

## EFSA PROGRESS REPORT

The present report refers to the period from the 1<sup>st</sup> of March to the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2015.

### SCIENCE

#### Outputs produced in the reporting period

In the risk assessment area, EFSA endorsed 4 guidance documents, among which the Scientific Committee 'Review, revision and development of EFSA cross cutting guidance documents'. EFSA published an editorial on 'Increasing robustness, transparency and openness of scientific assessment'. A total of 57 scientific opinions were adopted in the reporting period, 49 of which in the area of regulated products. Among them, to mention only some, there are the assessments of acrylamide, caffeine and perchlorate. In addition, 2 opinions of the NDA Panel were endorsed for public consultation: DRV for iron and magnesium. Urgent comments were asked to EFSA on the scientific and technical information provided by an Italian NGO on *Xylella fastidiosa*. EFSA Panels issued 2 statements on 'Process in assessing the risk to plant health posed by biological control agents of invasive alien plants' and 'Suitability of the BEEHAVE model for its potential use in a regulatory context and for the risk assessment on multiple stressors in honeybees'. EFSA issued 4 statements on the refined exposure assessment of some food colours. As well, the Authority adopted 9 scientific reports, which also include the work on the 'Categorisation of plants for planting according to the risk of introduction of *Xylella fastidiosa*' and the 'Update on transmission of the Ebola virus via the food chain'. In addition, 23 technical reports, 18 reasoned opinions, 6 peer review conclusions, 18 external reports and 3 event reports were issued.

#### Caffeine

Following extensive input from Member States, consumer groups, industry and other interested parties, EFSA has published the Opinion on the safety of caffeine, in which it estimates acute and daily intakes that raise no safety concerns for the general healthy population. The opinion also advises on the consumption of caffeine from all dietary sources in combination with physical exercise, and on the possible risks of consuming caffeine together with alcohol, with other substances found in so-called energy drinks, and with p-synephrine, a substance increasingly found in food supplements. Key conclusions include:

- Single doses of caffeine up to 200mg – about 3mg per kilogram of body weight (mg/kg bw) from all sources do not raise safety concerns for the general healthy adult population also when consumed less than two hours before intense exercise under normal environmental conditions.
- Single doses of 100mg of caffeine may affect sleep duration and patterns in some adults, particularly when consumed close to bedtime.
- Intakes up to 400mg per day consumed throughout the day do not raise safety concerns for healthy adults in the general population, except pregnant women.
- For pregnant women, caffeine intakes of up to 200mg per day consumed throughout the day do not raise safety concerns for foetus.
- A safety level of 3mg/kg bw per day is also proposed for habitual caffeine consumption by children (3-10 years) and adolescents (10-18 years).
- Consumption of other constituents of "energy drinks" at concentrations commonly present in such beverages would not affect the safety of single doses of caffeine up to 200mg.
- Alcohol consumption at doses up to about 0.65g/kg bw, leading to a blood alcohol content of about 0.08% - the level at which you are considered unfit to drive in

many countries – would not affect the safety of single doses of caffeine up to 200mg. Up to these levels of intake, caffeine is unlikely to mask the subjective perception of alcohol intoxication.

### **Acrylamide**

Acrylamide is a contaminant that naturally forms in starchy foods during every-day high-temperature cooking (frying, baking, roasting and also industrial processing at +120°C and low moisture). The EFSA opinion identifies fried potato products, coffee, biscuits, crackers, crisp bread and soft bread as the main contributors to the total dietary exposure. Scenarios were designed in order to assess the influence of specific behaviours, concluding that preferences in home-cooking can have a substantial impact on acrylamide dietary exposure. Neurotoxicity, adverse effects on male reproduction, developmental toxicity and carcinogenicity were identified as possible critical endpoints for acrylamide toxicity from experimental animal studies. EFSA's risk assessment concludes that possible harmful effects of acrylamide on the nervous system, pre- and post-natal development and male reproduction are not considered to be a concern, based on current levels of dietary exposure. However, although the human studies have not demonstrated acrylamide to be a human carcinogen, acrylamide in food potentially increases the risk of developing cancer for consumers in all age groups, based on animal studies. From 1 July to 15 September 2014, EFSA held an online public consultation on its draft opinion to allow scientists, national authorities, stakeholders and other interested parties to comment on the approach, information used and draft conclusions of EFSA's draft opinion. Before finalising the opinion, EFSA's scientific experts discussed this feedback together with the contributors to the online public consultation at a public meeting held in December 2014. This process helped EFSA's experts to fine-tune their opinion and integrate recent studies (up to March 2015) into the final opinion.

### **Xylella fastidiosa: new studies assessed**

There is currently no scientific evidence to support the suggestion that fungi rather than the bacterium *Xylella fastidiosa* are the primary cause of the olive quick decline syndrome observed in Apulia, southern Italy. That is the main finding of an analysis carried out by EFSA of new studies and other information submitted to the Authority. In addition, there is no published evidence that treatment of fungal disease will reduce the establishment, spread and impact of *Xylella*, although good orchard management is generally beneficial for plant health.

### **Pesticides and bees: call for data**

EFSA is asking national authorities, research institutions, industry and other interested parties to submit new information relevant to the evaluation of the risks posed to bees by three neonicotinoid pesticides applied as seed treatments and granules (clothianidin, thiamethoxam and imidacloprid). Information can be addressed to EFSA until 30 September 2015.

### **Review, revision and development of EFSA's cross cutting guidance documents**

Scientific assessments are evidenced-based and demand rigorous methodologies to collect, evaluate and integrate scientific evidence, together with transparent and open communication of the processes and results of the assessment. A structured and clearly documented approach is essential if the outcome of the scientific assessment is to be communicated unambiguously to decision makers, the wider scientific community and stakeholders. This will help to clearly focus on key issues and allow reproducibility of the assessments between expert groups and organisations.

### **Endocrine active substances**

Endocrine active substances are chemicals that can interact or interfere with normal hormonal activity. EFSA is currently involved in a number of initiatives to develop scientific knowledge in the field of endocrine active substances and also on overlapping

issues such as non-monotonic dose-response relationships and biological relevance in risk assessment. This work follows up on a 2013 opinion by EFSA which provided a definition of endocrine disruptors. EFSA took part in the meetings of the AGRI and ENVI committees that included discussion around this subject. A conference on 'Endocrine disruptors: criteria for identification and related impacts' was organised by the European Commission on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2015 in Brussels.

### **Perchlorate**

Perchlorate is a contaminant present in the environment naturally and as a result of human activity. The use of natural fertilisers and perchlorate contaminated irrigation water may lead to substantial concentrations in leafy vegetables. EFSA has re-published its opinion on the risks to public health from perchlorate in food, particularly in fruit and vegetables. Adopted in September 2014, the opinion has been revised because of a technical error. EFSA's experts have re-assessed dietary exposure to perchlorate using corrected data on perchlorate levels in food and taking into account more recently available occurrence data.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

In the reporting period, media coverage counted approx. 2,600 articles and 190 queries, representing a -45% decrease and +67% increase respectively compared to the previous quarter. The coverage in the previous quarter was significantly higher due to the publication of EFSA's opinion on BPA, which alone triggered around 400 articles. The coverage in this quarter is in line with yearly average figures. Among the issues that featured heavily on the media there are pesticides, *Xylella fastidiosa* and EFSA's report on chemicals in food for the general public. The latter is a new EFSA report aiming to give to non-specialists a balanced view of the findings of annual EU-wide monitoring of levels of chemicals in food.

EFSA published 2 press releases, 13 news stories, 2 feature stories, 8 news in brief and a lay summary. 12 publications were science related (i.e. pesticide residues, *Xylella fastidiosa*, caffeine, Ebola, data warehouse, food consumption data, foods of non-animal origin, methodology developments, Prometheus, scientific cooperation, biological controls, DRVs for vitamin A and magnesium). The remaining publications were on corporate issues.

