporting of data from EFSA and from Member States, EFSA will inform the Network before transmitting any data to WHO (2) before submitting raw data which are not contaminants (e.g. food additive occurrence data) EFSA will first ask permission from the Network members.

3.14. Guidance on data exchange

Eileen O'Dea presented the 'Guidance on data exchange version2' (GDE2)[17] and how it will improve data exchange between data providers and EFSA. The general recommendations and conclusions of the GDE2 for data transmission were explained. Eileen O'Dea explained that the guidance contains the frame and structure of the data exchange, and the general business rules. Specific business rules for each data domain should be defined. For the zoonoses data collection, specific business rules relating to 2014 data collection have been recently published together with the data transmission guidance[18].

3.15. A Further step of collecting occurrence and consumption data within EFSA: The use of Improrisk Model for exposure /risk assessment of lead in Cyprus and other contaminants.

Cyprus gave a presentation on user-friendly tool (Improrisk Model) developed for exposure assessment in Cyprus using lead as an example. The model is deterministic but a probabilistic dietary exposure model is also envisaged. The tool's potential usefulness and application in other Member States was discussed.

[13] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/doc/557e.pdf
[14] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/doc/768e.pdf
[15] https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/llisapi.dll/open/13966984
[16] https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/llisapi.dll/open/13966595
[17] see note 4 on page 4
[18] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/772e.htm

3.16. Use of data in 2014: Beauvericin and enniatins

Petra Gergelova gave a presentation on the CONTAM Panel opinion on the risks to human health related to the presence of beauvericin and enniatins in food and feed that was published in 2014, using occurrence data submitted to EFSA. It was explained that the overall lack/limitation of the data (in particular toxicity data) was an obstacle to perform risk assessment in the opinion[19].

3.17. Use of data in 2014: Arsenic

José Angel Gomez Ruiz gave an overview of a scientific report on dietary exposure to inorganic arsenic in the European population[20] demonstrating the use of occurrence data submitted by Member States in EFSA outputs. The conclusions of the exposure assessment were presented to the Network together with the work conducted by EFSA to analyse the data and the challenges encountered with the data.

3.18. Public access to EFSA documents

Citlali Pintado from the EFSA's Legal and Regulatory Affairs Unit (LRA) gave a presentation on the public access to EFSA documents, in particular the mechanism under Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001[21] (hereinafter the 'PAD Regulation') which applies to Union institutions, bodies and agencies, such as EFSA. She explained that every document that EFSA is preparing can be subject to a public access to documents request and that data in a database can be considered a document. It was explained that the PAD Regulation is currently under review and that the landscape in this regard is evolving; thus, EFSA is currently dealing with access to documents requests on a case-by-case basis taking into account the exceptions of the PAD Regulation as interpreted by Union Courts. When access to data, which are not already in the public domain is requested, EFSA always consults the data providers, in accordance with the provisions of the PAD Regulation.

3.19. EXPO 2015

Doreen Dolores Russell presented an overview of the three-day EFSA Scientific Conference scheduled to take place in October 2015 in Milan connecting to the main theme "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life" of the 2015 Word EXPO. The broad interest to this event and the limitation in available places were underlined as well as financial support initiatives for young scientists.

3.20. Feedback on FoodEx2 re-coding projects

Francesco Vernazza gave an overview about the experiences on FoodEx2 re-coding within the framework of an on-going procurement project involving 19 participating EU countries. The good work being done by different Member States was presented. It was explained that some data providers did not apply for the recoding of the datasets from their country; therefore, for these datasets it is still necessary to find an experienced organisation available to perform the re-coding work. The Network members were asked to express an eventual interest in the re-coding work not yet allocated to a contractor. The Netherlands expressed an interest in re-coding the Dutch dataset. Other countries

[19] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3802.pdf
[20] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3597.pdf
[21] Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43–48.

will consider the opportunity and will communicate later to EFSA if they are available to participate to an eventual negotiated procedure.

