

GLOBAL PERFORMANCE SERVICES

## Note to the Management Board

### **EFSA final Programming Document 2018-2020 & draft Programming Document 2019-2021**

#### **1. Objective**

The following documents are submitted for possible adoption by the Board:

- Final Programming Document 2018-2020 (supported by a separate document including a detailed Statement of revenue and expenditure for 2018);
- Draft Programming Document 2019-2021.

#### **2. Background and Scope**

In December 2016, the Board adopted the final Programming Document 2017-2019 and the draft Programming Document 2018-2020, in compliance with the requirements of the Programming Document common template of the EU Agencies' Network.

Following the same process, EFSA has updated the Programming Document 2018-2020 and presents it to the Board as a final draft for adoption, and has prepared the draft Programming Document 2019-2021, which it also presents to the Board for adoption.

Similarly to last year, the two documents overlap and coincide to a large extent in view of the intersecting timeframe<sup>1</sup>. While this is the result of requirements of the above mentioned template, it may occasionally make the reading complicated. For a more convenient review, please note that the parts where they two documents differ are:

- The annual work-programmes (section III in each of the two documents and its Appendices)
- The resource annexes (Annex I to IV in each of the two documents)
- The annual grants and procurement work programme (Annex IX in each of the two documents)

Content wise, the programming documents are fully aligned to EFSA Strategy 2020. In addition, they also address the Commission Opinion<sup>2</sup> received in July 2017 (see annex 1 below).

We also take the opportunity to inform the Board of the following changes in EFSA's budget structure (as described in the document with the detailed Statement of revenue and expenditure):

- Budget line 3410 (Risk Communications): updated budgetary comment
- Budget line 3420 (External Relations): updated budgetary comment
- Budget line 3514 (Prepaid travels for experts and shuttle services): updated heading and budgetary comment in order to reflect the centralisation of the

<sup>1</sup> In 2017, the EU Agencies' Network has been preparing recommendations to share with the Commission, suggesting a more streamlined approach next year.

<sup>2</sup> Commission Opinion C(2017) 4633 final of the 7.7.2017 on the draft Programming document 2018-2020 of the European Food Safety Authority.

scientific experts' prepaid travel cost into a unique budget line (previously covered by budget lines 3020 (REPRO meetings), 3120 (RASA meetings), 3130 (Crisis support), 3220 (Scientific Cooperation meetings), 3410 (Risk Communications), 3420 (External Relations) and 3520 (Conferences & Outreach)).

### **3. Next Steps**

Following the adoption by the Board (subject to possible revisions that may be made at the Board's meeting), the next steps in the process are envisaged as follows:

- The Final Programming Document 2018-2020 will be published on EFSA's website and become the reference for guiding EFSA's work programme implementation in 2018.
- The Draft Programming Document 2019-2021 will be further processed as follows:
  - by the end of January 2017: document updated as per the available actual 2016 execution data, and submitted to the EU Institutions (i.e. Commission, Parliament and Council);
  - during 2018: document to be reviewed to address the opinion from the Commission and to reflect other important developments that will occur during 2018;
  - by December 2018: document submitted to the Board for final adoption.

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**Annex 1: Key EC comments and EFSA follow-up on final PD 2018-2020 and draft SPD 2019-2021**

<b>Paragraph</b>	<b>Commission request/comment</b>	<b>EFSA reply/reaction</b>
SANTE-6	To provide in the Programming document a list of its projects with their objectives/intended results, key milestones, and their timeline and resourcing in a multiannual perspective. Where applicable the list should indicate links between projects or to past important projects (for example the scientific DWH will be updated with the new food consumption data from the EU MENU project).	Table included in an Appendix to the Programming document; previous summary tables under each SO have been removed.
SANTE-6	In addition the commission invites the Authority to consider carrying out mid-term reviews of its projects, which may help to adequately prioritise activities.	EFSA regularly assesses the progress of its projects within the framework of its standard project methodology (i.e. in the context of the Project Steering Committee meetings) as well as in the quarterly Performance reporting. EFSA is developing its approach in the context of evaluations, where the requirements/triggers for a mid-term review on its projects will also be defined.
SANTE-7	The Commission invites the Authority to reconsider if the target set for the number of applicants to the 2017 call (50% increase) is realistic.	The target set was ambitious, following the general approach in EFSA to drive the relevant behaviours and activities towards their accomplishment. At this stage in time it is not possible to change the target 2017 (call was closed on the 08/09/2017); However the future target is reconsidered and will be disclosed in the new Single Programming Document (+10% instead of +50%).

SANTE-7

Regarding the indicator on the harmonisation of risk assessment methodologies (section II.2.4) the Commission points out that guidance is not obligatory.

While it is true that Guidance is not obligatory in "hard" law terms, EFSA has decided to include them in a Policy Document which outlines the Guidance Documents that have an unconditional application, thus making them "compulsory". This stems from the evaluation that the risk of low quality assessments/advice would be too high should this set of identified "compulsory" guidance documents not be followed.

SANTE-7

The Commission notes that for all five strategic objectives feedback surveys are planned. Their use should be proportionate in terms of reliability as a tool of performance measurement, workload for the Authority, and to avoid stakeholder fatigue.

