



78th Advisory Forum meeting
Virtual meeting, 2-3 December 2020

Update on Partnerships

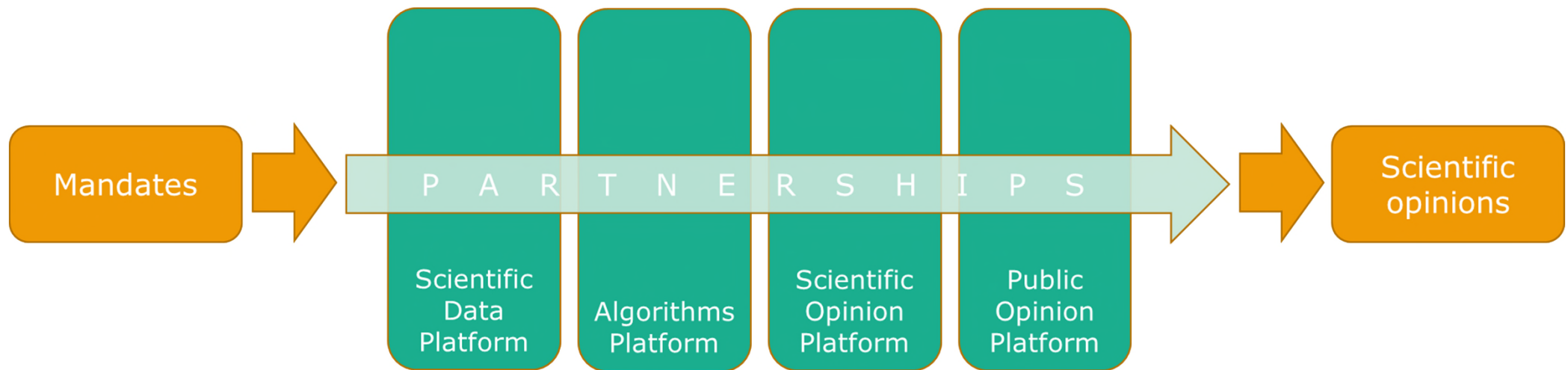
Barbara Gallani – HoD COMCO
Donna Lucas – FIN Unit
Juliane Kleiner – HoD RASA
Guilhem de Seze – HoD REPRO

Trusted science for safe food

Outline of presentation

- **Update on actions from 77th AF meeting**
- Outcome of survey to Article 36 organisations on partnerships
- Follow up on recommendations from the AF Task Force on Data Collection and Data Modelling
- Update on partnership pilots

77th AF → A partnership approach



How can we **set the foundations** for the implementation of a partnerships vision?

The response of the Advisory Forum



Building a **partnerships framework** together:
rules of engagement and removal of obstacles

Learning from pilots & engaging with the AF

Close-focused
Project-oriented

Pilots'
group

Pilot projects
(existing + new)

Lessons learnt
(reactive)

Partnerships

Far-focused
Concept-oriented

AFDG

Issues identified
(proactive)

Internal/
External
discussion

E.g., legal and financial modalities,
quality of science, quality management,
cooperation arrangements, stakeholder
Interactions, etc.

E.g., refinement of the vision,
independence, transparency,
confidentiality, quality of science,
engagement, etc.

