European Commission
Directorate General for Health and Consumers

Evaluation of the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed safety and animal heath and live animals

Framework Contract for evaluation
and evaluation related services - Lot 3: Food Chain

Final Report

Part I: Evaluation Report

Submitted by:

Food Chain Evaluation Consortium (FCEC)

Civic Consulting - Agra CEAS Consulting -

Van Dijk Management Consultants - Arcadia International

Project Leader: Civic Consulting

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11.04.2011

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Acronyms

AQC: Analytical Quality Control

CEN: European Committee for Standardization

CIRCA: Communication & Information Resource Centre Administrator (collaborative workspace for partners of the European institutions)

CRM: Certified Reference Materials

DG SANCO: Directorate General for Health and Consumers

DL-PCBs: Dioxin like Polychlorinated Biphenyls

EC: European Commission

EFSA: European Food Safety Authority

EMEA: European Medicines Agency

EU-RLs: European Union Reference Laboratories

GC-MS: Chromatography Mass Spectrometry

HPLC: High-performance liquid chromatography or high-pressure liquid chromatography

IRMM: Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements

ISO: International Organisation for Standardization

JRC: Joint Research Centre

LC-MS: Liquid Chromatography Mass Spectrometry

MRM: Multi-Residue Methods

MS: Member State/s

NDL-PCBs: Non Dioxin like Polychlorinated Biphenyls

NRCP: National Residue Control Plan

NRL: National Reference Laboratory

ONL: Official National Laboratory

PAH: Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons

PCB: Polychlorinated Biphenyls

PTs: Proficiency Tests

SOPs: Standard Operating Procedures

SRM: Single Residue Methods

TC: Third Countries

ToR: Terms of Reference

Key conclusions

In June 2010, the Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission commissioned the Food Chain Evaluation Consortium (FCEC) to carry out an *Evaluation of EU Reference Laboratories in the field of food and feed and animal health and live animals*. The evaluation was led by Civic Consulting and conducted with inputs from the consortium partners Agra CEAS Consulting and Arcadia International.

The evaluation of the network of 26 EU Reference Laboratories (EU-RLs) in the field of food and feed has led to the following key conclusions:[1]

1. The EU-RLs subject to this evaluation perform in general adequately and partly excellently. The evaluation has indicated that:
   - ⇒ Assistance to National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) during the evaluation period (2006-2010) has been adequate in order to improve analytical methods and the quality of analytical data generated in the EU (evaluation theme 1);
   - ⇒ Analytical methods and techniques developed, validated, or assessed can be considered responding to state-of-the-art standards and being appropriate to ensure food and feed safety (evaluation theme 2);
   - ⇒ Coordination and training activities carried out such as proficiency tests and workshops have been satisfactory (evaluation theme 3), as have been activities carried out to support the Commission's action, for instance to provide scientific advice and expertise (evaluation theme 4);
   - ⇒ All EU-RLs are assessed to fulfil the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 (evaluation theme 5).
2. There is broad agreement that the system of EU-RLs is an effective way to improve food and feed safety in the EU;
3. In spite of the overall positive results of the evaluation, it has to be noted that 19 EU-RLs have underperformed on at least one of a total of 72 evaluation indicators. Weaknesses identified include:
   - ⇒ In several cases, activities including the development, validation, or assessment of analytical methods, the distribution of reference materials, and the distribution of SOPs have insufficiently contributed to the improvement and the harmonisation of the analytical methods and quality of analytical data generated by the NRLs. This weakness has been identified for four EU-RLs.[2]
   - ⇒ Some EU-RLs did not provide corrective actions and follow up to NRLs that underperformed during Proficiency Tests. This shortcoming was identified for three EU-RLs.[3]

[1] Part III of this report presents the findings for the two EU-RLs in the field of animal health (the EU-RLs for brucellosis and foot-and-mouth disease).

[2] EU-RLs for milk and milk products, pesticides in food of animal origin, pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, residues of trace elements.

[3] EU-RLs for pesticides in food of animal origin, for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, and for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin.

⇒ The tools utilised by some EU-RLs to share information and communicate with NRLs could be improved. For example, the user-friendliness, the quantity and level of detail, as well as the update of the information available on the website of some EU-RLs could be enhanced. These aspects are relevant for six EU-RLs.[4]

⇒ A significant number of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed do not collect and summarise the feedback provided by participants in workshops or in ad hoc training activities. This is relevant for 17 EU-RLs.[5]

4. Overlaps and synergy potentials exist between several EU-RLs. To a certain degree such overlaps are unavoidable in a decentralised network where different issues are addressed by different, specialised reference laboratories. The evaluation has concluded that EU funding for the decentralised network of EU-RLs is used in a cost efficient manner when compared to the benchmark of a (hypothetical) centralised approach. However, the analysis of overlaps revealed a number of issues that deserve attention and provide opportunities to improve the efficiency of the current network of EU-RLs. There are also several potential new areas suggested that could lead to a recommendation to create new EU-RLs or to extend the area of responsibility of existing EU-RLs.

Taking into account these conclusions, the evaluation has identified six recommendations for improvement to safeguard that the potential of the EU-RLs to contribute to DG SANCO policy objectives could be fully deployed.

These recommendations are:

- Improving coordination by actively promoting the creation of clusters of EU-RLs;
- Addressing weaknesses of EU-RLs identified by the evaluation;
- Focusing EU-RL training activities more on those NRLs that need it most;
- Addressing overlaps and synergy potentials of existing EU-RLs in the field of pesticides; between the EU-RL for residues of trace elements and the EU-RL for heavy metals; between the EU-RLs for bivalve molluscs and the EU-RL for marine biotoxins; and between the EU-RL for milk and milk products and several other EU-RLs for biological risks.
- Creating a mechanism to regularly review the mandates of the existing EU-RLs and the need to create new EU-RLs; and
- Strengthening elements of output-based funding and creating a flexible funding mechanism.

[4] EU-RLs for *Staphylococci*, residues of trace elements, bivalve molluscs, residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists, milk and milk products, and *Listeria monocytogenes*.

[5] EU-RLs for animal proteins, antimicrobial resistance, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *E. Coli*, marine biotoxines, bivalve molluscs, *Staphylococci*, milk and milk products, *Listeria monocytogenes*, residues of trace elements, residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin, antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin, pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, pesticides in food of animal origin, food contact materials, and feed additives.

Executive summary

EU Reference Laboratories (EU-RLs), formerly known as Community Reference Laboratories (CRLs), aim to ensure high quality, uniform testing within the EU and to support the activities of the Commission in relation to risk management and risk assessment, in the area of laboratory analysis. EU-RLs coordinate activities of the National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) in the Member States (MS). For each EU-RL, the MS must ensure that one or more NRLs are designated. This network of EU-RLs and NRLs is an integral part of the contingency planning for major health risks.

EU-RLs are embedded in public institutions that are not exclusively devoted to the tasks established in EU legislation; most of them also function as a National Reference Laboratory for the Member State in which they operate. Annex VII of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004[6] provides a list of the 23 EU-RLs in the areas of food and feed safety and animal health and live animals designated in previous acts. Since the publication of this Regulation in 2004, 21 additional EU-RLs have been designated, bringing the total number of EU-RLs to 44.

In June 2010, the Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission commissioned the Food Chain Evaluation Consortium (FCEC) to carry out an *Evaluation of EU Reference Laboratories in the field of food and feed and animal health and live animals*. The evaluation was led by Civic Consulting and conducted with inputs from the consortium partners Agra CEAS Consulting and Arcadia International.

This study continues and finalises the process of evaluation of the overall system of EU Reference Laboratories (EU-RLs), which began with an evaluation of 12 Reference Laboratories in the field of animal health and live animals, finalised in 2009. The present evaluation completes the evaluation of EU-RLs in the field of animal health by including the EU-RLs brucellosis and foot and mouth disease. The main emphasis of the study is, however, on the 26 EU-RLs in the food and feed safety field that are subject to this evaluation, as well as the evaluation of the current network of EU-RLs, and the identification of possible problems, challenges, and areas for improvement.