More than 1,600 people registered to participate at EFSA's second scientific conference "Shaping the Future of Food Safety. Together". EFSA had a target of 1,000. In addition, more than 500 abstracts were received for the poster session. For these, EFSA had a target of 100, but due to the high number of posters received the selection committee eventually retained 250. Since its launch on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May, the dedicated microsite of the conference was visited more than 28,000 times: [www.efsaexpo2015.eu](http://www.efsaexpo2015.eu). Nine videos have been published on this site.

Publications and multimedia products include, among others: the annual activity report 2014; Chemicals in food 2015: Overview of data collection reports; 2013 Pesticides Annual Report (interactive PDF); EFSA explains: caffeine; five scientific posters; promotional material for the Europe Day; Videos on 'Food safety knows no borders' and 'Good governance at EFSA: the Management Board'; and the DVD collection of the Understanding Science videos.

EFSA participated in the meetings of the AGRI and ENVI committees to follow discussions on animal cloning, novel food, antimicrobial resistance, endocrine active substances and *Xylella fastidiosa*. Animal cloning was also among the matters discussed with MEP Giulia Moi (AGRI and ENVI Committees) in occasion of her visit to EFSA. In that occasion, independence, transparency and openness were also discussed. EFSA had the opportunity to address these subjects also in a meeting with the European Ombudsman,

Ms Emily O'Reilly. With MEP Christofer Fjellner, among others EFSA discussed its work on bisphenol A and endocrine active substances.

On 29 April, the European Parliament granted the Executive Director with the discharge of the 2013 budget. The previous week, the Council of the European Union appointed a new member of the Management Board, Mr Michael Winter.

On a local level, on the Europe Day (9 May), EFSA welcomed several classes of the higher schools of Parma and surroundings to dialogue around the European Union, EU institutions, EFSA and its role in the EU food/feed security system. In collaboration with the Parma City Council and other local institutions, EFSA organised an open event aimed at sensitising the public opinion on EU issues and EFSA's activities.

## **SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION**

EFSA had intensive exchanges with several EU and international scientific organisations. Among them, to mention some, the UK Food Standard Agency (sustainability of risk assessment expertise, foodborne viruses, uncertainty in risk assessment and use of social sciences in risk assessment), Agencia Española de Consumo, Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutrición - AECOSAN (exchange on scientific cooperation and opportunities for joint scientific activities), European Chemicals Agency – ECHA (common activities in the area of nanotechnology), European Medicine Agency (High scientific conference for EMA's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary), Food Standards Australia New Zealand (methodologies and approaches related to health claims and dietary surveys), Chilean Agency for Food Safety and Quality (opportunities of scientific cooperation) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (opportunities of cooperation between EFSA and CFIA).

The Advisory Forum (AF) held its meeting on 11 and 12 June 2015 (after the circulation to the Board of this report). Information on the AF meeting outcome will be provided at the Board meeting.

The Focal Points (FP) held their meeting in Palma de Mallorca with the presence of the ED, the AECOSAN Director and the President of the Balearic Islands. Among others, the group exchanged views on the use of new technologies and on strengthening Europe's risk assessment community through e.g. guest scientist and PhD student schemes. Other topics addressed during the meeting included EFSA's scientific networks, new training opportunities, forthcoming risk assessment activities and the development of the concept of twinning projects between Member States.

## **RELATIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

With the Stakeholder Consultative Platform (SHP), discussion is being carried out on how the Platform can enhance its contribution to EFSA's work. The Platform exchanged preliminary views at the meeting held on 10-11 March and a follow-up discussion is planned for the meeting scheduled on 15 June, which is organised at EXPO in Milan. The SHP will be held after the circulation to the Board of this report. Information on the SHP meeting outcome will be provided at the Board meeting.

## SCIENCE STRATEGY AND COORDINATION (SCISTRAT)

<p><b>Scientific Committee and Emerging Risks</b></p>	<p><u>Scientific Committee (SC)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Guidance on 'Review, revision and development of EFSA's cross cutting guidance documents'.</li> <li>○ Editorial on 'Increasing robustness, transparency and openness of scientific assessment' and technical report of the consultation.</li> <li>○ Endorsement of the technical report on the identification of emerging risks.</li> </ul> <p><u>SCER Unit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ External report on 'Data collection on toxicokinetic and toxicodynamic interactions of chemical mixtures for human risk assessment'.</li> <li>○ Event report of the 'EFSA's 21<sup>th</sup> Scientific Colloquium on harmonisation of human and ecological risk assessment of combined exposure to multiple chemicals'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advisory Forum and Scientific Cooperation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Advisory Forum (AF) meeting held on 4-5 March: The group discusses how to deal with scientific divergence (Art. 30 of the Founding Regulation), the Data Warehouse, the report on risk ranking and closer working relationship with the AF Communications Working Group.</li> <li>○ Focal Point (FP) meeting held on 7-8 May: with the participation of the ED, the AECOSAN Director and President of the Balearic Islands, the group discussed around Open EFSA, guest scientist and PhD student schemes, EFSA's Scientific Networks, forthcoming risk assessment activities and twinning projects between Member States.</li> <li>○ European Neighbourhood Programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Final report on the Pre-Accession Programme 2011-2014 and interim report 2014-2016.</li> <li>▪ Study tour to National Food Authorities in Belgium.</li> <li>▪ EFSA expert mission to the Jordan Food and Drug Administration (JFDA): participation of 40 experts from National Food Safety Authorities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>International relations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ EFSA received the visit of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delegation of the Indonesian Government: discussion around EFSA's experiences in the area of risk assessment and risk communication.</li> <li>▪ Food Standards Australia New Zealand, Mrs Dorothy Mackerras: methodologies and approaches related to health claims and dietary surveys.</li> <li>▪ New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries, Ms Haritina Mogoşanu: activities in the area of risk communication, emerging risks and plant health.</li> <li>▪ US Food and Drug Administration Europe Office, Mr Donald Prater: exchange with the ED and opportunities of collaboration.</li> <li>▪ Chilean Ministry of Agriculture, Vice-Minister Claudio Ternicier González, and the Chilean Agency for Food Safety</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>International relations</b>	<p>and Quality (ACHIPIA), Executive Secretary Mr Michel Leporati Néron: opportunities of scientific cooperation between ACHIPIA and EFSA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Executive Vice-President Ms Carolina Giliberti and Vice-President Mr Paul Mayers: opportunities of cooperation between EFSA and CFIA.</li> <li>○ Participation in a meeting of the Task Force on African Union Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism.</li> <li>○ Conference call with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): exchange of information on projects related to epidemiology and developmental neurotoxicity of pesticides.</li> </ul>
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### RISK ASSESSMENT AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE (RASA)

<b>Animal health and plant health</b>	<p><u>Panel on Animal health and welfare (AHAW)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opinions on: 'Canine Leishmaniosis', 'Increased mortality events in Pacific oysters associated with ostreid herpes virus 1<math>\mu</math>var and/or Vibrio aestuarianus' and 'Welfare aspects of perches for poultry'.</li> </ul> <p><u>Panel on Plant health (PLH)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opinions on: 'Risk to plant health in the EU territory of the intentional release of the bud-galling wasp Trichilogaster acaciaelongifoliae for the control of the invasive alien plant Acacia longifolia' and 'Risk to plant health of soil and growing medium'.</li> <li>○ Statement on the 'Process in assessing the risk to plant health posed by biological control agents of invasive alien plants'.</li> </ul> <p><u>ALPHA Unit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Scientific reports of EFSA on: 'Small hive beetle diagnosis and risk management options', 'Welfare assessment of dairy cows in small scale farming systems', 'Categorisation of plants for planting, excluding seeds, according to the risk of introduction of Xylella fastidiosa', 'Update on the risk of transmission of Ebola Virus via the food chain', 'Response to scientific and technical information provided by an NGO on Xylella fastidiosa'.</li> <li>○ Event report on the 'Workshop on research gap analysis in animal influenza'.</li> <li>○ External reports on 'Inventory and review of quantitative models for spread of plant pests for use in pest risk assessment for the EU territory' and 'Development of probabilistic models for quantitative pathway analysis of plant pests introduction for the EU territory'.</li> </ul>
<b>Biological hazards and contaminants</b>	<p><u>Panel on Contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opinions on: 'Risks to animal and public health and the environment related to the presence of nickel in feed', 'Acrylamide in food' and 'Risks for public health related to the presence of perchlorate in food, in particular fruits and vegetables'.</li> </ul>