A question was debated in relation to the FoodEx2: Ireland expressed the wish to continue using FoodEx2 also for the normal annual data reporting starting form 2015 because it is a more complete and overall better classification. Spain also agreed on this possibility. The request was how to proceed. EFSA acknowledged the legitimate wish to move to the newest standards and promised to consider the possible technical solutions for using FoodEx2 in the transition phase between SSD1 and SSD2.

Some brainstorming was done on possible solutions using a simplified format or putting the FoodEx2 code in a text field. A final answer will be provided by EFSA based on the technical evaluation of the problem.

4. AoB

4.1. Veterinary Drug Residues inquiry

The question of which Network members are also involved in the Veterinary drug residues data collection was already addressed in point 3.6 therefore, it was not raised under this agenda item as planned.

No other point was raised under AOB.

Date for next meeting

The Chair proposed to have a 2.5 days meeting on 11-13 November 2015 including a half day discussion on the Circle of Trust pilot project. No issue concerning these dates was raised.

5. Closure of the meeting

The meeting was closed shortly after 13:00.

List of Actions

Agenda item	Action/decision
3.1. Circle of trust – update	EFSA to add a note in the Rules for the Circle of Trust pilot to better explain the concept of 'data provider': " 'data provider' means both the national organisation in charge of transmitting the chemical occurrence data to EFSA and the national organisations providing the data to be transmitted to EFSA". Additionally, to grant access to the Circle of Trust pilot study to the national organisations complying with this definition having requested to participate to the pilot study.
3.2. Summary and discussion of data collection 2014	EFSA to communicate well in advance to the data providers the changes in the business rules impacting on the data transmission. Data providers to engage with national laboratories to show how the data that they are generating are being used at European level. EFSA to support Member States in this process. EFSA to prepare yearly a technical report on chemical contaminants data collection so that member States can see an overview of the contaminant data submitted annually to EFSA's database.

Agenda item	Action/decision
3.3. Update on specific requirements and discussion	EFSA to update the specific requirements by end of May 2015. Acrylamide codes to be added by EFSA to FoodEx2 as a facet. EFSA to prepare for Ireland statistics on the proportion of Irish data which are not deemed to be at a sufficient level of detail (i.e. with respect to FoodEx), so that this can be addressed with national data providers.
3.6. Procurement projects supporting the harmonisation initiatives – 2015	EFSA to prepare information about the VDR sample based data collection project to be presented at the next Network meeting.
3.8. Data Warehouse demo: hands-on clinic	EFSA to find a solution for managing the differences in the laboratory accreditation for the same sample respect to different substances. Austria to send a list of the problems found in using the Data warehouse and EFSA to address the problems. EFSA to maintain traceability of the submitted data and providing country reports on the data as soon as possible so that any issues can be addressed in the same year as the data were collected.
2015 data collection - deadlines / future of data collection and discussion	EFSA to implement the new procedure to provide as feedback only a word file with summary statistics while providing the excel file only on specific request. EFSA to provide the cleaning report within two weeks from the cleaning and data providers to approve within two weeks. Approval assumed as default in absence of comment by the data provider. EFSA to consider whether any additional action is needed in terms of data conversion in case of substances reported as microgram equivalents of a reference substance per kg.
3.13. Transmission of data to World Health Organisation - additives and discussion	EFSA to inform the Network before transmitting any data to WHO in order to avoid double reporting of data from EFSA and from Member States. EFSA to ask permission from the Network members before submitting raw data which are not contaminants (e.g. food additive occurrence data).
3.20. Feedback on FoodEx2 re-coding projects	Network members to express interest in participating to negotiated procedures for projects for re-coding the datasets not allocated to a contractor during 2014. EFSA to consider the possible technical solutions for using FoodEx2 in the transition phase between SSD1 and SSD2 and communicate them to the Network.

Document history	
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