I. Overview of evaluation results for EU-RLs in the field of food and feed

The overall performance of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed is evaluated on basis of the assessment of five evaluation themes, for which a total of 72 evaluation indicators have been scrutinised for each EU-RL. The indicators were developed on basis of an in depth analysis of tasks and responsibilities of EU-RLs, as outlined in the legal basis and annual work programmes.

Table 1 on page 10 summarises the results of the evaluation for the main evaluation themes and provides an overall assessment of the performance of all EU-RLs in the field of food and feed during the evaluation period. It is based on the evaluation reports for each individual EU-RL. All data and assessments provided refer to the overall evaluation period (2006-2010).

As the table indicates, the following groups of EU-RLs can be differentiated:

[6] Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and welfare rules. This Regulation applies from 1 January 2006. See Commission Regulation (EU) No 208/2011 for the most recent list of EU-RLs.

- The overall performance of 3 EU-RLs is assessed as A, i.e. they performed "excellently" on all five evaluation themes;
- The overall performance of 12 EU-RLs is assessed as A^-, i.e. they performed "excellently" on three or four evaluation themes and "adequately" on the other evaluation themes;
- The overall performance of 9 EU-RLs is assessed as B^+, i.e. they performed "excellently" on one or two evaluation themes and "adequately" on the other evaluation themes;
- The overall performance of 1 EU-RL is assessed as B, i.e. it performed "adequately" on all five evaluation themes.
- The overall performance of 1 EU-RL is assessed as B^-, i.e. it performed "adequately" on four evaluation themes and "underperformed" on one evaluation theme.

None of the EU-RLs was assessed to have overall "underperformed" during the evaluation period.

In spite of the overall positive results of the evaluation, it has to be noted that 19 EU-RLs have underperformed on at least one indicator. Weaknesses identified include:

- In several cases, activities including the development, validation, or assessment of analytical methods, the distribution of reference materials, and the distribution of SOPs have insufficiently contributed to the improvement and the harmonisation of the analytical methods and quality of analytical data generated by the NRLs. This weakness has been identified for four EU-RLs.[7]
- Some EU-RLs did not provide corrective actions and follow up to NRLs that underperformed during Proficiency Tests. This shortcoming was identified for three EU-RLs.[8]
- The tools utilised by some EU-RLs to share information and communicate with NRLs could be improved. For example, the user-friendliness, the quantity and level of detail, as well as the update of the information available on the website of some EU-RLs could be enhanced. These aspects are relevant for six EU-RLs.[9]
- A significant number of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed do not collect and summarise the feedback provided by participants in workshops or in ad hoc training activities. This is relevant for 17 EU-RLs.[10]

[7] EU-RLs for milk and milk products, pesticides in food of animal origin, pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, residues of trace elements.

[8] EU-RLs for pesticides in food of animal origin, for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, and for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin.

[9] EU-RLs for *Staphylococci*, residues of trace elements, bivalve molluscs, residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists, milk and milk products, and *Listeria monocytogenes*.

[10] EU-RLs for animal proteins, antimicrobial resistance, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *E. Coli*, marine biotoxines, bivalve molluscs, *Staphylococci*, milk and milk products, *Listeria monocytogenes*, residues of trace elements, residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin, antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin, pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, pesticides in food of animal origin, food contact materials, and feed additives.

Table 1: Overview of assessments of the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed safety

	EU-RLs in the field of biological risks											EU-RLs in the field of contaminants				EU-RLs in the field of pesticides				EU-RLs in the field of residues				EU-RLs in other fields		
	Animal proteins	Antimicrobial resistance	Listeria monocytogenes	Campylobacter	Parasites	Salmonella	Bivalve molluscs	E. coli	Marine biotoxins	Milk and milk products	Staphylococci	Dioxins and PCBs	Heavy metals	Mycotoxins	PAH	Fruit and vegetables	Single residue methods	Food of animal origin	Cereals and feedingstuff	Veterinary medicines and beta-agonists	Antimicrobials and dyes	Trace elements	Hormones, mycotoxins	GM food and feed	Food contact materials	Feed additives
Overall assessment	A	A	A^-	A^-	A^-	A^-	B^+	B^+	B^+	B^+	B^+	A^-	A^-	A^-	A^-	B^+	B^+	B	B^-	A^-	A^-	A^-	B^+	A	A^-	B^+
1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	(B)	B	A	B	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	(A)	B	A	B	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	A	B	B	B	A	A	B
4.Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	*	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	C	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
5. Fulfilment of the requirements laid down in EU legislation	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	A	B	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	A	A	(A)	A	A	A	B

Source: Surveys of NRLs, EU-RL and Commission official, interviews and desk research. See evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II) for more detail.

Note: The following scale is used to assess overall performance: excellent performance (A, A^-), adequate performance (B^+, B, B^-) and underperformance (C). See section 2.5 for more details. * No assessment possible. Assessments provided in brackets indicate that a low number of NRLs/ONLs provided a rating for the related indicators.

II. Evaluation results by evaluation theme

Adequacy of assistance to National Reference Laboratories: Evaluation results indicate that the assistance of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed to the NRLs has globally been adequate in order to improve analytical methods and/or the quality of analytical data generated in the EU. Assistance provided is at least "adequate", with four of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed even having provided overall "excellent" assistance to NRLs.

Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques: Based on the feedback from NRLs received and the other evidence collected, the evaluation concludes that analytical methods and techniques developed, validated, or assessed by the EU-RLs are considered to respond to state-of-the-art standards and to be appropriate to ensure food and feed safety. 14 of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed have performed "excellently" regarding this aspect during the evaluation period, while the remaining 12 EU-RLs have performed "adequately".

Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RLs: Coordination and training activities carried out by EU-RLs in the field of food and feed have been overall satisfactory. All EU-RLs have provided at least "adequate" (nine of the 26 EU-RLs even "excellent") coordination and training during the evaluation period. In more detail, the evaluation concludes:

- Key tools of EU-RLs to communicate with NRLs are their websites, which are positively assessed by NRLs concerning content and user-friendliness.
- Proficiency tests (PTs) allow the assessment of the technical capacity of the NRLs to identify serotypes or to detect the pathogen or substance as well as the sensitivity of the techniques and methods in use in the laboratories. Proficiency tests constitute the activity for which the highest number of EU-RLs (18) score "excellently" (the others score "adequately").
- Workshops constitute an important tool for developing an effective EU-RLs-NRLs network. The overall assessment regarding workshops organised by EU-RLs is "excellent" for 10 EU-RLs. The other 16 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed perform "adequately" in this respect. The positive assessments are reflected in the high level of satisfaction of NRLs with the quality and relevance of the workshops. 94% of the NRLs are fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of the workshops.

Activities carried out to support the Commission's action: EU-RLs support the Commission's actions by providing scientific advice related to analytical methodology and expertise. Activities carried out by EU-RLs to support the Commission's action have overall been satisfactory. A large majority (19) of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed have been able to provide scientific advice and expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge very well and to deliver this advice and expertise in a very timely manner, with the others mostly performing "adequately". Shortcomings exist concerning the scientific advice and expertise delivered by the EU-RL for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, because scientific advice and expertise has hardly been delivered in a timely manner, as is reported by DG SANCO.

Fulfilment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation: According to Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, EU-RLs shall fulfil specific requirements, including having suitably qualified staff with adequate training, possessing the equipment and products needed to carry out the tasks assigned to

them, and having sufficient knowledge of international standards and practices.[11] There is a common agreement among stakeholders that EU-RLs in the field of food and feed fulfil the requirements laid down in EU legislation.

Contribution of the EU-RLs to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation: The evaluation indicates that the activities carried out by the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed have contributed to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improved food and feed safety in the EU.

Adequacy and appropriateness of the requirements for the EU-RLs set in the EU legislation and in the work programmes: The evaluation concluded that the requirements set in the EU legislation and in the work programmes for the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed are adequate and appropriate to achieve established food and feed safety objectives, at both the level of existing individual EU-RLs and at network level.