<b>Biological hazards and contaminants</b>	<u>BIOCONTAM Unit</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Scientific reports on 'Update on the risk of transmission of Ebola virus (EBOV) via the food chain' and 'Request for a scientific statement on the health based guidance value for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs'.</li> <li>○ External reports on: 'Elaboration of specific sections on multi-drug resistance in the 2013 EU Summary Report on Antimicrobial Resistance', 'Survey on sterigmatocystin in food' and 'Experimental study of Deoxynivalenol biomarkers in urine'.</li> <li>○ Technical report on the 'Outcome of the public consultation of the draft scientific opinion of the CONTAM Panel on Acrylamide in Food'.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment and methodological support</b>	<u>AMU Unit</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PROMETHEUS project: Scientific report on 'Principles and process for dealing with data and evidence in scientific assessment'. The report was endorsed by the Scientific Committee.</li> <li>○ Methodological support to BIOHAZ (Development of a risk ranking toolbox for the BIOHAZ Panel), AHAW ('Canine Leishmaniosis', 'Systematic reviews of the efficacy and safety of sometribove zinc suspension', 'Welfare aspects of perches for poultry' and 'Welfare assessment of dairy cows in small scale farming systems') and NDA (Dietary Reference Values for calcium).</li> <li>○ Assistance to ALPHA for the 'Urgent reaction from EFSA to comment the scientific and technical information provided by an Italian NGO on Xylella fastidiosa'.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence management</b>	<u>DATA Unit</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Technical reports on: 'User manual for reporting officers and reporters for mapping Member State standard terminology to EFSA standard terminology', 'Data dictionaries - guidelines for reporting data on zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance and food-borne outbreaks', 'Guideline for reporting data on residues of veterinary medicinal products' and 'Food classification and description system FoodEx 2'.</li> <li>○ Support to BIOCONTAM ('Nickel in feed' and 'Perchlorate in food, in particular fruits and vegetables'), FIP ('Chlorophylls - E 141i - food colour' and 'Re-evaluation of Dodecyl gallate - E312 - as food additive'), GMO (Use of comprehensive European food consumption database for estimating dietary exposure to genetically modified foods), COMMS (Annual report on Chemicals in Food 2015) and NUTRI (Dietary Reference Values for vitamin A).</li> <li>○ External reports on 'Implementation of XML and Excel data reporting and updating the historical datasets on zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance and food-borne outbreaks' from Romania, Greece, Finland, Austria and Lithuania.</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Endorsement by the Scientific Committee of 'Quality assurance for science approach'.</li> <li>○ Kick-off of the 2015 Customer feedback exercise.</li> <li>○ Development of quality assurance system for DATA based on lessons learnt from Perchlorate.</li> </ul>

## SCIENTIFIC EVALUATION OF REGULATED PRODUCTS (REPRO)

<b>Additives and products or substances used in animal feed</b>	<p><u>Panel on Additives and products or substances used in animal feed (FEEDAP)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opinions on feed additives: sensory (2), technological (2), nutritional (7) and zootechnical (6).</li> </ul> <p><u>FEED Unit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review of the scientific opinion on AviMatrix<sup>®</sup> (benzoic acid, calcium formate and fumaric acid) as a feed additive.</li> <li>○ External report on the preparatory work to support the re-evaluation of technological feed additives.</li> </ul>
<b>Food ingredients and packaging</b>	<p><u>Panel on Food Additives and Nutrient Sources added to Food (ANS)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opinions on the re-evaluation of food additives (4) and the assessment of new applications (2).</li> </ul> <p><u>Panel on Food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings and processing aids (CEF)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opinions on flavouring substances (7) and food contact materials (2) and recycling processes (4).</li> </ul> <p><u>FIP Unit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statements of EFSA on the refined exposure assessment for food colours (ponceau, quinoline yellow and azorubine/carmoisine).</li> <li>○ Scientific report on the 'Monitoring of scientific literature on food contacts materials for metals: barium, cobalt, copper, manganese, nickel and selenium'.</li> </ul>
<b>Genetically modified organisms</b>	<p><u>Panel on Genetically modified organisms</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Guidance documents for the 'Risk assessment of the renewal of GM plant products authorised under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003' and 'Agronomic and phenotypic characterisation of genetically modified plants'.</li> <li>○ Opinions on: 'Maize 5307', 'Soybean MON 87708 x MON 89788' and 'Maize MON 87427'. In addition, '2013 post-market environmental monitoring report on maize MON810' and 'Supplement previous risk mitigation measures reducing exposure of non-target Lepidoptera to maize MON 810, Bt11 or 1507 pollen'.</li> </ul> <p><u>GMO Unit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Meeting of the GMO Network.</li> <li>○ Procurement for literature review of baseline information to support the risk assessment of RNAi-based GM plants.</li> </ul>
<b>Dietetic products, nutrition and allergies</b>	<p><u>Panel on Dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opinions endorsed for public consultation: Dietary Reference Values for iron and magnesium.</li> <li>○ Opinions on: 'Caffeine' and 'DRVs for calcium'.</li> <li>○ Opinions on Health Claims: Art. 14 (1) and Art. 13/5 (5).</li> </ul>

	<p><u>NUTRI Unit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Three technical reports following the request for scientific assistance on comments received pursuant to Article 16(6) of Regulation (EC) N°1924/2006.</li> <li>○ Technical reports on the outcomes of public consultations for: caffeine, DRVs for calcium and DRVs for vitamin A.</li> <li>○ External report on the 'Provision of training services in the area of biometry and biostatistics'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pesticides and plant protection products and their residues</b></p>	<p><u>Panel on Plant protection products and their residues (PPR)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statement on the suitability of the BEEHAVE model for its potential use in a regulatory context and for the RA on multiple stressors in honeybees.</li> </ul> <p><u>PRAS Unit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ EFSA Guidance document for predicting environmental concentrations of active substances of PPPs and transformation products of these active substances in soil.</li> <li>○ 6 conclusions on pesticides peer review.</li> <li>○ 18 reasoned opinions on MRLs.</li> <li>○ Event report on the 'Workshop with stakeholders on the Use of Epidemiological findings in Regulatory Pesticide Risk Assessment'.</li> <li>○ External reports on: 'Immunotoxic effects of PPPs', 'Literature review of testing methods', 'Microorganisms used as PPPs' and 'Scenarios for predicting environmental concentration of PPPs'.</li> <li>○ Technical reports on: Confirmatory data of active substances (6), Monitoring residues in food products (1) and Outcome of the public consultation of the draft EFSA guidance on predicting environmental concentrations in soil (1).</li> <li>○ Call for new scientific information as regards the risk to bees from the use of the three neonicotinoid pesticide active substances (clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam) applied as seed treatments and granules in the EU.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Application Desk</b></p>	<p><u>APDESK Unit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Receipt of 114 applications and 78 requests via web form.</li> <li>○ Support to the organisation of an info session on 'Feed Additives Applications'.</li> <li>○ Technical report on 'EFSA's Catalogue of support initiatives during the life-cycle of applications for regulated products'.</li> <li>○ External report on 'EFSA stakeholders' benefit analysis of the future implementation of an electronic submission tool'.</li> </ul>