EFSA welcomes this point; while recognising that some performance elements can only be obtained via feedback surveys, EFSA is following up towards the centralised management of its feedback surveys (and the launch of combined surveys thereby reducing the number of surveys), to ensure internal efficiency and the overall effectiveness of the surveys avoiding target audience fatigue.

SANTE-9

On international relations the commission agrees that the Authority should continue to prioritise multilateral cooperation (section II.2.3) within the limits of the current resource constraints.

EFSA is giving priority to multi-lateral cooperation in the implementation of the international scientific cooperation work plan 2017-2020. In order to ensure efficient use of the agencies' resources and align on international priorities, EFSA and SANTE meet twice a year to discuss the progress and planning of EFSA's international activities, in line with the work plan 2017-2020, for which SANTE expressed support.

SANTE-10

Justify the increase of 6 FTEs in SO1 for communication and engagement ....

The increase was related to new initiatives in the draft programming document 2018-2020, such as the new approach for the stakeholder platform, the social media project, and the digital collaboration project, which while being directly allocated as communication and engagement activities, are also underpinning the successful execution of EFSA's risk assessments.

It should be noted that in the final programming document 2018-2020, this increase is not evident anymore, as a result of further updates and refinements in the planning of the activities in 2018. This also highlights the fact that small fluctuations (e.g. 5-10%) in the FTE and budget allocation to different strategic objectives between subsequent years are normal and reflect the variability in the timing of expected workload and development investments. It should also be noted that the resources allocated to core business processes under SO1 (regulated products evaluation and general risk assessment) are not decreasing.

SANTE-13

Reconsider the way the efficiency gains and the human resources needs are presented (II.3.2)

EFSA welcomes to work in close cooperation with the Commission to improve the estimations on the workload, related resource needs, and efficiency targets, as well as their presentation in the Programming Document. To this end, two technical meetings were held in the fall 2017, and further exchanges are underway to work together in this area towards a better substantiation and presentation of the above

SANTE-13

The Commission welcomes to work together with the Authority to estimate the workload related to endocrine disruptors and to assess the human resources required for these specific activities.

SANTE-13

The Commission does not fully share the authority's view on the staff shortage for the other determinants of increasing human resources needs in table 9. More substantiation would be necessary.

elements. EFSA has updated this section of the document with more updated information, in an effort to transparently demonstrate the availability of and demand for resources and therefore the need for prioritisation, as well as the areas where negative priorities are applied. To this end the figures presented are not stable but represent the latest available information. EFSA acknowledges that some estimates, e.g. on the increased complexity, could be further clarified, and to this end is working towards improving it.

SANTE-14

10 short term CA for backlog in the evaluation of regulated products. The deployment of this additional workforce capacity was finalised in 2016 and is conditional upon the submission of a yearly action plan follow-up table.

A yearly action plan with a follow-up table in the context of the PRAS backlog was submitted in 2016 and an update of the deployment of this plan is currently under discussion, to be agreed with SANTE early 2018. EFSA welcomes the close collaboration with Commission services in the preparation of this yearly action plan to ensure it captures adequately its intended needs.

SANTE-15

The Commission would like to flag that some functions (such as secretaries) have according to the Staff Regulations/Conditions of Employment of Other Servants<sup>5</sup> to be filled in function group AST/SC...

EFSA is aware of the implementation of the new AST/SC type of post. Based on its needs analysis as well as on the inter-agency consultation, EFSA will consider the possibility to progressively convert some AST posts into SC posts.

SANTE-16

To re-align the requested establishment plan to better reflect reality while taking account of realistic forecasts for reclassification.

EFSA, similarly to other EU agencies, has been maintaining the allocation of the establishment plan posts in higher level staff categories than the actual posts filled in, which provides it with flexibility not only to deal with re-classification, but also to fill the posts at higher grades to maintain/increase its attractiveness of the top talents, should the necessary budget become available in the future. As indicated in the PD 2018-2020, EFSA's Title I costs are consuming an increasingly high share of its overall budget, even with the reductions in the establishment plan it had to implement and notwithstanding the lower than foreseen grade allocation. Nevertheless, in view of the few years remaining under the current Multiannual Financial Framework and the large differences in some grades, EFSA has re-aligned the establishment plan while maintaining a small margin to account for re-classification.

SANTE-17

Ensure normal pace of career development for officials and temporary staff

EFSA has been making efforts to increase the pace of career development but has had to maintain a slower pace in view of the budget constraints it has been facing since the Common Approach to agencies was implemented in 2012 (see also reply to paragraph SANTE 16). To this end, the pace was increased in the last years from around 10% to around 12% of the eligible staff.

SANTE-18

Enforce measures to attract staff from more member states to eliminate the site-effect.

EFSA is closely monitoring and proactively seeking to ensure a balanced representation of as many EU nationalities as possible, without prejudice to the rules governing the recruitment process. Implemented measures include the following:

- Active promotion of EFSA career opportunities in all EU Member States in close cooperation with EFSA's Scientific Networks and EFSA's Focal Points as well as by organising campaigns with European Universities and participating to European job fairs;
- Promotion of equal opportunities during selection procedures to prevent any kind of discrimination, including a balanced selection board's composition;
- Broad dissemination of vacancy notices through publication in EPSO web site as well as in specialized international press and on relevant social media platforms;
- Revamp of the relocation services to be offered to newcomers supporting them already before arrival and during their first period as well as continued support to expats to relieve them from local administrative burden.