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Key facts

171/299

Respondents



28/30

Countries



57%

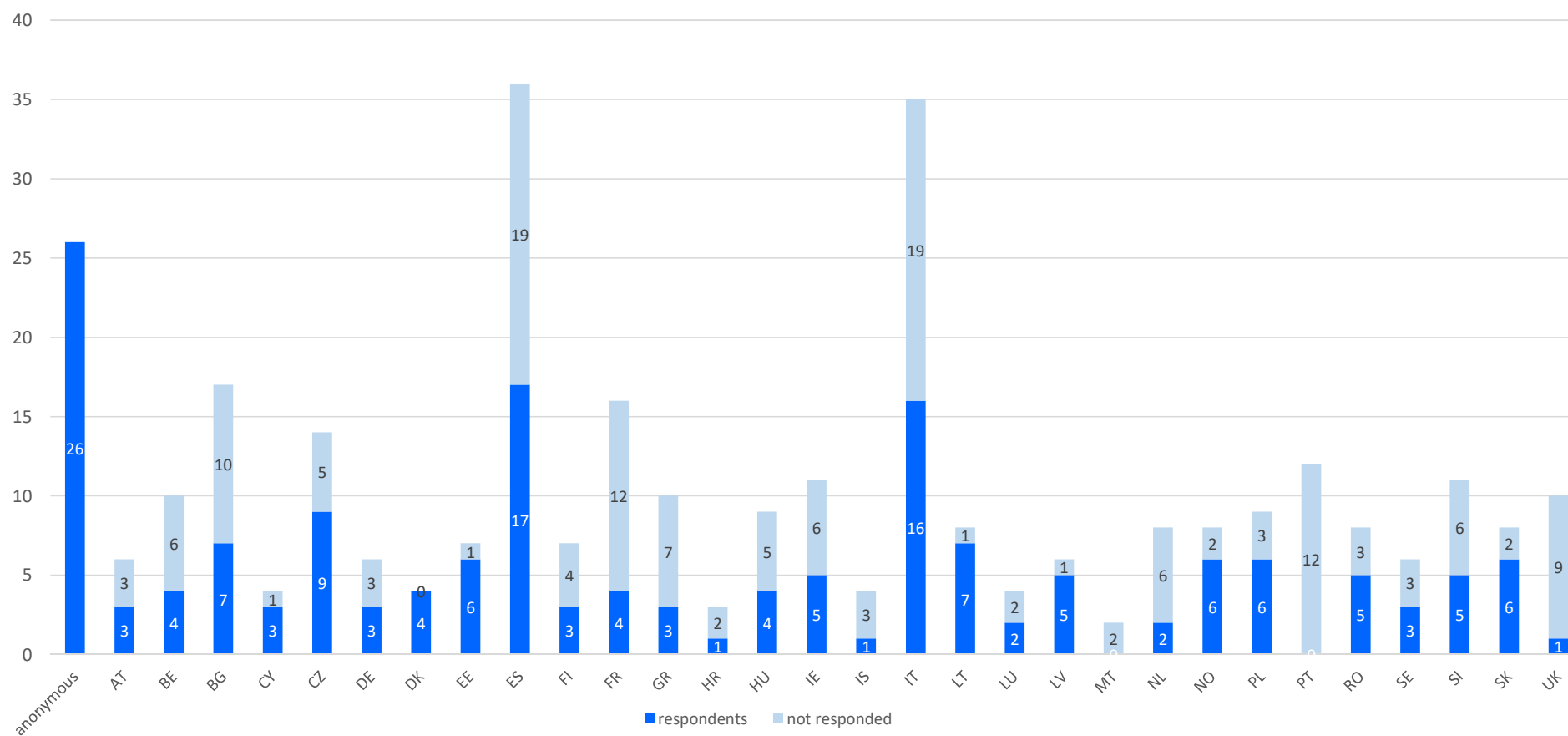
Participation
rate



Survey open from 05/10/2020 to 06/11/2020

Answer distribution by country

Survey respondents by country
(171 respondents)



23 questions:

Partnering &
engagement

Administrative

Experts

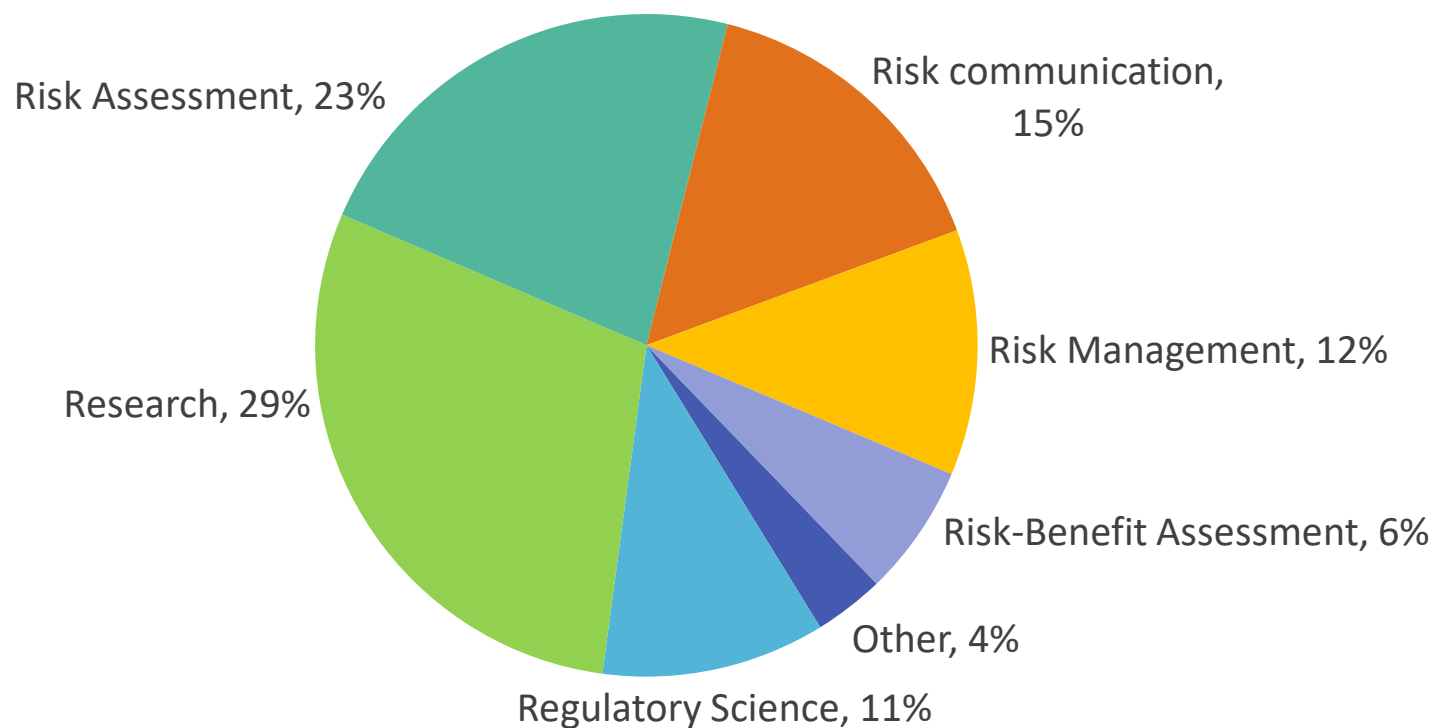
Enhancing
grant
schemes

QUESTIONS Partnering & engagement



1. Remit of organisation
2. Competency areas of organisation
3. Main drivers to work with EFSA
4. Blocking factors to work with EFSA
5. Improving dissemination of information

1. What is the remit of your organisation regarding food and feed safety:



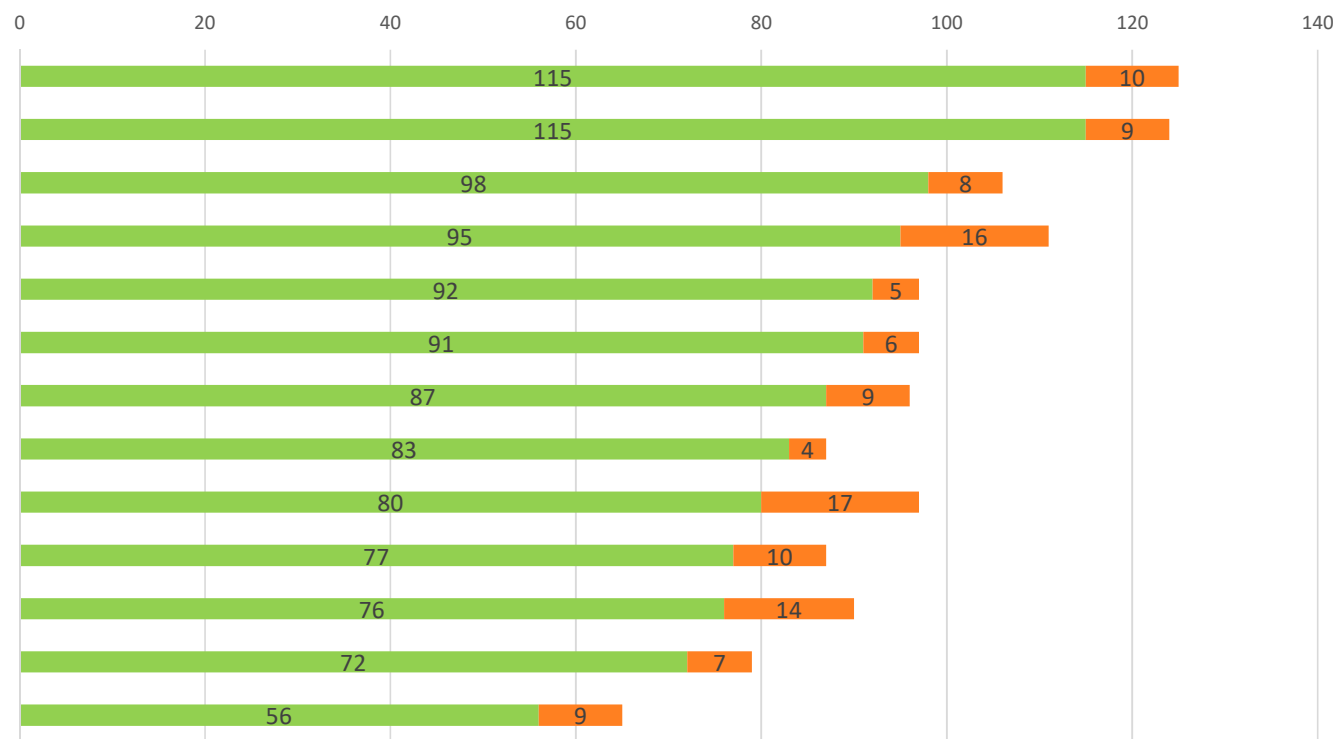
Multiple-choice answers

- Total contributions: 171

Partnering & engagement (Q2)