## COMMUNICATIONS (COMMS)

### External relations

#### Stakeholders

- Stakeholder Consultative Platform
  - Set up of a pilot focus group on a Guidance document on Allergenicity with stakeholders and member states' representatives. This engagement initiative aims to enhance the quality, clarity and usability of the Guidance document.
  - Discussion is being carried out on how members could enhance the contribution of the Platform to EFSA's work, as part of the roll-out of a new approach to stakeholder engagement. The Platform exchanged preliminary views at the meeting held on 10-11 March and a follow-up discussion is planned for the meeting scheduled on 15 June, which is organised at EXPO in Milan.
  - Regular information exchange with stakeholder organisations in relation to the publication of opinions of particular interest (e.g. caffeine and acrylamide).
- EU institutions
  - The Council of the European Union appointed a new member of the Management Board, Mr Michael Winter.
  - The European Parliament granted the Executive Director with the discharge for the budget 2013.
  - Meeting of the Executive Director with the European Ombudsman, Ms Emily O'Reilly.
  - Participation of EFSA at meetings of the AGRI and ENVI committees to follow discussions on animal cloning, novel food, antimicrobial resistance, endocrine active substances and Xylella fastidiosa.
  - Visit to EFSA of MEP Giulia Moi, member of the AGRI and ENVI Committees: exchange of views around EFSA's independence, transparency and openness and the scientific activities carried out in the field of cloning.
  - Participation of EFSA at the meeting of the Heads of EU Agencies.
- EU and international scientific organisations
  - Visit of EFSA to the UK Food Standard Agency. Among the key issues discussed: corporate strategy of FSA and EFSA, sustainability of risk assessment expertise, foodborne viruses, uncertainty in risk assessment and use of social sciences in risk assessment.
  - Visit of EFSA to the Agencia Española de Consumo, Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutrición (AECOSAN): exchange on scientific cooperation and opportunities for joint scientific activities.
  - Participation of EFSA at the European Medicines Agency (EMA)'s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary Conference "Science, Medicines, Health: Patients at the heart of future innovation".
  - Participation of EFSA at the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Joint Research Centre's Scientific Committee. Among others, the activities of the EU Agencies Network on Scientific Advice (EU ANSA) were presented. EU ANSA submitted the 2015 (and first) edition of the compilation of the scientific processes of the EU ANSA agencies and the progress

**External Relations**

report Jan-June 2015.

- Video-conference with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) on common activities in the area of nanotechnology.
- Other stakeholders
  - Participation of EFSA at the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the German food industry.
  - Lecture of the ED at the Collegio europeo (European College) of Parma.
  - 'World Food research and innovation Forum': meeting with the Italian Emilia-Romagna Region to discuss the objectives and format of the project to be launched at the EXPO 2015 in September.
  - Europe Day 2015: EFSA met several classes of the higher schools of Parma and surroundings to dialogue on European Union, EU institutions, EFSA and its role in the EU food/feed security system. In collaboration with the Parma City Council and other local institutions, EFSA organised an open event aimed at sensitising the public opinion on EU issues and EFSA activities.

Media and social media

- Coverage in approx. 2,600 articles and 190 media queries, representing a -45% decrease and +67% increase respectively compared to previous quarter. The drop of coverage is in line with yearly average figures. Additionally, coverage in the previous quarter was significantly higher due to the publication of EFSA's opinion on BPA. Issues that featured heavily on the media: pesticides, *Xylella fastidiosa* and EFSA's report on chemicals in food for the general public.
- Highlights from the quarter include: interview on corporate topics with RNE; interview on mycotoxins and dioxins in feed with Corriere della Sera; media activities organised to mark the Europe Day, including a live interview with RAI 3 on the Europe Day and a joint press conference with the Parma City Council.
- Twitter account reached more than 10K followers, +873 new followers (+17% compared to last quarter; average 9 new followers/day). A Twitter chat held on World Food Day jointly with WHO, FAO and ECDC was used in over 1000 tweets, with a reach of 3.6 million people (hashtag #safefoodchat).
- 11% decrease in "applause rate" (e.g. #of times the Twitter community mentioned, re-tweeted or replied to EFSA tweets). This can be linked to the exceptionally high Twitter activity generated in the previous quarter by the publication of the BPA opinion.

**Risk Communication**

Content overview

- 2 press releases, 13 news stories, 2 feature stories, 8 news in brief, 1 lay summary were published; 12 of which were science related and 14 were on corporate issues.
- Highlights included: Pesticide residues, *Xylella fastidiosa*, safety of caffeine, food risks of Ebola, data warehouse, food consumption data, foods of non-animal origin, methodology developments, Prometheus, scientific cooperation, biological controls, DRVs for vitamin A and magnesium.

<p><b>Risk Communication</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Chemicals in Food report was the first issue of a new output developed by COMMS following a request from the European Commission for an annual report on EFSA’s chemical occurrence data collection activities and aimed at the general public.</li> </ul> <p><u>Website</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Finalised website migration to new platform, currently entering in testing phase.</li> <li>○ Completed design proposal for new website, currently entering in user testing phase for details refinements.</li> <li>○ Carried out migration of newsletter system to external dedicated system, improving both efficiency and quality of the service.</li> </ul> <p><u>Conference/Events</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ EFSA’s second scientific conference “Shaping the Future of Food Safety. Together”: 535 abstracts received for the poster session (KPI of 100); 1,655 participants registered (KPI of 1,000) and a total number of web visits to the dedicated microsite of 28,111 sessions and a number of page views of 96,660 since the launch of the microsite on 19 May (KPI of 10,000 visitors). 9 videos published on the dedicated microsite since its launch (<a href="http://www.efsaexpo2015.eu">www.efsaexpo2015.eu</a>).</li> <li>○ Campaigns to promote the info session with stakeholders on the EFSA guidance on assessment criteria for stunning interventions (9 June) and the workshop on allergenicity assessment of GM plants (17 June).</li> </ul> <p><u>EFSA Journal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Call for tenders on ‘Publishing of the EFSA Journal and related services’ published.</li> </ul> <p><u>Publications &amp; Multimedia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Annual report 2014; Chemicals in food 2015: Overview of data collection reports; Scientific cooperation annual report 2014; EFSA explains: caffeine; 5 scientific posters for the EFSA presentations at the SETAC conference; promotional material for the Europe Day (brochure, banners and posters); Video: Food safety knows no borders; AppDesk scroller; 2013 Pesticides Annual Report (interactive PDF); Video: Good governance at EFSA: the Management Board; Internal video: Interview with the ED on “Open EFSA”; DVD with the collection of the Understanding Science videos.</li> </ul>
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**CORPORATE – RESOURCES AND SUPPORT**

<p><b>Strategy based services</b> (Business specific knowledge and strong upside for effective decisions)</p>	<p><u>Corporate business control (PTT)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The new Planning, Transformation &amp; Technology Unit - operational as of May 4 - has the function to provide strategic planning and programming, budgeting, controlling, corporate reporting, portfolio management, project and programme support, service-desk services, IT assurance and customer empowerment to EFSA staff for the improved use of technology. A new function of EU Technology Liaison has been created; the Information Programme Team will also be hosted in the new Unit.</li> <li>○ Completed absorption of new IT teams and Corporate Business Controlling team into the new Unit.</li> <li>○ Completed absorption of Planning &amp; Monitoring team members into the new Corporate Business Control team.</li> </ul> <p><u>Independence</u></p> <p>The Authority triggered the initial, preliminary reflections instrumental to preparing the ground for the in-depth discussion with the Management Board on independence, absence of bias and objectivity. The objective is the adoption of a novel EFSA Objectivity Policy by the end of 2016.</p>
<p><b>Expertise based services</b> (Technically specialised and they require considerable contact with internal customers. They are based on broad expertise and customisation, i.e. application of best practices to specific EFSA problems)</p>	<p><u>Data protection</u></p> <p>Support provided in various data protection questions at EFSA, e.g. the application of cloud computing, personal data handling in DMS - Open Text, public access requests on personal data. Follow-up to requests from European Data Protection Supervisor, in particular survey on international data transfers, preparation of reply to EDPS on the 2015 general monitoring exercise with EU institutions &amp; bodies. Participation in the DPO network meeting.</p> <p><u>Court cases</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Case T-231/12 P EMA v Drakeford. On 14 April, a hearing was held by the General Court. EFSA is supporting EMA against the claims of a former employee.</li> <li>○ Case C-615/13P, ClientEarth &amp; PAN Europe v EFSA. On 14 April, the Advocate General issued the Opinion which proposes the Court to reject the two first grounds of appeal agreeing with the judgment of the General Court in first instance, in particular on the fact that the names of scientific experts linked to their comments qualify as personal data. However, the Advocate General proposes the Court to uphold the third ground of appeal considering that an element of mistrust as to EFSA is enough to establish the necessity of having this personal data to be transferred.</li> <li>○ Case T-716/14, Tweedale v EFSA. On 17 April, the President of the Fifth Chamber of the General Court ordered that the proceedings in this case are stayed until the Court of Justice gives final ruling in Cases C-673/13P and C-442/14 on the interpretation of the exceptions to disclosure under the Aarhus Regulation (EC) No 1367/2006.</li> </ul>

