

# Summary of Annual Report 2012

EFSA celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012, an occasion it marked with a number of events and publications highlighting the Authority's integral role in the European food safety system and the main achievements of its first decade. The anniversary activities culminated in two major events: *Challenging boundaries in risk assessment – sharing experiences* was the title of a two-day scientific conference held in Parma that was attended by 600 people. A high-level conference held jointly with DG SANCO, entitled *Ready for the Challenges of Tomorrow*, was attended by 120 people.

The organisation took a number of steps that will help it continue to play a central part in ensuring the safety of the food chain across Europe. Foremost among these was the publication of the Science Strategy for 2012-2016, which lays out the vision for its scientific development for the next five years. The renewal of eight of EFSA's Panels and the Scientific Committee was another key milestone. The incorporation of the new members and the transition from old panels to new was carried out under EFSA's new Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision Making and its implementing rules. The rules, finalised in the first quarter of 2012, provide a detailed framework for all persons who are obliged to submit declarations of interest, and explain how EFSA prevents and manages any potential conflicts of interest.

The efforts that EFSA has devoted to strengthening and safeguarding its independence were acknowledged by important bodies. The Authority's second external evaluation noted the high quality of EFSA's scientific outputs and risk communication activities and highlighted the Authority's culture of transparency and robust systems to ensure the impartiality of its scientific advice. The European Court of Auditors concluded that EFSA is applying some of the most advanced policies and procedures for declaring, assessing and managing potential conflicts of interest.

EFSA continued to take a more multidisciplinary approach to emerging issues related to food safety such as low-dose effects, endocrine active substances, bee health and chemical mixtures, and to work towards the harmonisation of risk assessment practices. In 2012 the Authority also continued its major work on the modernisation of meat inspection processes, and responded to requests for urgent input on the Schmallenberg virus and *Salmonella* Stanley and for an assessment of a long-term feeding study on GM maize NK603 and glyphosate.

Other noteworthy scientific work included:

- a number of important outputs in support of the EU Animal Welfare Strategy 2012-2015, such as guidance laying out, for the first time, a standardised methodology for the risk assessment of animal welfare, and three opinions on the use of animal-based measures to assess the welfare of dairy cows, pigs and broilers;
- the start of a full risk assessment of the sweetener aspartame;
- a call for data on the food contact material bisphenol A;
- conclusions on the potential risk to bees from three neonicotinoid pesticides.

2012 was a landmark year for EFSA in the area of health claims as the European Commission published a list of 222 general function claims that are approved for use in the EU. The list is based on scientific advice that EFSA's nutrition experts have been providing since 2008. In addition to the health claims list, one of the other key achievements in the regulated products arena was the ongoing development of the Applications Desk Unit. The unit was established in 2011, and in 2012 staff answered hundreds of queries and organised information sessions on pesticides, food additives, GMOs and flavourings to ensure that commercial operators and other stakeholders are fully informed of the evaluation process. The Helpdesk function was launched on EFSA's website to provide structured guidance to applicants

>>>

## Key figures 2012

Scientific outputs	763
Public consultations	39
Contracts and grants	320
Website visits	4,400,000
Electronic newsletter subscribers	30,309
Media coverage (articles)	9,194
EFSA staff in December 2012	466
Plenary meetings	91
Working group meetings	1,047



## HIGHLIGHTS 2012

<<<

and enable them to submit questions on the application process.

EFSA continued to build on its work in environmental risk assessment. A guidance document was drafted on assessment of the risk to aquatic organisms from plant protection products, and a scientific opinion was published on the science behind the development of guidance on the risks posed by pesticides to bees. The Authority's GMO experts drew up guidance for the environmental risk assessment of GM animals, which was subject to public consultation.