III. Effectiveness and efficiency of EU funding to the network of EU-RLs

Effectiveness of EU funding: There is a widespread agreement between the EU-RLs and those collaborating with them (NRLs and Commission officials) that the EU-RLs contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and the improvement of food and feed safety in the EU. The existing network of EU-RLs has clear advantages over a (counterfactual) situation without an EU system for developing new analytical methods in the field of food and feed safety and for contributing to the harmonisation and improvement of analysis and providing confirmatory analysis in emergency situations. Since the existing system of EU-RLs builds on the long-standing expertise of existing laboratories in very diverse fields of expertise, it can also reasonably be assumed that the current system is more effective than a (hypothetical) central EU-RL responsible for all tasks currently performed by the EU-RLs in various EU Member States could possibly be.

Efficiency of EU funding: EU funding for the decentralised network of EU-RLs appears to be used in a cost efficient manner when compared to the benchmark of a (hypothetical) centralised approach and other benchmarks. The efficiency of the current EU-RL network is illustrated by considering the (counterfactual) situation of having one centralized EU-RL operated by the EU and responsible for all tasks currently assigned to the EU-RLs in various Member States. This would reduce cost efficiency since economies of scale and scope, as well as learning curve effects stemming from the combination with existing laboratories, would be lost. However, at the network level the evaluation has indicated some potential efficiency gains that can result from increasing collaborations between EU-RLs, reducing overlaps between them and tapping the potential synergies identified.

IV. Overlaps and synergy potentials

The evaluation has identified overlaps and synergy potentials between several EU-RLs. To a certain degree such overlaps are unavoidable in a decentralised approach where different issues are addressed by different, specialised reference laboratories. However, some overlaps and synergy potentials are due to historic reasons, for example, the EU-RL for milk and milk products was designated long before other EU-RLs for specific pathogens were added to the EU-RL network. Other overlaps originate in legislative overlaps and lead to a situation where,

[11] See http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:165:0001:0141:EN:PDF

for example, the EU-RL for residues of trace elements is responsible for heavy metals in farmed fish whereas the EU-RL for heavy metals in food and feed has the responsibility for heavy metals in wild caught fish.

V. Potential new areas

Potential new areas have been identified through the combined expertise of Commission officials, EU-RLs, and NRLs. Feedback provided during interviews and in survey responses have indicated several potential new areas that could recommend the creation of new EU-RLs or the extension of the mandate of existing EU-RLs. Potential new areas include specific areas relevant for food and feed safety, which are not covered by the current network of EU-RLs (e.g. processing contaminants such as acrylamide and furan, nanoparticles in foods and plant toxins). The need to create new EU-RLs or to extend the mandate of existing EU-RLs in the areas suggested during interviews and in survey responses should be regularly assessed through an appropriate mechanism (see recommendation 5 below).

VI. Recommendations

The evaluation has identified six recommendations for improvement to safeguard that the potential of the EU-RLs to contribute to DG SANCO policy objectives could be fully deployed.

Recommendation 1: Improving coordination by actively promoting the creation of clusters of EU-RLs

It is recommended to promote the creation of clusters of EU-RLs in order to improve coordination between laboratories and avoid duplication of efforts by NRLs. The clustering could be based on similar hazards, the use of similar methods, or the analysis of similar matrices. Clustering can mean, for instance, the organisation of regular meetings (e.g. on a yearly basis) of representatives of the EU-RLs and relevant Commission officials by clusters, the set-up of joint websites for clusters or sub-clusters, the joint organisation of workshops, or the coordination of proficiency tests. It is recommended to apply a flexible and bottom-up approach for the definition of clusters, which could be proposed by the EU-RLs and formalised in coordination with the Commission and in due consideration of existing relationships and coordination requirements between EU-RLs. It could be considered to provide a separate budget for cluster activities such as joint websites, joint workshops and projects etc. (see also recommendation 6 below).

Recommendation 2: Addressing weaknesses of EU-RLs identified by the evaluation

The evaluation has assessed the performance of each of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed based on 72 indicators. In spite of the overall positive results of the evaluation, it has to be noted that 19 EU-RLs have underperformed on at least one indicator. EU-RLs and Commission officials could develop jointly appropriate actions to address the shortcomings identified (see also section 3.3 of this report with recommendations per EU-RL).

Recommendation 3: Focusing more EU-RL training activities on those NRLs that need it most

Training needs may differ between groups of NRLs, notably between NRLs from some new Member States and candidate countries and NRLs from older Member States. It is recommended to focus training activities more on those laboratories that need improvement most. For example, ad-hoc training sessions for a limited number of NRLs could be organised outside regular workshops in the EU-RL where a sufficient quality of equipment is guaranteed and training of multiple laboratories would be possible. An alternative approach would be to integrate staff members from the NRLs in need of training for one or two months into the EU-RL's staff groups. Additional funds for extra capacity building and training in EU Member States where NRLs lack expertise and experience could help to bring all NRLs to the same level of expertise (see also option 6 below).

Recommendation 4: Addressing overlaps and synergy potentials of existing EU-RLs

The evaluation has identified specific options to address the most relevant overlaps and synergy potentials identified (see section 4.4 of this report). Overlaps and synergy potentials have been identified for the following EU-RLs:

- EU-RLs in the field of pesticides;
- EU-RL for residues of trace elements and EU-RL for heavy metals;
- EU-RLs for bivalve molluscs and EU-RL for marine biotoxins;
- EU-RL for milk and milk products and other EU-RLs for biological risks.

In many cases overlaps between EU-RLs are well understood and coordinated and, to a certain degree, considered necessary by EU-RLs for methodological reasons. Nonetheless, the current situation can lead to a higher coordination effort and a higher effort for participating NRLs. Approaches for improvement identified are: a) reducing overlaps by reducing the number of EU-RLs or b) a better coordination of activities to further reduce any duplications of activities for NRLs. For more specific options regarding the overlaps and synergies identified, see section 5.2 of this report.

Recommendation 5: Creating a mechanism to regularly review the mandates of the existing EU-RLs and the need to create new EU-RLs

The areas covered by EU-RLs need regular assessment and fine-tuning where necessary. This is evidenced by the existing overlaps and synergy potentials described above, and also by the list of potential new areas suggested during interviews and in survey responses. Currently, the mandates of the existing EU-RLs and issues such as the creation of new EU-RLs are discussed at a working level at DG SANCO and, where relevant, with other relevant bodies such as EFSA and Member States. It could be considered to formalise this process. For this aim, it is recommended that the Commission develops a mechanism for more regular reviews of the mandates of the existing EU-RLs and the need to create new EU-RLs. One option would be that an EU-RL advisory board is created to assess increased or decreased food and feed safety relevance of areas covered and not covered by EU-RLs. This advisory board, which would be chaired by the Commission, could include representatives of all SANCO units responsible for EU-RLs, representatives of each EU-RL cluster, selected NRLs and Member States representatives as well as representatives of EFSA. Alternatively, an internal working group of DG SANCO could be formally set up to take on this task across all SANCO

units responsible for EU-RLs. It would be the main role of the advisory board/the working group to support setting priorities in resource allocation for EU-RLs in a changing environment.

Recommendation 6: Strengthening elements of output-based funding and creating a flexible funding mechanism

The current process to determine the level of EU funding for EU-RLs could be refined to combine top-down and bottom-up elements. A key element of this approach is the use of performance indicators (for instance, costs per participating NRL in workshops or PTs) to determine a budget suggestion, which is then refined on basis of a discussion process between Commission and EU-RL to take into account the specific situation and varying degrees of complexity of specific tasks. Performance indicators would be derived through a benchmarking process in which EU-RLs are compared on basis of past performance. A precondition for establishing such benchmarks is that EU-RLs would list in their annual report the use of EU funding for the reporting period in a standardised template, which would need to be structured according to their main activities. For each activity (such as workshops, PTs, development of analytical methods, information request received from DG SANCO), staff input of the EU-RL and other costs would need to be listed as well as the related details regarding the outputs such as the number of workshop participants and participants in PT's etc.

Other aspects of the budgeting procedure that could be reviewed by the Commission include:

- Several EU-RLs would prefer multiannual funding to have budgets available that could be used for all necessary activities and to get more financial flexibility in the sense that budgets could be transferred from one year to the other without losing funds that have not been spent at the end of the year (this could however only be done after the creation of the appropriate legal basis);
- It could be considered to provide a separate budget for cluster activities such as joint websites, joint workshops and projects etc. (see recommendation 1 above);
- Additional funds for extra capacity building and training in EU Member States where NRLs lack expertise and experience could help to bring all NRLs to the same level of expertise (see option 3 above);
- Access of EU-RLs to EU funding for new young scientists to be engaged in one or two year technical projects could be further improved.