**Expertise based services**

(Technically specialised and they require considerable contact with internal customers. They are based on broad expertise and customisation, i.e. application of best practices to specific EFSA problems)

- On 21 May, the General Court ruled on Case T-201/13 Rubinum v European Commission. The General Court dismissed the action brought by Rubinum against the decision of the European Commission to suspend the authorisation of the feed additive Toyocerin®. Both the legality of the Commission’s decision and the soundness of EFSA’s procedures have been confirmed and upheld by the Court.

Ombudsman

- Case 0684/2012/JF: On 25 March, the EO adopted the decision closing the inquiry and welcoming EFSA acceptance of the friendly solution. The case refers to the payment of dependent child allowances to a former staff member.
- Case 176/2015/JF. On 5 May, the EO notified to EFSA a new complaint, alleging EFSA failed to reply properly to the specific questions concerning the procedure for authorization of GM maize MON 810. EFSA’s opinion on the complaint is due by 30 August 2015.

Talent Selection

On 31 May, 433 posts were occupied and 3 job offers sent to the selected candidates bringing the total to 436 posts filled-in out of the planned 477 posts (including Seconded National Experts). With regards to statutory staff, the recruitment execution rate for the establishment plan 2015 (temporary agents and officials) is at 96.7%, while that for contract agents is at 89.1% (or at 81.7% if taking into account the 10 additional short term contracts allocated to Science). This gives an overall weighted average of 94.9% (corresponding to 92.8% including the 10 short term contracts).

Staff Categories	Target 2015	Total Contracted and Offered
<b>Temporary Agents and Officials</b>		
Executives, Managers & Officers (AD)	234	212
Assistants functions (AST)	103	114
<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>326</b>
<b>Contract Agents</b>		
Officers functions (CA FG IV)	70	55
Assistants functions (CA FG I, II, III)	50	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>98</b>
Seconded National Experts	20	12
<b>Total all staff categories</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>436</b>

	<p><u>Assurance, Business engineering and Customer empowerment (PTT)</u>  Completed re-organization to new target operating model based on the outsourcing of project and service delivery and integrated the remaining IT activity into 3 teams (Assurance, Business engineering and Customer empowerment) which are now part of a larger corporate unit within RESU delivering Planning, Transformation &amp; Technology.</p>
<p><b>Transaction based services</b>  (Routine activities, high volume tasks and highly sensitive to scale)</p>	<p><u>Assurance, Business Engineering and Customer empowerment (PTT)</u>  Completed the transition to new outsourced services delivery supplier, selected through open call for tender (€35 million contract). Achieved stability (Perfect Service performance index at 56%, which is equal to the level achieved in 2014 by EFSA, after improvement from 36% in 2013). The service is delivered at lower cost and with higher service levels (resolution of incidents at 99% vs. 90% achieved in 2014; service requests completed within target at 95%-98% vs. 90% achieved in 2014). These higher quality levels are guaranteed by supplier penalties for non-performance. The performance is stable through the 3 month transition period ending May 2015 and measured legacy software stability is within 5% of the operational standard achieved last year.</p> <p><u>Outreach and support services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stakeholder meeting on the draft opinion on the safety of caffeine. Participants: 69, out of which 37% from private sector, 28% from Member States and 16% from other public bodies. Positive rates in evaluation survey: 98%.</li> <li>○ APDESK meeting with Stakeholders (FEED). Registered participants: 126 including NGOs, private sector and public risk assessment authorities in Member States.</li> </ul> <p><u>Financial management</u>  On 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015, € 37.26 million or 46.82% of the € 79.58 million budget was committed, and € 23.32 million or 29.88% of the € 78.03 million payment appropriations were paid. Detailed information are available in mb150618-i6.</p>

## Glossary

**ADoI** – Annual Declaration of Interest  
**AF** – EFSA’s Advisory Forum  
**AFCWG** – Advisory Forum Communications Working Group  
**AFSCO** – EFSA Unit on Advisory Forum and Scientific Cooperation  
**ALPHA** – EFSA Unit on Animal health and plant health  
**AHAW** – EFSA Panel on Animal health and welfare  
**AMU** – EFSA Unit on Assessment and methodological support  
**ANS** – EFSA Panel on Food additives and nutrient sources added to food  
**BIOCONTAM** – EFSA Biological hazard and contaminants Unit  
**BIOHAZ** – EFSA Panel on Biological hazards  
**BPA** – bisphenol A  
**CEF** – EFSA Panel on Food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings and processing aids  
**COMMS** – EFSA Department of Communications  
**CONTAM** – EFSA Panel on Contaminants  
**DATA** – EFSA Unit on Evidence management  
**DG SANCO** – Directorate General for Health and Consumers  
**DoI** – Declaration of Interest  
**DPO** – EFSA Data Protection Officer  
**EC** – European Commission  
**ECA** – European Court of Auditors  
**ECDC** – European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control  
**ED** – EFSA Executive Director  
**EP** – European Parliament  
**ERA** – Environmental risk assessment  
**ERWG** – EFSA’s External Review Working Group  
**EU** – European Union  
**EXO** – EFSA’s Executive Office Unit  
**FAQ** – Frequently asked questions  
**FEED** – EFSA Unit on Feeds  
**FEEDAP** – EFSA Panel on Additives and products or substances used in animal feed  
**FIP** – EFSA Unit on Food ingredients and packaging  
**FP** – EFSA Focal Points  
**GMO** – EFSA Panel/Unit on Genetically modified organism  
**HUCAP** – EFSA Unit on Human capital and knowledge management  
**IEP** – Information exchange platform  
**IFCSLG** – International Food Chemical Safety Liaison Group  
**MAP** – Multi-Annual Plan  
**MEP** – Member of the European Parliament  
**MRL** – Maximum residue levels  
**MS** – EU Member States  
**PRAS** – EFSA Unit on Pesticides  
**PPR** – EFSA Panel on Plant protection products and their residues  
**QPS** – Qualified Presumption of Safety  
**RASA** – EFSA Department of Risk assessment and scientific assistance  
**RASFF** – Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed  
**REPRO** – EFSA Department of Scientific evaluation of regulated products  
**RESU** – EFSA Department of Resources and Support  
**SC** – EFSA Scientific Committee  
**SCER** – EFSA Scientific Committee and Emerging Risk Unit  
**SCISTRAT** – EFSA Department of Scientific strategy and coordination  
**SCP** – Stakeholders Consultative Platform  
**SOP** – EFSA’s Standard Operational Procedure

**WG** – Working group

**Document history**

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Version: 3  
Prepared by: ED office  
Reviewed by: Management Team  
Last modified: 05/06/2015

## Progress Indicators as of 31 May 2015

### Executive Summary

This document includes:

- An overview of EFSA's results in the first five months of 2015 on key performance indicators.
- Detailed tables with figures and data referring to the period 1/1/15 - 31/5/15 on: Outputs adopted by unit (figures 1 to 3), analysis of on-going questions by status and their monthly evolution (figures 4 and 5) and evolution of key indicators on Communication activities (figure 6).