Cooperation remained at the core of EFSA's activities. The Advisory Forum continued to address key strategic issues at the four meetings it held in 2012, and emphasised its support for EFSA's contribution to the progress of EU food safety over the past decade in a statement published by all Member States. Scientific cooperation with Member States, EEA/EFTA countries and candidate countries also continued to be promoted by the Focal Points. EFSA strengthened its dialogue with stakeholders when it renewed the membership of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform.

Cooperation in data collection continued with publication of the annual *Summary Report on Zoonoses and Food-borne Outbreaks*, which is published jointly with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and which revealed that cases of *Salmonella* in humans fell by almost 9% in 2010, marking a decrease for the sixth consecutive year. EFSA and ECDC also published the second joint EU *Summary Report on Antimicrobial Resistance*.

A number of developments made 2012 a significant year for communications at EFSA, including the 10-year anniversary activities, the continued implementation of a thematic approach to communicating, publication of Risk Communications Guidelines in cooperation with the Advisory Forum Working Group on Communications, and the launch of EFSA's Twitter account.

EFSA continued to address its working practices to further improve efficiency. The Project and Resources Management Approach (PARMA) Project was launched with the aim of harmonising working practices at EFSA, the Balanced Scorecard system for evaluating performance was fully implemented and EFSA also progressed work on the project to put in place an ISO 9001 quality management system.

## EFSA@10: KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



- Provided scientific advice which contributed to the successful reduction of human *Salmonella* cases in EU;
- Evaluated more than 3,000 health claims, providing the scientific basis to protect European consumers from potentially misleading labelling of food products;
- Re-evaluated the majority of food colours currently approved on the EU market;
- Carried out a peer review of active substances used in plant protection products, leading to the removal of the majority (67%) from the market;
- Analysed annually the data from EU Member States on zoonoses and antimicrobial resistance in animals and food as well as consumer exposure to pesticide residues;
- Published more than 3,000 scientific outputs that have been used as the basis for EU food and feed safety risk management measures and policy initiatives;
- Published more than 70 guidance documents to assist risk managers as well as applicants seeking approval of regulated products;
- Pooled more than 1,500 independent scientific experts to carry out its risk assessments;
- Set up effective cooperation and information exchange structures bringing together all EU Member States and established effective contacts with stakeholders;
- Implemented one of the most robust systems to ensure the impartiality of scientific advice, as benchmarked amongst peer organisations in an independent report;
- Promoted coherence in risk communications through development with Member States of risk communications guidelines underpinned by risk perception research;
- Worked closely with sister agencies in the EU – such as the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, European Medicines Agency and European Chemicals Agency – and reached out to risk assessment bodies beyond the EU to facilitate co-operation in risk assessment worldwide.



## January

- EFSA 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year begins
- Public consultation on draft guidance on risk assessment of GM animals

## February

- Scenarios presented for the possible spread of Schmallenberg virus in the EU
- Population Reference Intakes for protein published

## March

- Joint reports with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control on antimicrobial resistance and zoonoses
- Publication of implementing rules for EFSA's independence policy
- Pilot project begins for observers to attend EFSA scientific panel meetings

## April

- Full re-evaluation of bisphenol A launched
- Post-market monitoring data for MON810 maize is analysed
- Reduction targets for *Salmonella* in turkeys are set

## May

- Guidance issued for assessment of *Enterococcus faecium*, a common probiotic used in animal feed
- EFSA welcomes CODEX Working Group to Parma
- State-of-the-art scientific review of the risks posed by pesticides to bees is published

## June

- Membership of eight Panels and Scientific Committee is renewed
- 17<sup>th</sup> Scientific Colloquium on low-dose response is held
- Council of the European Union appoints seven members to EFSA's Management Board
- Launch of Network for Harmonisation of Risk Assessment Methodologies

## July

- Call for additional data on aspartame is launched
- Dioxins and PCBs report shows drop in dietary exposure
- New guidance issued for food additive applicants
- Risk Communications Guidelines issued by EFSA and Member States

## August

- Further guidance made available for health claim applicants

## September

- Scientific support provided for rare *Salmonella* Stanley incident
- Independent external evaluation of EFSA released
- Public consultation launched on draft guidelines for assessing the risks from pesticides to bees