The table on the next pages provides an overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the network of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed.

Table 2: SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) of the network of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed

Strengths	Weaknesses
▪ The assistance of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed to the NRLs has been adequate in order to improve analytical methods and/or the quality of analytical data generated in the EU. ▪ Analytical methods and techniques developed, validated, or assessed by the EU-RLs can be considered as responding to state-of-the-art standards and being appropriate to ensure food and feed safety. ▪ Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed such as proficiency tests and workshops have been satisfactory. ▪ Activities carried out by EU-RLs to support the Commission's action, for instance to provide scientific advice and expertise, have been satisfactory. ▪ All EU-RLs in the field of food and feed are assessed to fulfil the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation. ▪ The EU-RLs contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and the improvement of food and feed safety in the EU. ▪ EU funding for the decentralised network of EU-RLs is used in a cost efficient manner.	▪ Further coordination between EU-RLs is possible, for instance with regard to programmes, method development, validation, training and publication strategies (including joint websites), and harmonisation of approaches. ▪ The existing overlap between the EU-RL for residues of trace elements and the EU-RL for heavy metals requires additional coordination effort between both EU-RLs, mainly with regard to fish and similar matrices such as crabs where responsibilities are not always clearly defined. A duplication of efforts occurs when NRLs belong to the networks of both EU-RLs. ▪ In the biological risk cluster, there is an overlap between the EU-RLs for bivalve molluscs and for marine biotoxins since both EU-RLs cover a specific food commodity. This overlap can result in a duplication of efforts and coordinative challenges with regard to the development of sampling and monitoring plans, risk-based approaches to controls, and the use of global information systems for establishing the extent of harvesting areas and sharing knowledge of industry practices. ▪ In the pesticide cluster, which consists of the four EU-RLs for residues of pesticides, the current situation leads to a higher coordination effort and higher effort for participating NRLs because some NRLs may need to participate in PTs organised by different EU-RLs. ▪ As EU-RLs exist for both the milk matrix and for hazards that may be found in it, this can result in unclear responsibilities (for instance, with regard to *Salmonella* in milk powder). Cooperation between the EU-RLs that deal with the hazards that can be found in milk and milk products has been so far informal. ▪ The large diversity and high complexity of the tasks of EU-RLs make output-based funding difficult, and controlling is therefore often limited to a comparison of work plans against actual outcomes and budgets planned against actual expenses.

Opportunities	Threats
▪ There are several potential new areas that could lead to a recommendation to create new EU-RLs or to extend the areas of responsibility of existing EU-RLs, including processing contaminants (such as acrylamide and furan), nanoparticles in foods, plant toxins. ▪ Coordination of activities between EU-RLs could be further improved by actively promoting the creation of clusters of EU-RLs. ▪ Training activities could be focused on those laboratories that need improvement most. ▪ The activities and responsibilities of the EU-RL for residues of trace elements and of the EU-RL for heavy metals currently overlap. Two approaches could be envisaged to improve the current situation: (a) to repeal requirements on official controls on contaminants currently laid down in Directive 96/23/EC; or (b) to reduce the number of EU-RLs dealing with heavy metals. ▪ The overlap between the EU-RLs for bivalve molluscs and the EU-RL for marine biotoxins can be addressed by a) better coordinating the activities of both EU-RLs and increasing synergies through the sharing of information on sampling, monitoring and control plans and industry practices, and the development of a jointly used information system or b) by reducing the number of EU-RLs in the field of biological risks with regard to seafoods and establishing a single EU-RL covering all aspects of seafood safety. ▪ In the field of pesticides, two approaches for improvement can be identified: a) reducing overlaps by reducing the number of EU-RLs in the area of pesticides, e.g. by merging two EU-RLs in this area or b) a better coordination of activities to further reduce any duplications of activities for NRLs/ONLs that are part of the network of more than one EU-RL. ▪ Since milk is a significant matrix for *Staphylococci*, the two relatively small EU-RLs for milk and *Staphylococci* could be merged in order to increase synergies, also taking into account that both laboratories are hosted by the same host organisation, in the same location. ▪ A mechanism to regularly review the mandates of the existing EU-RLs and the need to create new EU-RLs could be created. ▪ In spite of the difficulty of defining performance indicators for EU-RLs that can be related to budget allocation decisions, it appears to be important to strengthen elements of output-based funding. ▪ Access of EU-RLs to EU funding for new young scientists to be engaged in one or two year technical projects could be further improved.	▪ There is currently no formal mechanism for regularly reviewing the mandates of the existing EU-RLs and possibly, if needed, creating new EU-RLs. ▪ Scientific advice and expertise has hardly been delivered in a timely manner by the EU-RL for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, as is reported by DG SANCO.

1. Introduction

The Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission has commissioned the Food Chain Evaluation Consortium (FCEC) to carry out an *Evaluation of EU Reference Laboratories in the field of food and feed and animal health and live animals*. The evaluation was led by Civic Consulting and conducted with inputs from the consortium partners Agra CEAS Consulting and Arcadia International.

This study continues and finalises the process of evaluation of the overall system of EU Reference Laboratories (EU-RLs), which began with an evaluation of 12 Reference Laboratories, finalised in 2009. Already the Animal Health Strategy for the European Union for 2007–2013, published in 2007,[12] identified the need for a comprehensive evaluation of the Community Reference Laboratories (CRLs), as the EU Reference Laboratories were called then. The 2009 evaluation therefore focused on the laboratories in the field of animal health and assessed the performance of most laboratories in this field and investigated options for the future operation of the system. The reasons for the evaluation of the laboratories in the animal health field were fundamental changes in the field of animal health control and in the general circumstances in which animal health policy is applied since the policy was first developed several decades ago.

The present evaluation completes the evaluation of the EU Reference Laboratories in the field of animal health by including the EU-RLs brucellosis and foot and mouth disease.

The main emphasis of the study is, however, on the 26 EU-RLs in the food and feed safety field that are subject to this evaluation, as well as the evaluation of the current network of EU-RLs, and the identification of possible problems, challenges, and areas for improvement. The rationale for evaluating the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed safety are the major changes and developments that have taken place in relation to the food and feed safety field since the laboratories were first established, which justify a comprehensive evaluation of the EU-RLs and their network. These developments include the following:

- The broadening scope and legislative detail of Community food and feed safety legislation;
- The increase of the number of EU-RLs, which nearly doubled in number since the landmark Regulation on official controls (Regulation (EC) No 882/2004) came into force;
- The successive enlargements of the European Union, in particular the accession of 12 new MS in 2004 and 2007;
- The role of the European Union as a major food exporter and the largest food importer of the world, which greatly enhances the global importance of EU food and feed safety standards and their enforcement;
- Evolution of related Union regimes, in particular the Union Animal Health Policy, and the legislative framework in the field of GM food and feed;

[12] COM (2007)539

- Various other developments, most notably globalisation and changed expectations from society as well as the availability of new and highly sensitive analytical methods, which lead to a large increase of possible contaminations to be detected.

Objectives of the evaluation

According to the Terms of Reference (TOR), the purpose of the study is twofold:

- To provide the Commission with an evaluation of the functioning and performance of each of 28 EU-Reference Laboratories listed in the TOR as well as the EU-RL network as a whole having regard to the obligations and duties of the EU-RLs laid down in EU law and in the approved working programmes;
- To provide the Commission, for each of the areas covered by the EU-RLs listed in TOR, with an assessment of the relevance of the tasks currently assigned to the respective EU-RL for the overall objectives of EU legislation in the field of food and feed safety and in the field of animal health, and an assessment of possible overlaps or synergies between EU-RLs in a particular field, and the appropriateness of their current mandate.