2. In which of the following competences within EFSA's remit does your organisation have expertise?
Would you be willing to work in joint projects with EFSA in these competency area?

■ Yes ■ No

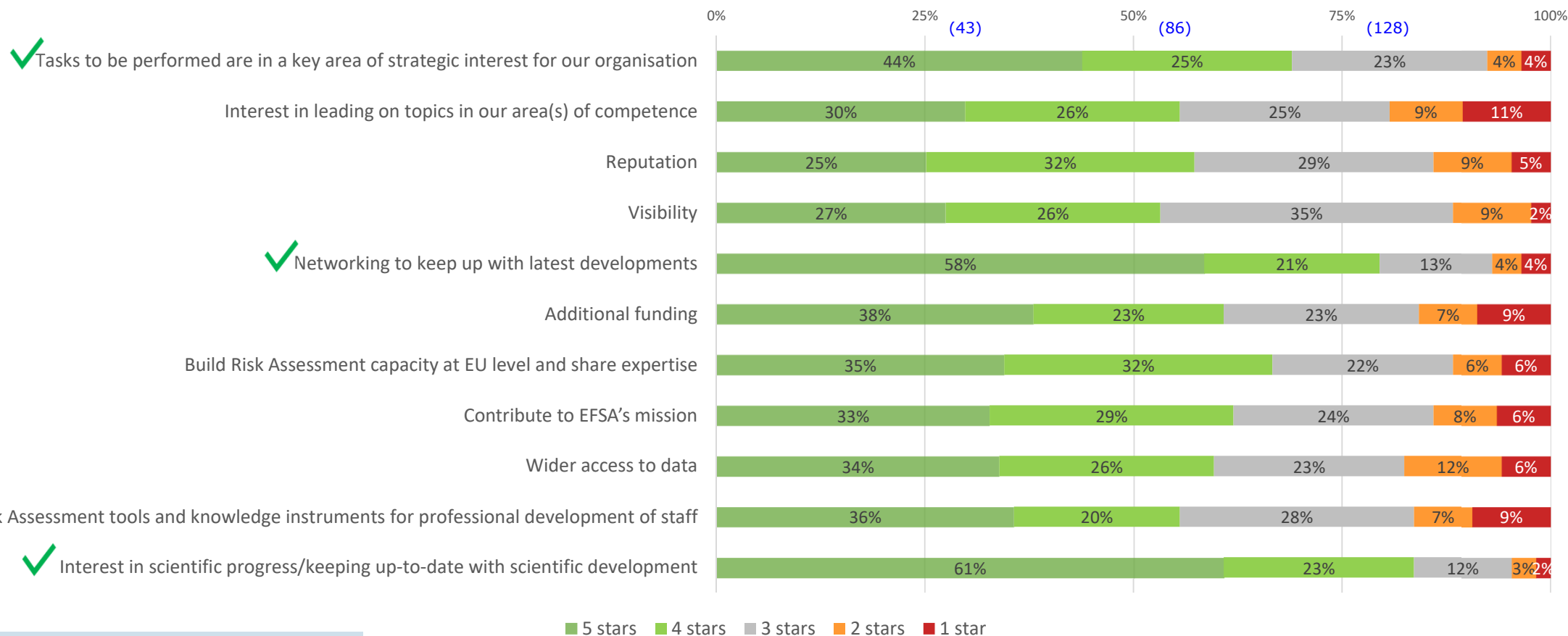


Multiple-choice answers

- Total contributions: 171

Partnering & engagement (Q3)