## October

- Initial review of study on GM maize NK603 and glyphosate is published
- EFSA indicates that acrylamide levels in food are not decreasing
- European Court of Auditors recognises EFSA's advanced independence policies, makes recommendations

## November

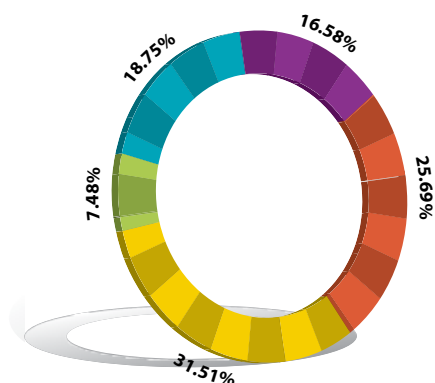
- 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Scientific Conference and High-Level Conference held in Parma, new premises inaugurated
- EFSA hosts sixth annual meeting with NGOs on risk assessment of GMOs
- EFSA concludes that review of safety of GM maize NK603 is unwarranted

## December

- EFSA advises on risks of mercury to public health
- Exposure to caramel colours found to be less than previously estimated
- Advice on sea transport of edible fats and oils

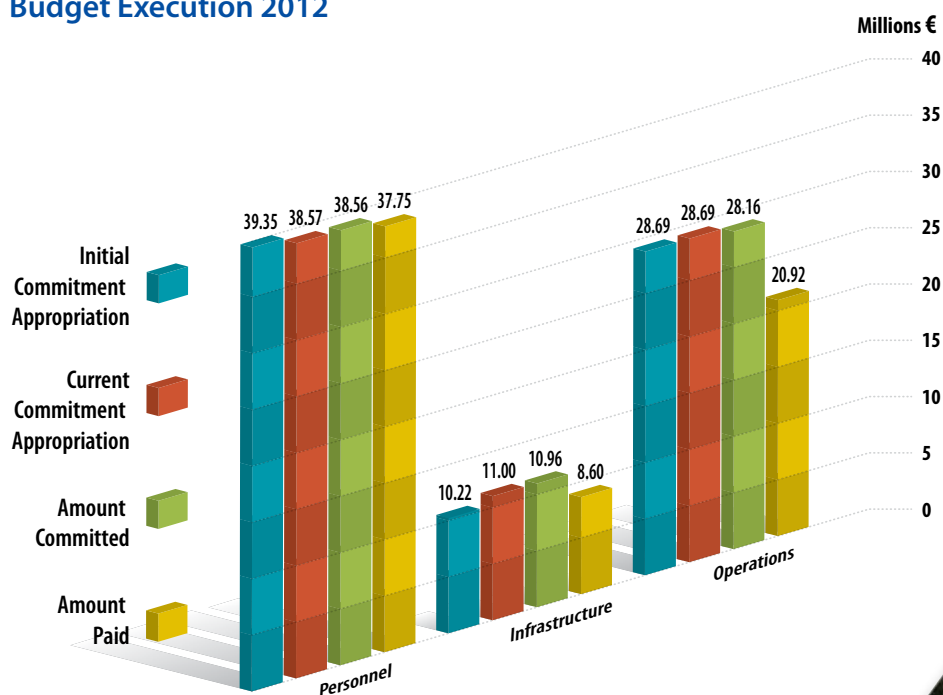
# EFSA FINANCES 2012

## Activity Based Budgeting – ABB Appropriation 2012 (% at year end)



- Activity 1 = Provision of scientific opinions and advice and risk assessment approaches
- Activity 2 = Evaluation of products, substances and claims subject to authorisation
- Activity 3 = Data collection, scientific cooperation and networking
- Activity 4 = Communication and dialogue
- Govern 5 = Governance and administration functions

## Budget Execution 2012



Committed to ensuring that Europe's food is safe