Structure of the report

This Report is structured as follows:

Part I provides an overview of evaluation results for the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed. It also presents the results of the evaluation concerning the network of the 26 EU-RLs (including on the efficiency and effectiveness of the EU funding) and identifies challenges and areas for improvement (including on overlaps and synergies between EU-RLs);

Part II presents the evaluation reports of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed including the technical annexes;

Part III presents the findings for the two EU-RLs in the field of animal health (the EU-RLs for brucellosis and foot-and-mouth disease). It examines how synergies with the other EU-RLs in this field could be increased and analyses the current efficiency and effectiveness of the EU funding for these two EU-RLs.

2. Methodological framework

2.1. Context

EU Reference Laboratories (EU-RLs), formerly known as Community Reference Laboratories (CRLs), aim to ensure high quality, uniform testing within the EU and to support the activities of the Commission in relation to risk management and risk assessment, mainly in the area of laboratory analysis. Since the late 1970s, in a number of legal acts, the Council and the Commission have designated EU-RLs with scientific and technical expertise within the areas of animal health, food and feed safety, and zootechnics, gradually establishing a network of such laboratories. EU-RLs are embedded in public institutions that are not exclusively devoted to the tasks established in EU legislation; most of them also function as a National Reference Laboratory for the Member State in which they operate or, in the case of laboratories in the field of animal health and live animals, as the Regional Reference Laboratory of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). Annex VII of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004[13] provides a consolidated list of the 23 EU-RLs in the areas of food and feed safety and animal health and live animals designated in previous acts. Since the publication of this Regulation in 2004, 21 additional EU-RLs have been designated, bringing the total number of EU-RLs to 44.

EU-RLs coordinate activities of the National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) in the Member States (MS). For each EU-RL, the MS must ensure that one or more NRLs are designated. For example, in the field of biological risks, several MS have appointed more than one NRL for *Salmonella* and for different matrices (i.e. veterinary samples, food, milk, etc.). This network of EU-RLs and NRLs is an integral part of the contingency planning for major health risks.

The 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed can be grouped into five main clusters: the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides, the EU-RLs in the field of contaminants, the EU-RLs in the field of residues, the EU-RLs in the field of biological risks, and the EU-RLs in other fields of expertise.

EU-RLs for pesticides

The four EU-RLs designated in the area of pesticides residues cover three different matrices (fruits and vegetables, cereals and feedingstuff, food of animal origin) and one type of analytical methods (single residue methods). The first three EU-RLs are dedicated to multiple residue methods. The EU-RL for single residue methods develops analytical methods for the pesticides that can only be analysed using single residue methods.

EU-RLs for contaminants

EU-RLs for contaminants include three EU-RLs located in the Joint Research Centre (JRC) in Geel, Belgium (i.e. the EU-RLs for heavy metals in food of plant origin and feedingstuff, for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and for mycotoxins) and one EU-RL for dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in Freiburg, Germany.

[13] Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and welfare rules. This Regulation applies from 1 January 2006. See Commission Regulation (EU) No 208/2011 for the most recent list of EU-RLs.

EU-RLs for residues

EU-RLs in the field of residues include the EU-RLs for antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin, for residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists, for residues of trace elements, and for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin.

EU-RLs for biological risks

EU-RLs for biological risks include the EU-RLs for milk and milk products, for bivalve molluscs, for marine biotoxins, for *Salmonella*, for *Escherichia coli* including *verotoxigenis E. coli* (VTEC), for *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Staphylococci*, for *Campylobacter*, for parasites, for anti-microbial resistance, and for animal proteins.

EU-RLs in other fields of expertise

EU-RLs with expertise in other areas of food and feed include the EU-RL for GM food and feed, the EU-RL for food contact materials, and the EU-RL for feed additives.[14]

2.2. Functions of the EU-RLs

Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 lays down the general tasks, duties, and requirements for EU-RLs in the field of food and feed and in the field of animal health. It provides detailed responsibilities for EU-RLs that differ depending on the area of expertise, i.e. whether they operate in the field of food and feed or in the field of animal health.

The main functions of the EU-RLs consist notably of the following:

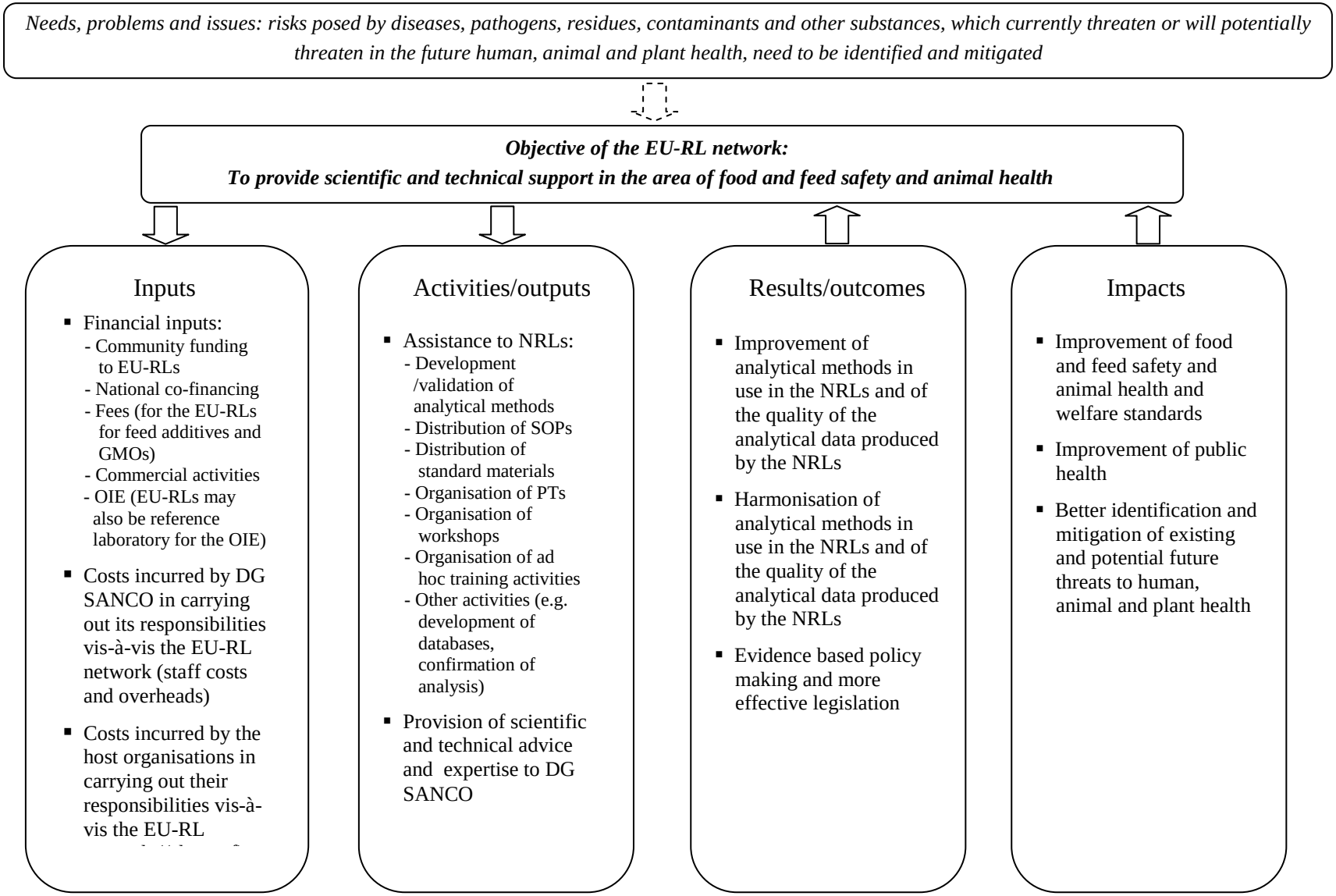
- Provision of assistance to NRLs and coordination of the NRL network;
- Provision of scientific advice and/or expertise related to analytical methodology to the European Commission.

The performance of the EU-RLs subject to the evaluation is assessed for each of these functions.

The figure on the following page presents the intervention logic for the EU-RLs/NRLs network.

[14] These EU-RLs are all operated by the Joint Research Centre (JRC).

Figure 1: Intervention logic for the EU-RLs/NRLs network



2.3. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation concerns 28 EU-RLs specifically listed in the TOR that coordinate activities of and provide assistance and training to the National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) in the 27 EU Member States. The focus and scope of the evaluation was further discussed with the Commission in the inception phase. The evaluation covers the period 2006-2010.