3. What are the main drivers for your organisation to work on joint projects with EFSA?

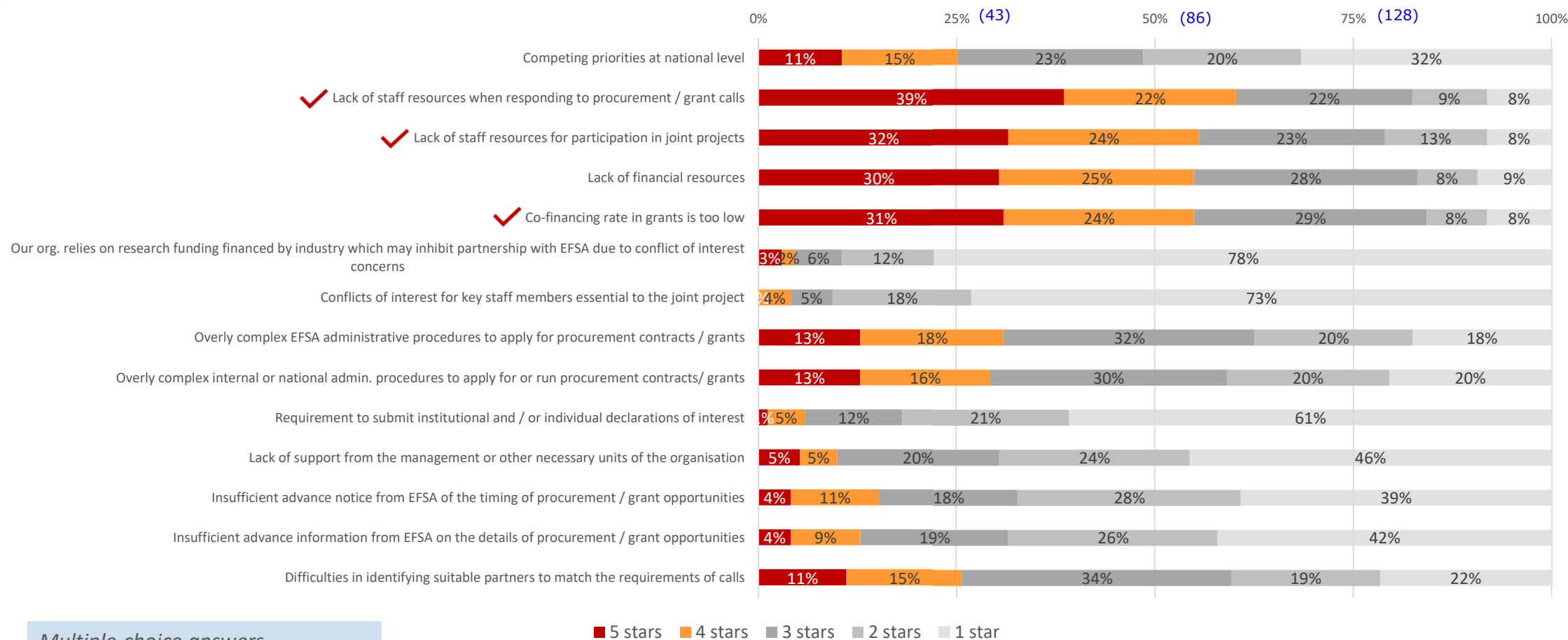


Multiple-choice answers
 • Total contributions: 171

5 stars (most likely) - 1 star (least likely)

Partnering & engagement (Q4)