In the first 5 months of the year, **137 scientific outputs and 70 Supporting publications** have been finalized / adopted, representing respectively 35% and 48% of the yearly target.

All scientific outputs adopted under Activity 1 (Provision of scientific opinions and advice & risk assessment approaches) were on time, in line with the target of 100% timeliness.

Adoption timeliness for Activity 2 (Evaluation of products, substances and claims subject to authorization), excluding questions already overdue at the beginning of the year, stands at 87%, slightly below the target of 90%.

Communication activities are on track, with web visits, twitter followers and subscribers to online products constantly increasing.

Financial performance at global level as of 31 May is 3% above the monthly target for commitments and 9% below the monthly target for payments. Commitments for Scientific Cooperation are well above targets and payments in line with target.

For further details on financial performance, please refer to document mb150618-i6 (Budget Execution & Transfers).

## Overview of Key performance indicators as of 31/5/2015

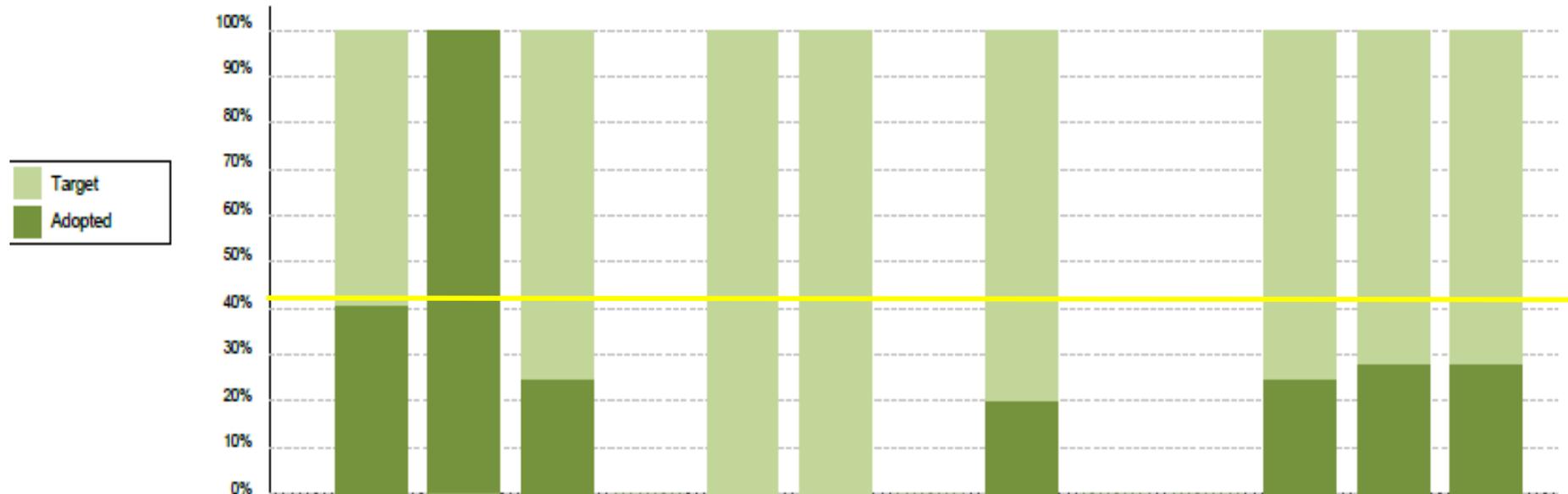
Description	Traffic light	Comment
1 Scientific Outputs Activity 1		24 outputs adopted/finalised, in line with monthly targets and representing 28% of the yearly target (see figure 1)
2 Scientific Outputs Activity 2		110 outputs adopted/finalised, in line with monthly targets and representing 36% of yearly target (see figure 2 )
3 Outputs Activity 3 (including supporting publications)		3 scientific outputs adopted/finalised, 100% of the yearly target and 70 supporting publications, 48% of yearly target (see figure 3)
4 Global Commitments & Payments rate		Global commitments 3% above monthly target, but global payments 9% below target (for details, see document mb150618-i6-Budget Execution & Transfers)
5 G & P Commitments & Payments rate		Grants and procurements commitments and payments above monthly targets (for details, see document mb150618-i6-Budget Execution & Transfers)
6 Adoption Timeliness Activity 1		All scientific outputs under Activity 1 have been adopted within deadlines (100%)
7 Adoption Timeliness Activity 2 <sup>1</sup>		Timeliness performance - excluding backlog - stands at 87%, slightly below the SPD targets of 90%
8 Scientific Outputs published within 15 WD of adoption		The proportion of scientific outputs published within 15 working days of adoption stands at 95% vs. a target of 100%. Delays were minor and concern a limited number of outputs (less than 10 out of 156 published outputs)
9 % of press releases/web news items delivered within 20 WD of output adoption		The proportion of press releases/web news items accompanying scientific outputs is above the target (88% versus a target of 85%)
10 Traffic to EFSA WEB content		Total nr. of visits to the EFSA web site is 1.3 million, in line with monthly target (see figure 6)
11 Subscribers to online products		Subscribers to online products at end May is 35,239, already above annual target of 32,000 (see figure 6)
12 Impact score	-	First results are expected in September 2015
13 Twitter followers		Number of twitter followers at end May is 10,217, constantly increasing (see figure 6)
14 Number of SNEs		13 SNEs at end May, vs. a target of 20
15 Occupancy Rate		Staff occupancy rate - excluding short term contract agents - is 95.1%, in line with 95% target.

<sup>1</sup> Excluding questions already overdue at beginning of 2015

## Progress indicators: detailed tables

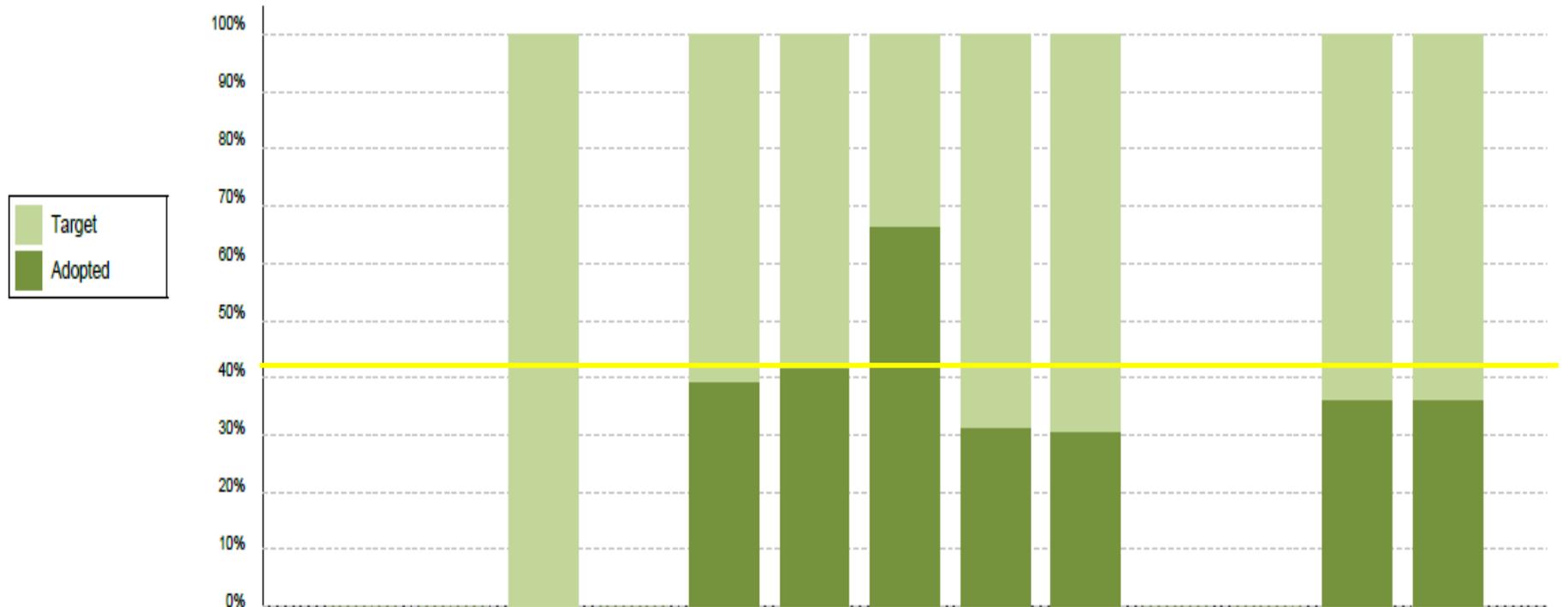
### SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