2.4. Methodological tools

The main methodological tools employed in the evaluation are:

- Desk research;
- Exploratory interviews;
- Interrelated and complementary surveys targeting EU-RLs; NRLs and Commission officials;
- In-depth evaluation interviews with EU-RLs; and
- Complementary interviews.

Desk research

Following the kick-off meeting, key documentation was assembled and reviewed. The Commission provided the FCEC with the Technical Reports and the Work Programmes for the EU-RLs subject to the evaluation. The Contractor also reviewed the information provided in partnership agreements, financial reports, and in the relevant legislation (Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, Council Decision 2009/470/EC, Regulation (EC) No 1754/2006, Regulation (EC) No 1981/2006, Directives 64/432/EEC, 91/68/EEC, and 2003/85/EC, and other relevant legislation) as well as the final report and annexes of the 2009 evaluation (*Evaluation of Community Reference Laboratories in the field of animal health and live animals*). The purpose of this desk review was to gather data on the tasks and responsibilities assigned to the EU-RLs, on the functioning of the EU-RLs-NRLs network, and on the financing of EU-RLs activities.

Exploratory interviews

During the inception phase, semi-structured interviews (face-to-face and phone interviews) were conducted with relevant Commission officials, EU-RLs, and NRLs. Group interviews were held in Brussels on 18 June 2010 with a total of 13 Commission officials from DG SANCO (desk officers responsible for the EU-RLs, the evaluation of the EU-RLs, and the financing of the EU-RLs). In addition, a total of seven interviews were conducted with representatives of six EU-RLs and of three NRLs.

Table 1 provides the list of Commission officials, EU-RLs and NRLs consulted during the inception phase of the study.

Table 3: List of stakeholders consulted during the inception phase

Organisation	Name of interviewees and areas of competence	Date of interview
DG SANCO	Ana Blass, Joaquim Ordeig (coordination of the Evaluation) Luis Martin Plaza (pesticides) Almut Bitterhof, Frans Verstraete (contaminants) Frank Swartenbroux (residues) Friedle Vanhee (food contact materials) Sebastien Goux (GMO) Miguel Angel Granero (feed additives) Leena Rasanen, Paolo Caricato (food safety) Marta Cainzos (animal health) Ludwig Vandenberghe (financial unit)	18 June 2010
EU-RL for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, JRC Geel, Belgium	Thomas Wenzel	2 July 2010
EU-RL for antimicrobial residues in food, AFSSA-Fougères LERMVD, France	Eric Verdon	6 July 2010
EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables, University Of Almeria, Spain	Amadeo Rodríguez Fernández-Alba	5 July 2010
EU-RLs for milk and milk products, *Listeria* and *Staphylococci*, AFSSA Maisons-Alfort, France	Bertrand Lombard	2 July 2010
NRL for residues of veterinary medicines, AESAN, Madrid, Spain	Patricia Munioz Moreno	2 July 2010
NRL for biological risks, National Veterinary Research Institute, Pulawy, Poland	Dariusz Wasyl	5 July 2010
NRL for residues of pesticides, AGES, Innsbruck, Austria	Sonja Masselter	1 July 2010

Surveys of EU-RLs, NRLs, and Commission officials

Civic Consulting conducted three complementary surveys targeted at all EU-RLs, all NRLs, and all relevant Commission officials responsible for the EU-RLs subject to this evaluation. The questionnaires for the surveys of EU-RLs and Commission officials were provided as Word documents to allow respondents to consult their colleagues when answering the questionnaires (see Annexes 3 and 5). The survey for NRLs was implemented on an online platform (*Qualtrics*) (see Annex 4).

The three complementary surveys (surveys of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed, NRLs, and Commission officials) were launched on 5 August 2010. The survey of the EU-RLs in the field of animal health was launched on 9 July 2010.

Survey of EU-Reference Laboratories

The survey of EU-RLs collected data concerning the selected output and results/outcome indicators for the evaluation of each individual EU-RL and for the evaluation of the network as a whole. The draft questionnaire was circulated to DG SANCO, selected EU-RLs and to the scientific advisory group.[15] Comments were taken into consideration and integrated in the final version of the questionnaire presented in Annex 3. To ensure consistency with the evaluation approach taken for the group of EU-RLs in the field of animal health, the survey questionnaires that were developed for the 2009 evaluation, were used to evaluate the two EU-RLs in the field of animal health (i.e. the EU-RLs for brucellosis and for food-and-mouth disease) subject to the present evaluation (see Part III)

All EU-RLs returned the evaluation questionnaire prior to the evaluation interview.

Survey of National Reference Laboratories

The survey of NRLs provided details concerning both the "client" perspective on the performance of the EU-RLs and information concerning the overall functioning of the EU-RLs/NRLs network.

To increase the rate of response for the survey of NRLs, three reminders were sent to the NRLs and an extension of the deadline was granted until 20 September 2010. Civic Consulting received a total of 616 responses for this survey. As Official National Laboratory (ONLs) in the field of pesticides are also recipients of the assistance provided by the EU-RLs in this field, it was agreed with DG SANCO to also target these ONLs as part of the survey of NRLs. Table 4 below presents the number of responses received from NRLs for each EU-RL. It shows a high rate of response for most EU-RLs.

[15] Prof. Thomas Alter from the Free University in Berlin, Germany; Prof. Sándor Belák from the University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Uppsala, Sweden; and Prof. Carlos Van Peteghem from Ghent University, Belgium.

Table 4: Number of survey responses of NRLs by EU-RL

EU-RL	Number of responses of NRLs
Animal proteins in feedingstuff	19
Antimicrobial resistance	21
Bivalve molluscs	14
Brucellosis	19
Campylobacter	21
Dioxins and PCBs	21
Escherichia coli, including verotoxigenic *E. coli* (VTEC)	21
Feed additives	14
Food and Mouth Disease (FMD)	13
Food contact materials	20
Genetically Modified (GM) food and feed	24
Heavy metals in food and feed	27
Listeria monocytoges	20
Marine biotoxins	16
Milk and milk products	18
Mycotoxins	26
Parasites	17
Pesticides (cereals and feedingstuff)	26
Pesticides (food of animal origin)	33
Pesticides (fruits and vegetables)	71
Pesticides (single residue methods)	21
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH)	18
Residues (antibiotics and illegal substances)	16
Residues (hormones, mycotoxins)	15
Residues (trace elements)	4
Residues (veterinary medicines and beta-agonists)	20
Salmonella	28
Staphylococci	23
Total	*606*

Source: Survey of NRLs. Figures include ONLs in the field of pesticides.

Table 5: Number of responses of NRLs by MS

MS	Number of responses of NRLs
Austria	24
Belgium	31
Bulgaria	25
Cyprus	13
Czech Republic	20
Denmark	23
Estonia	21
Finland	28
France	28
Germany	33
Greece	29
Hungary	30
Ireland	13
Italy	32
Latvia	25
Lithuania	24
Luxembourg	2
Malta	7
Netherlands	16
Poland	27
Portugal	21
Romania	22
Slovakia	26
Slovenia	23
Spain	28
Sweden	18
United Kingdom	17
Total	*606*

Source: Survey of NRLs. Figures include ONLs in the field of pesticides.

Survey of Commission officials

During the inception phase of the evaluation, it was agreed with DG SANCO to conduct a survey of Commission officials (as recipients of services, i.e. scientific advice related to analytical methodology and expertise, provided by the EU-RLs to DG SANCO).

The aim of the survey of Commission officials was to collect the views of the relevant Commission officials on the activities carried out by the EU-RLs (including the provision of scientific advice related to analytical methodology and expertise) to support the Commission's action. Questionnaires from Commission officials have been received for all EU-RLs subject to the evaluation.

Evaluation interviews with EU-RLs

The evaluation interviews covered all aspects of the evaluation and aimed to clarify questions that arose from the answers to the questionnaires of the EU-RLs, the Commission officials, and the NRLs. Prior to the interview, the technical annex was completed for the EU-RL on the basis of the survey results (see Part II) and the data analysed. The pre-filled technical annex allowed the evaluation interview to validate quantitative data on results/outcomes and qualitative indicators that are difficult to assess through a questionnaire. If results from the surveys of NRLs and Commission officials gave indications of any issue that needed clarification, this was discussed with the EU-RL.