4. What are the blocking factors for your organisation to work on joint projects with EFSA?



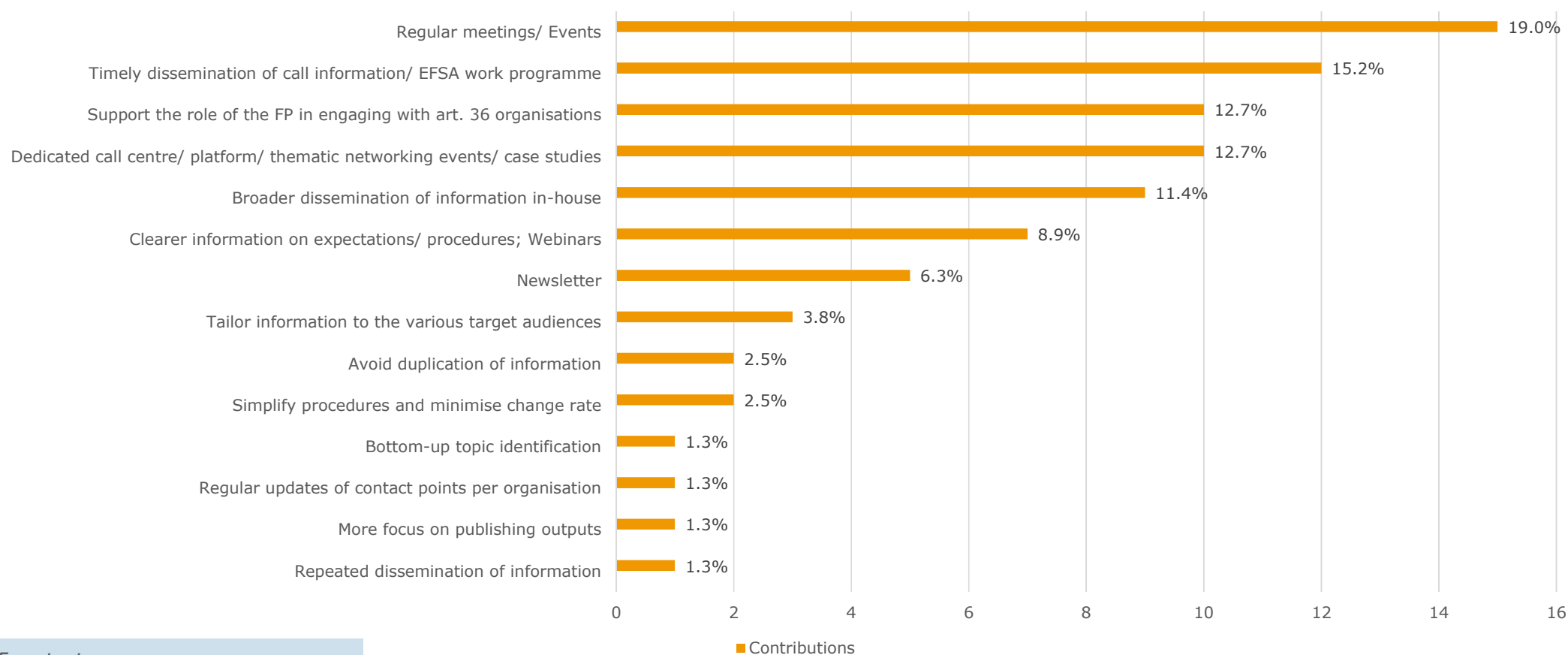
Multiple-choice answers

- Total contributions: 171

5 stars (most likely) - 1 star (least likely)

Partnering & engagement (Q5)

5. How can dissemination of information to art. 36 organisations be improved?



Free text answers

- Total contributions: 79

SUMMARY Partnering & engagement (Q1-5)



Main drivers to work with EFSA:

- Networking
- Interest in scientific developments
- Additional incentive to work on tasks for EFSA if in a key area of strategic or current interest for the organisation

Main blocking factors to work with EFSA:

- Lack of staff / financial resources
- Co-financing rate too low (grants)
- Complexity in application process; overly demanding requirements (timing, experience, deliverables)

Other:

- Need to improve overall dissemination of information to Article 36 orgs. on call content and application procedure
- Enable networking and interactions with EFSA and across the Article 36 group

QUESTIONS Administrative

6. Limitations to sign procurement contracts
7. Limitations to sign grant agreements
8. Difficulties in forming consortium
9. Improving/simplifying terms & conditions
10. Easing administrative burden of applying for calls

SUMMARY Administrative (Q6-10)



- Majority do not have limitations on signature of procurement contracts / grant agreements.
- Majority do not face difficulties in finding consortium partners.
- Almost 70% either did not know, or did not have the experience, to suggest improvements to the terms & conditions of contracts / grants.
- For all questions some free text comments / suggestions were provided.

QUESTIONS Experts



11. Involvement in decision of staff member to participate in EFSA Panels or Working Groups
12. Key benefits of staff involvement in Panels / WG
13. Blocking factors to staff involvement in Panels / WG
14. Positive / negative impact on work programme
15. Impact of expert indemnity increase
16. Views on financial compensation to the organisation

SUMMARY Experts (Q11-16)



- Majority are involved in decision of staff members to participate in EFSA Panels or Working Groups (WG)
- Overwhelming majority believe participation of staff in Panels or WG has positive impact on work programme of organisation
- Participation is encouraged for scientific development; information sharing; networking and visibility
- Participation might be discouraged due to time, human resource and financial constraints – ***difficult to replace the specific expertise lost***

SUMMARY Experts (Q11-16)

- Too early to say if indemnity increase made it more or less likely for organisation to encourage staff participation in EFSA's activities
- Views on providing financial compensation to the organisation for the time their expert is unavailable:
 - 44% in favour
 - 20% against citing concerns about independence; higher administrative burden; not solving key issue of replacing specific expertise lost
 - 36% don't know