**Fig.1. Provision of scientific opinions and advice & risk assessment approaches (Activity 1)  
01.01.2015 –31.05.2015 vs. Annual Target**



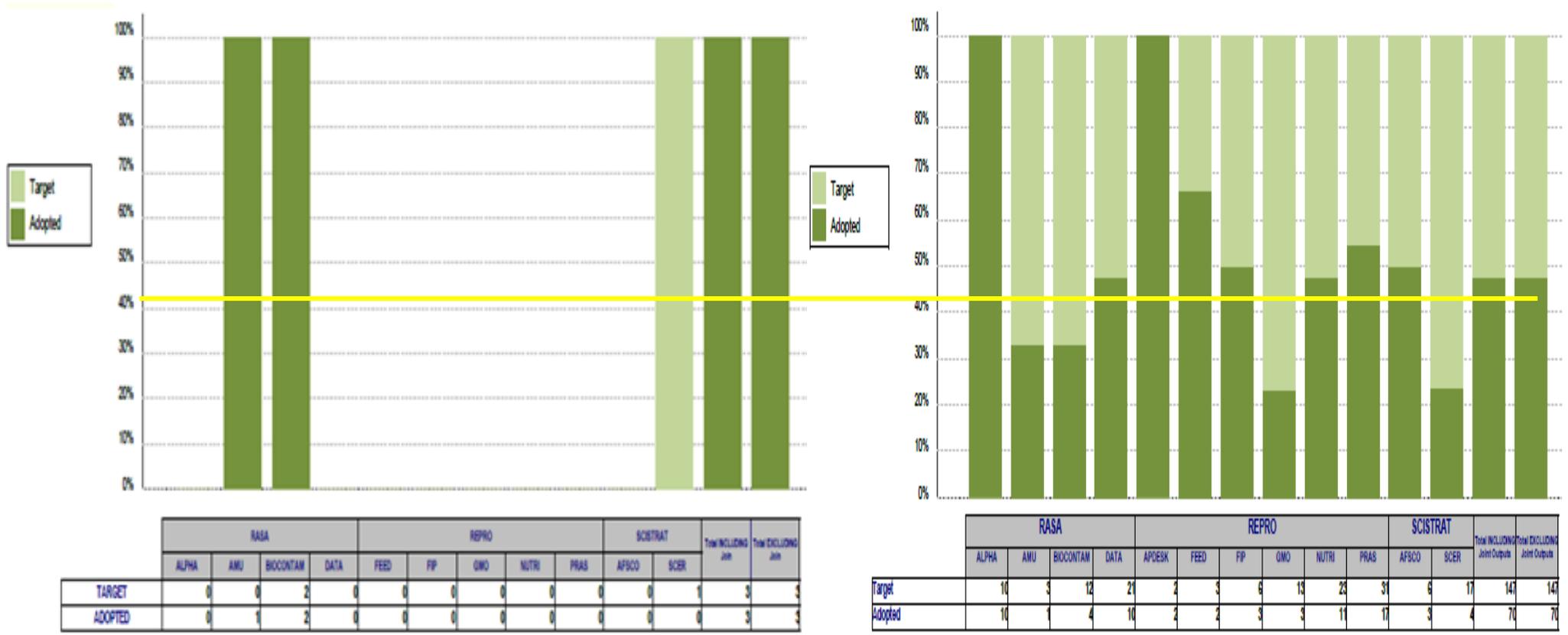
	RASA				REPRO					SCISTRAT		Total INCLUDING Join	Total EXCLUDING Join
	ALPHA	AMU	BIOCONTAM	DATA	FEED	FIP	GMO	NUTRI	PRAS	AFSCO	SCER		
TARGET	32	1	24	0	8	2	0	15	0	0	4	86	86
ADOPTED	13	1	6	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	24	24

**Fig. 2. Evaluation of products, substances and claims subject to authorisation (Activity 2), 01.01.2015 – 31.05.2015 vs. Annual Target**

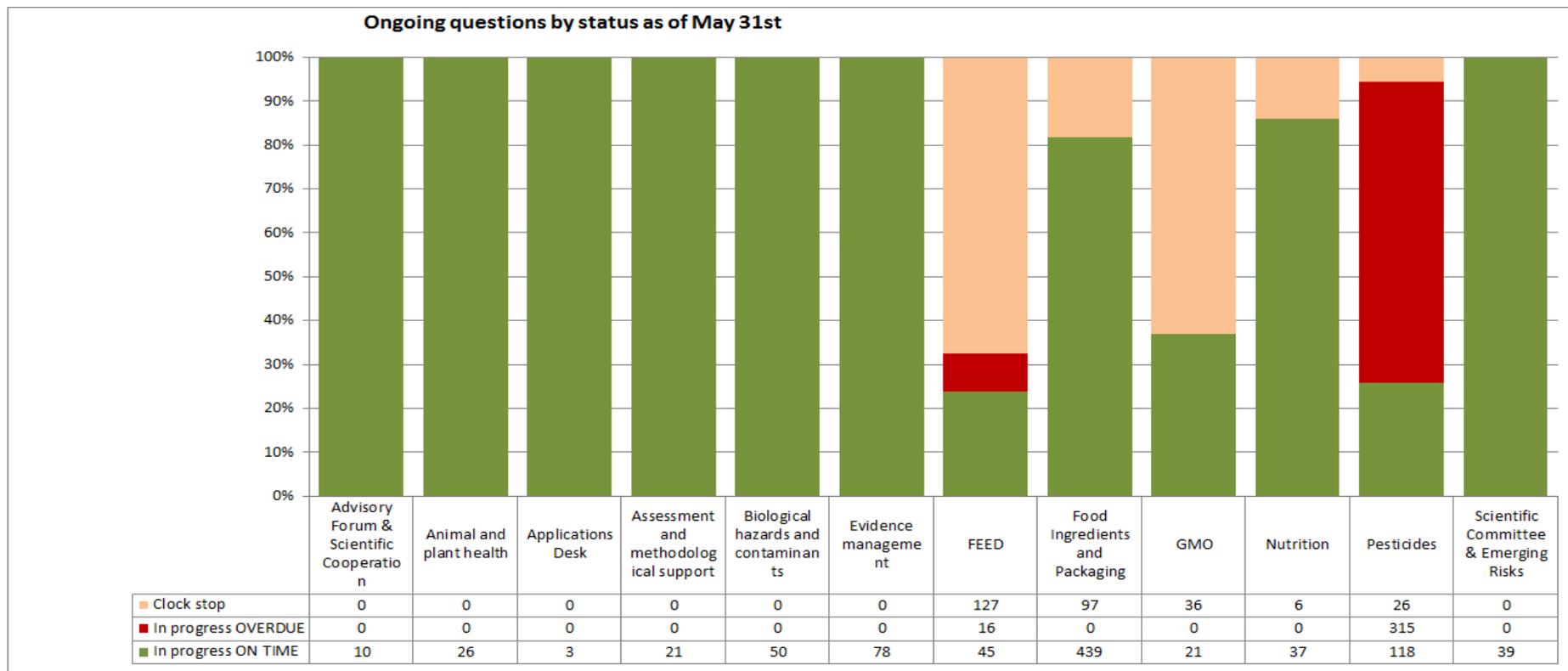


	RASA				REPRO					SCISTRAT		Total INCLUDING Join	Total EXCLUDING Join
	ALPHA	AMU	BIOCONTAM	DATA	FEED	FIP	GMO	NUTRI	PRAS	AFSCO	SCER		
TARGET	0	0	4	0	61	74	12	32	121	0	0	304	304
ADOPTED	0	0	0	0	24	31	8	10	37	0	0	110	110