Table 6 below lists the evaluation interviews that were conducted with the EU-RLs.

Table 6: List of evaluation interviews conducted

EU-RL	Name of interviewees	Date
Animal proteins in feedingstuff	Vincent Baeten	25/10/2010
Antimicrobial resistance	Frank M. Aarestrup	23/09/2010
Bivalve molluscs	David Lees Rachel Rangdale	19/10/2010
Brucellosis	Bruno Garin-Bastuji David Albert Foulo Basse Marie Cécile Veyrenc	23/09/ 2010
Campylobacter	Eva Olsson Engvall	18/10/2010
Dioxins and PCBs	Rainer Malisch	02/11/2010
Escherichia coli, including verotoxigenic *E. coli* (VTEC)	Alfredo Caprioli	11/10/2010
Feed additives	Christoph Von Holst	27/10/2010
Food and Mouth Disease (FMD)	Jef Hammond Yanmin Li Don King Nigel Ferris Bryan Charleston	21/09/2010
Food contact materials	Catherine Simoneau	21/10/2010
Genetically Modified (GM) food and feed	Guy Van Den Eede Damien Plan Marco Mazzara	11/11/2010
Heavy metals in food and feed	Maria Beatriz de la Calle	26/10/2010
Listeria monocytoges	Laurent Laloux, Head manager of the laboratory, ANSES Bertrand Lombard, Coordinator of the EU-RL, ANSES Adrien Asséré, Deputy coordinator of the EU-RL, ANSES Foulo Basse, financial supervisor, ANSES	4/10/2010
Marine biotoxins	Ana Gago Martinez, Director of the EU RL	28/10/2010
Milk and milk products	Laurent Laloux, Head manager of the laboratory, ANSES	6/10/2010

	Bertrand Lombard, Coordinator of the EU-RL, ANSES Adrien Asséré, Deputy coordinator of the EU-RL, ANSES Foulo Basse, financial supervisor, ANSES	
Mycotoxins	Joerg Stroka	20/10/2010
Parasites	Edoardo Pozio	26/10/2010
Pesticides (cereals and feedingstuff)	Mette Erecius Poulsen	25/10/2010
Pesticides (food of animal origin)	Rainer Malisch	02/11/2010
Pesticides (fruits and vegetables)	Amadeo R. Fernández-Alba	15/10/2010
Pesticides (single residue methods)	Michelangelo Anastassiades	19/10/2010
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH)	Thomas Wenzl	20/10/2010
Residues (antibiotics and illegal substances)	Eric Verdon	29/10/2010
Residues (hormones, mycotoxins)	Leendert A. van Ginkel	27/10/2010
Residues (trace elements)	Rosa Giordano	22/10/2010
Residues (veterinary medicines and beta-agonists)	Petra Gowik	21/10/2010
Salmonella	Kirsten Mooijman	12/10/2010
Staphylococci	Laurent Laloux Bertrand Lombard Adrien Asséré Foulo Basse	4/10/2010

Complementary interviews

The complementary interviews were conducted once the evaluation interviews with the EU-RLs took place and the draft evaluation report and draft technical annex were prepared. They aimed to discuss issues that needed further clarification.

2.5. Methodological approach for assessing the performance of the EU-RLs

In this study, the overall performance of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed[16] is evaluated on basis of the assessment of five evaluation themes, for which a total 72 evaluation indicators have been scrutinised for each EU-RL. The indicators were developed on basis of an in depth analysis of tasks and responsibilities of EU-RLs, as outlined in the legal basis and annual work programmes.

The overall performance of each EU-RL is determined through the following steps:

- Firstly, the performance of the EU-RL is assessed for each indicator;
- Secondly, on basis of the assessment of the relevant indicators, the performance of the EU-RL is assessed for each of the 14 sub-evaluation themes;
- Thirdly, on basis of the assessment of the relevant sub-evaluation themes, the performance of the EU-RL is assessed for each of the five evaluation themes; and
- Finally, the overall performance of the EU-RL is determined on basis of the assessment of the five evaluation themes.

The following paragraphs describe this process in detail.

Step 1: Assessment of the performance of the EU-RL on each indicator

The evaluation of the performance of the EU-RL on the indicators is based on assessment criteria. Assessment criteria set out the standards against which performance on a specific aspect can be assessed and improve the transparency of the evaluation by making the assessment explicit. Annex 2 presents the indicators used for the evaluation and the criteria used to determine the performance of the EU-RL.

For each indicator, an assessment has been made by the evaluator and a score, A, B or C, assigned according to the assessment criterion and on the basis of the information collected. In this assessment, "A" indicates an excellent performance, "B" an adequate performance, and "C" an underperformance regarding the particular criterion.

As shown in Annex 2, indicators can be based either on stakeholder ratings (e.g. ratings of stakeholders concerning the user-friendliness of the websites) or data regarding outputs (e.g. number of proficiency tests organised by the EU-RL over the evaluation period).

For indicators based on *stakeholder ratings*, ratings of stakeholders (i.e. NRLs, EU-RL and Commission official(s)) were translated into assessments on the basis of the assessment criteria presented in Annex 2 of this report. The table below shows an example of indicator and how the assessment was conducted on basis of the related assessment criteria.

[16] Subject to this evaluation are also two EU-RLs in the field of animal health (the EU-RLs for Brucellosis and FMD). To ensure consistency of the evaluation approach for the group of EU-RLs in the field of animal health, the same evaluation approach used for the 2009 Evaluation is applied to the two EU-RLs in the field of animal health subject to the present evaluation. The related indicators and judgement criteria are not replicated in this Report.

Table 7: Example of assessment criteria for an indicator based on stakeholder ratings

Indicator	Basis for assessment[(a)]	Assessment criteria
3.1.5. The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the website contains information that is not available elsewhere. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance (A):* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the website contains information that is not available elsewhere. *Adequate performance (B):* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the website contains information that is not available elsewhere. *Underperformance (C):* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the website contains information that is not available elsewhere.
3.1.6. The website provides up-to-date information.	…	…
3.1.7. …	…	…

Note: (a) The "basis for assessment" indicates the relevant survey data for the indicators listed. The assessment criteria are applied to the data described in the "basis for assessment", supplemented, where relevant, by the data collected through interviews and desk research.

Each indicator has then been assessed as follows:

- In case of excellent assessments (rating of 3) by the EU-RL and the Commission officials and the majority of NRLs, the indicator was assessed as "A";
- In case of poor assessments (rating of 1 or 0) by one or more of the three stakeholders (i.e. the EU-RL or the Commission officials or the majority of NRLs) the indicator was assessed as "C";
- In all other cases between these two extremes, the indicator was assessed as "B".

The table below illustrates how assessments are obtained for indicators based on stakeholder ratings (related basis for assessment and assessment criteria are listed in Table 7 above).

Table 8: Example of an assessment for an indicator based on stakeholder ratings

Indicator	Stakeholder ratings			Complementary information	Assess-ment
	EU-RL	DG SANCO	NRLs		
3.1.5. The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	**3.0**	**3.0**	**3: 60%** 2: 35% 1: 5% 0: 0%	60% of the NRLs that answered the question totally agree when asked whether the website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	**A**
3.1.6.	…	…	…	…	…
3.1.7.	…	…	…	…	…

For indicators based on *data regarding outputs* (e.g. number of proficiency tests organised), the performance of the EU-RL on the indicator was determined on the basis of the data collected during the interviews and through the survey of EU-RLs, supplemented, when needed, by desk research. The table below shows an example of an indicator based on data regarding outputs and of the related basis for assessment and assessment criteria.

Table 9: Example of assessment criteria for an indicator based on data regarding outputs

Indicator	Basis for assessment	Assessment criteria
3.2.1 PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years.	*Excellent performance (A):* PTs have been organised more than once a year over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance (B):* PTs have been organised once a year over the last 5 years. *Underperformance (C):* PTs have been organised less than once a year over the last 5 years.