QUESTIONS Enhancing grant schemes

17. Optimum co-financing rate

18. Use of in-kind contributions

19 & 20 Optimum grant agreement duration

21. Use of financing not linked to costs grants

22. Location of staff whilst working on activities for EFSA

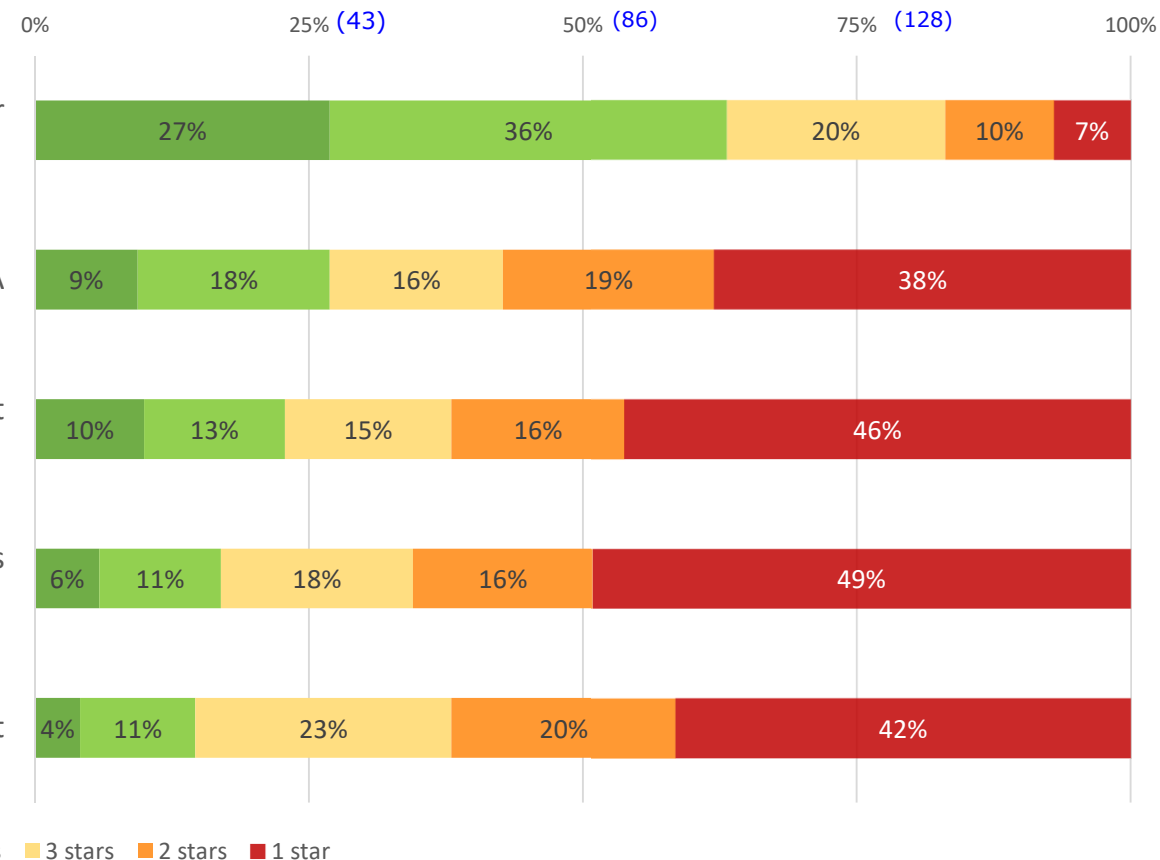
23. Implementing own work programme whilst working on activities for EFSA

SUMMARY Enhancing grant schemes (Q17-23)

- Optimum co-funding rate >75% and >90%
- Optimum grant duration between 12 and 48 months
- Duration and co-funding rate less important if grant aligns with area of strategic or current interest for the organization
- Respondents unclear about use of “in-kind” contributions
- Majority could accept result based grants with financing not linked to costs (FNLC) but many express concerns about “profit” and need to better understand legal and audit consequences
- Majority of respondents prefer flexibility between working from home and EFSA when performing tasks for EFSA

Enhancing EFSA grant schemes (Q23)

23. If your organisation were to be involved in future joint projects with EFSA for the preparation of scientific opinions, how would your organisation ensure availability of resources to perform this work whilst continuing to implement your own work programme and priorities?



Multiple-choice answers

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5 stars (most likely) to 1 star (least likely)

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AF Task Force Recommendations: Recap.