**Fig. 3. Data Collection, Scientific Cooperation and Networking (Activity 3) and Supporting Publications 01.01.2015 – 31.05.2015 vs. Annual Target**



**Fig. 4. Ongoing questions<sup>2</sup> by status**

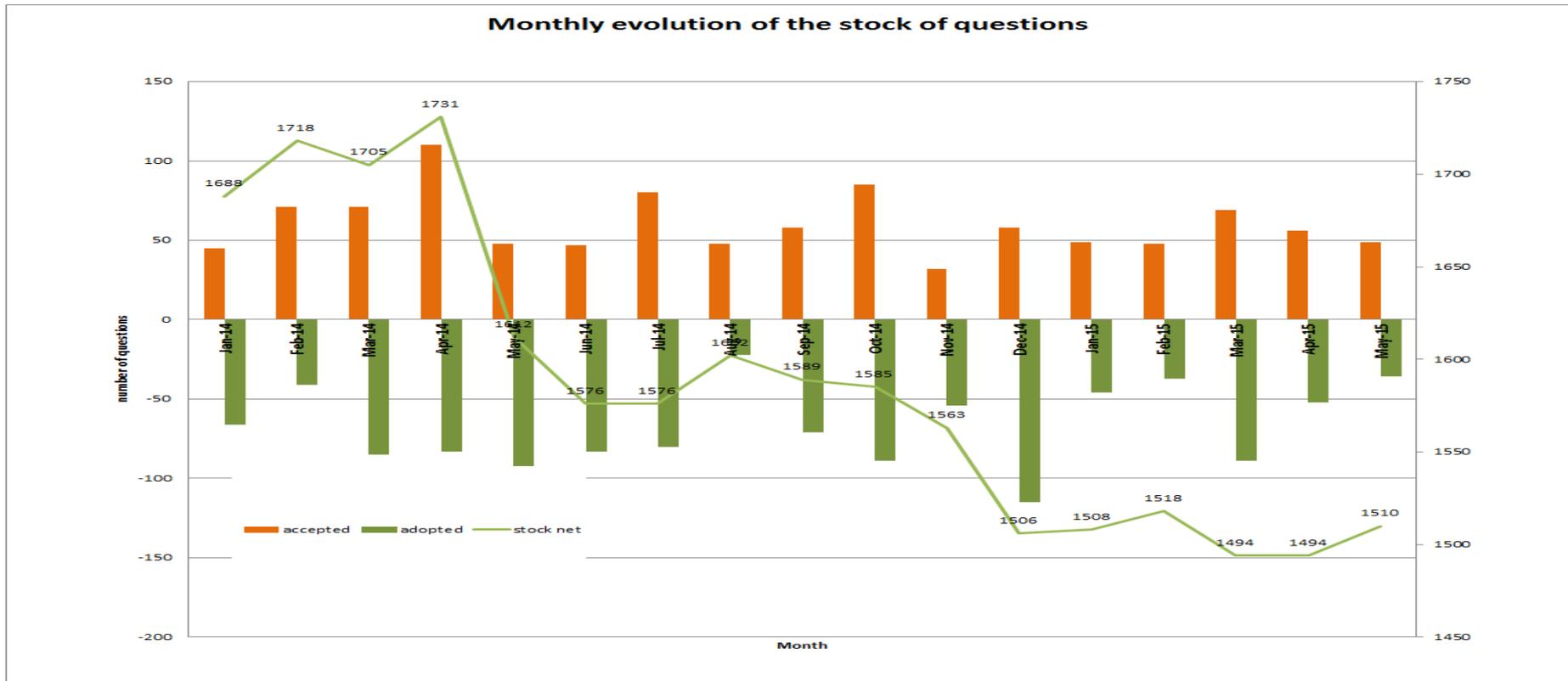


At end May, 331 questions (linked to the adoption of EFSA Scientific Outputs) were overdue, +2% compared to February 2015. The increase is mainly concentrated in the Pesticides Unit and related to request for reasoned opinions on the review of the existing maximum residue levels of pesticides.

Questions in clock stop status (292 as of May) show an overall reduction (-7%) compared to last quarter (314 at end February).

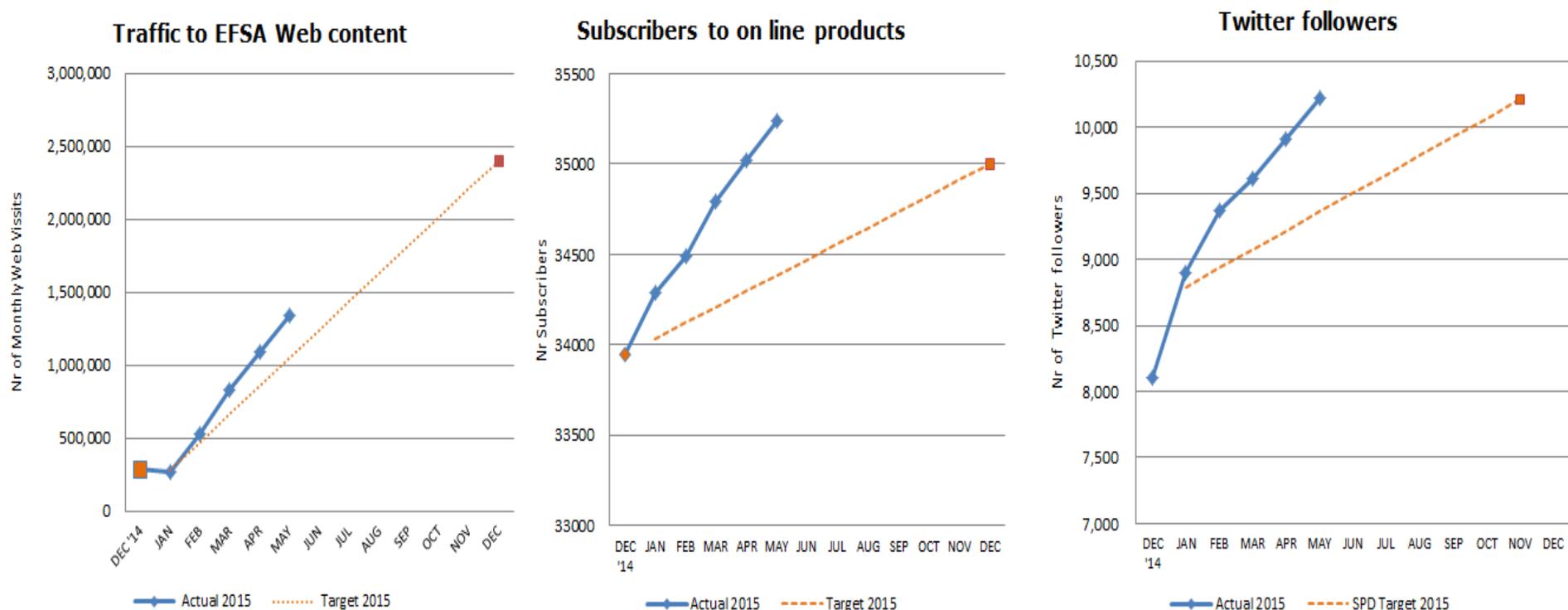
<sup>2</sup> On-going questions excluding the over 1500 questions under consideration referring to health claims pursuant to article 13 of Regulation 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on food.

**Fig. 5. Monthly evolution of the stock of questions**



The stock of questions in the Register of Question system (RAW) at end May 2015 is 1510, an overall stable number compared to the beginning of the year, but in reduction (-6%) compared to May 2014, mainly due to a decrease in the number of incoming requests.

**Fig. 6. Evolution of selected Communication KPI**



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