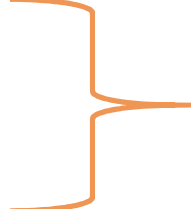
Horizontal and Organisational Recommendations

**MS Reporting
Recommendations**

**Data Modelling
RecommendationsI**

**IT Architecture
Recommendations**

**Data Analysis
Recommendations**

- 20 Strategic Recommendations
 - 25 Operational Recommendations
- 
- Quick wins
 - Short to medium-term
 - Long-term

Report of the Advisory Forum Task Force on Data Collection and Modelling, Sept. 2020

77th AF Meeting Follow Up

- 16/11/20: Teleconference with core group of AF
TF members: *Ákos Jozwiak (HU), Moez SANAA (FR), Eva Scharfenberg (DE)*
Koen Wienk (NL)
 - Brainstorm next steps & mandate for a new group to oversee implementation of the AF TF recommendations
 - Agreed need to work in parallel - short-term goals and mid-term strategy.
 - Suggestion to start with small projects as examples of how to define a data ecosystem and build up.
 - Prepare Preliminary draft ToR of an Advisory Group on Data

77th AF Meeting Follow Up

- 25/11/20: Preliminary draft ToR of an Advisory Group on Data prepared
 - Prioritising, steering and monitoring the implementation of the selected recommendations in the next years
 - Think tank for input on project idea generation
 - Providing input on EFSA's data roadmap
- 11/11/20: 3rd Chemical Monitoring Network meeting
 - AF TF Recommendations presented
 - Members invited to propose ideas for joint projects

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- **Update on partnership pilots**

2 December 2020

Proposal for partnership on risk assessment of novel foods

Guilhem de Sèze

REPRO Head of Department

Trusted science for safe food

- Regulation (EU) 2015/2283:
 - Centralised assessment for novel foods as of January 2018
 - Deadline: 9 months from the date of receipt of a valid application (+ stop-the-clock time)
 - No initial assessment carried out by Member States
- Status:
 - 157 novel food applications received between January 2018 and November 2020
 - 74 in the risk assessment process
 - For comparison: before 2018, EFSA assessed 5 to 7 applications/year
- Resources:
 - Number of staff and Working Group experts increased 5-fold and 2-fold, respectively
 - Outsourcing scheme in place (Individual Scientific Assistance)

New centralised regulation requires new partnership approach

Why a partnership on novel foods?



- Before 2018 Member States Competent Authorities carried out the initial risk assessment
- Such direct involvement is not possible with the New Novel Food Regulation of 2018
- Member States expertise that contributed to the novel food risk assessment before 2018 is not used anymore and may gradually get lost
- Transparency Regulation opens the possibility for national scientific organisations to draft preparatory scientific opinions to be peer-reviewed and adopted by EFSA Panels
- **Overall objective:** Develop a sustainable collaborative model that (re)build and reintegrate the competences in the Member States into the EU risk assessment model for novel foods

Partnership model on novel foods



- Organisations from one or more Member States build a consortium and put together the necessary expertise to carry out the draft assessment
- One organisation acts as coordinator
- Financial compensation by EFSA
- Strong interaction with EFSA along the risk assessment process
- Assessment in line with EFSA guidance documents, CoI management, confidentiality and IT security
- NDA panel finalises and adopts the opinion
- Contributors will appear as authors in the final output

- Assessing novel food dossiers
 - 'vertical expertise' : one or more categories of novel foods as defined in the Novel Food Regulation (e.g. new or modified molecular structures, new production processes, microorganisms, fungi, algae, plants or their parts, animal origin, engineered materials), or
 - 'horizontal expertise' : assessment of one or more sections of the applications (e.g. product characterisation, ADME, toxicological information, human studies)



- Expression of interest by mid-January 2021
- Detailed model will be developed in consultation with the members of the Network on novel foods
- Launch in 2021
- Comments and suggestions welcome

NEXT STEPS

❖ **Timeline for AFDG on Partnerships**

- Agree on date for 1st meeting and share with DG draft ToR & relevant documentation

❖ **Actions stemming from the Art. 36 MS survey**

- Incorporate key survey outcomes in draft concept paper for ecosystem partnership vision
- Potential improving actions for procurement, grants and expert participation from survey discussed internally, with agreed list of actions approved by EFSA MT in December 2020

❖ **Upcoming milestones on future work on DATA**

- Teleconference with AF core group to brainstorm quick win projects linked to short-term recommendations
- AF consultation on draft ToRs for an Advisory Group on Data → Endorsement @ 79th AF meeting
- First project/s scoped Q1 2021

❖ **Upcoming milestones on Partnership Pilots**

- Volunteers for Enzyme consultation group – deadline is 20.12.2020
- EFSA to set up an internal task force to launch partnership initiatives in 2021

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