Each indicator based on data regarding outputs has been assessed according to the criteria in the table provided above. This is illustrated for the example indicated in the table below.

Table 10: Example of an assessment of an indicator based on data regarding outputs

Indicator	Complementary information	Assess-ment
3.2.1. PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	The EU-RL organised **8** PTs over the evaluation period.	**A**

Step 2: Assessment of the performance of the EU-RL on the sub-evaluation themes

Once the performance of the EU-RL was assessed for each relevant indicator, related evaluation indicators were grouped to sub-evaluation themes (e.g. organisation of training activities) which were assessed as follows:[17]

- If the majority of indicators relevant for the sub-evaluation theme were assessed as "A", the performance regarding this sub-evaluation theme was assessed as excellent ("A");
- If the majority of indicators relevant for the sub-evaluation theme were assessed as "B", the performance regarding this sub-evaluation theme was assessed as adequate ("B");
- If the majority of indicators relevant for the sub-evaluation theme were assessed as "C", the performance regarding this sub-evaluation theme was assessed as underperforming ("C").[18]

[17] This methodological approach was preferred to an approach involving a point system. The assessment of the performance of the EU-RLs on the basis of points (given for each indicator, and then added up to a total evaluation score) could have distorted the results because the number of indicators varies significantly across sub-evaluation themes.

[18] If the number of indicators e.g. assessed as "A" was the same as the number of indicators assessed as "B", the lower assessement was considered for the sub-evaluation theme (i.e. the sub-evaluation theme was assessed as "B").

The table on the following page illustrates how the performance on the sub-evaluation theme is determined.

Table 11: Example of performance on a sub-evaluation theme

	Assessment
Sub-evaluation theme 3.1. Tools utilised to share information and communicate with NRLs	**A**
Related indicators:	
3.1.1. Availability of EU-RL website and other tools	*A*
3.1.2. Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website	*A*
3.1.3. NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL.	*A*
3.1.4. The content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for the day-to-day activities of the NRL.	*A*
3.1.5. The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	*A*
3.1.6. The website provides up-to-date information.	*B*
3.1.7. The website of the EU-RL is user-friendly.	*B*
3.1.8. The web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs.	*B*

Step 3: Assessment of the performance of the EU-RL on the evaluation themes

The performance of the EU-RLs has been assessed on the following five evaluation themes:

a) Adequacy of assistance to National Reference Laboratories (evaluation theme 1);

b) Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques (evaluation theme 2);

c) Extent to which coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL have been satisfactory (evaluation theme 3);

d) Extent to which activities carried out to support the Commission's action have been satisfactory (evaluation theme 4); and

e) Extent to which the EU-RL fulfils the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation (evaluation theme 5).

Related sub-evaluation themes were combined to provide an assessment regarding the evaluation theme as follows:

- If the majority of sub-evaluation themes relevant for the evaluation theme were assessed as "A", the performance regarding this evaluation theme was assessed as excellent ("A");
- If the majority of sub-evaluation themes relevant for the evaluation theme were assessed as "B", the performance regarding this evaluation theme was assessed as adequate ("B");
- If the majority of sub-evaluation themes relevant for the evaluation theme were assessed as "C", the performance regarding this evaluation theme was assessed as underperforming ("C").[19]

[19] If the number of sub-evaluation themes assessed as "A" was the same as the number of sub-evaluation themes assessed as "B", the lower assessement was considered for the evaluation theme (i.e. the evaluation theme was assessed as "B").

The table below illustrates how the performance on the evaluation theme is assessed.

Table 12: Example of performance on an evaluation theme

	Assessment
Evaluation theme 3. Extent to which coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL have been satisfactory	**B**
Related sub-evaluation themes	
3.1. Tools utilised to share information and communicate with NRLs	*C*
3.2. Organisation of Proficiency Tests (PTs)	*A*
3.3. Organisation of workshops	*B*
3.4. Organisation of ad hoc trainings	*B*
3.5. Other activities carried out	*B*

Step 4: Assessment of the overall performance of the EU-RL

Finally, the overall performance of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed was determined on the basis of the performance on the five evaluation themes according to the following scale: [20]

Excellent performance	A	*The overall performance of the EU-RL is "A" if the EU-RL performs "excellently (A)" on all five evaluation themes.*
Excellent and partly adequate performance	A^-	*The overall performance of the EU-RL is "A^-" if the EU-RL performs "excellently (A)" on at least three evaluation themes and "adequately (B)" on the other evaluation themes.*
Adequate performance	B^+	*The overall performance of the EU-RL is "B^+" if the EU-RL performs "excellently (A)" on one or two evaluation themes and performs "adequately (B)" on the other evaluation themes.*
	B	*The overall performance of the EU-RL is "B" if the EU-RL performs "adequately (B)" on all five evaluation themes.*
	B^-	*The overall performance of the EU-RL is "B^-" if the EU-RL performs "adequately (B)" on at least three evaluation themes and "underperforms (C)" on the other evaluation themes.*
Underperformance (shortcomings that require improve-ment)	C	*The overall performance of the EU-RL is "C" if the EU-RL "underperforms (C)" on three or more evaluation themes.*

[20] In practice, the combination of evaluation themes assessed as "A" with evaluation themes assessed as "C" did not occur. This option was therefore not considered in the scale for assessing the overall performance of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed.

3. Overview of evaluation results for EU-RLs in the field of food and feed

This section presents an overview of the results of the evaluation of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed. It is based on the evaluation reports for each individual EU-RL presented in Part II of this report. All data and assessments provided refer to the overall evaluation period (2006-2010).

The section is structured as follows:

- The first sub-section provides a summary of the overall evaluation results;
- The second sub-section presents an overview of evaluation results for each evaluation theme;
- Finally, the third sub-section presents key evaluation results separately for each of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed.

3.1. Overall evaluation results

Table 13 on the next page summarises the results of the evaluation for the main evaluation themes and provides an overall assessment of the performance of all EU-RLs in the field of food and feed during the evaluation period. As the table indicates, the following groups of EU-RLs can be differentiated:

- The overall performance of 3 EU-RLs is assessed as A, i.e. they performed "excellently" on all five evaluation themes. These are the EU-RLs for animal proteins, antimicrobial resistance, and GM food and feed;
- The overall performance of 12 EU-RLs is assessed as A^-, i.e. they performed "excellently" on three or four evaluation themes and "adequately" on the other evaluation themes. These are the EU-RLs for *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Campylobacter*, parasites, *Salmonella*, dioxins and PCBs, heavy metals, mycotoxins, PAH, residues of trace elements, residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists, antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin, and food contact materials;
- The overall performance of 9 EU-RLs is assessed as B^+, i.e. they performed "excellently" on one or two evaluation themes and "adequately" on the other evaluation themes. These are the EU-RLs for bivalve molluscs, *E. coli*, marine biotoxins, milk and milk products, *Staphyloccoci*, pesticides in fruits and vegetables, pesticide analysis using single residue methods, residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives, and mycotoxins in food of animal origin and feed additives;
- The overall performance of 1 EU-RL is assessed as B, i.e. it performed "adequately" on all five evaluation themes. This is the EU-RL for pesticides in food of animal origin;
- The overall performance of 1 EU-RL is assessed as B^-, i.e. it performed "adequately" on four evaluation themes and "underperformed" on one evaluation theme. This is the EU-RL for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff.

None of the EU-RLs was assessed to have overall "underperformed" during the evaluation period.

The evaluation has assessed the performance of each of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed based on 72 indicators. In spite of the overall positive results of the evaluation, it has to be noted that 19 EU-RLs have underperformed on at least one indicator. Weaknesses identified include:

- In several cases, activities including the development, validation, or assessment of analytical methods, the distribution of reference materials, and the distribution of SOPs have insufficiently contributed to the improvement and the harmonisation of the analytical methods and quality of analytical data generated by the NRLs. This weakness has been identified for four EU-RLs.[21]
- Some EU-RLs did not provide corrective actions and follow up to NRLs that underperformed during Proficiency Tests. This shortcoming was identified for three EU-RLs.[22]
- The tools utilised by some EU-RLs to share information and communicate with NRLs could be improved. For example, the user-friendliness, the quantity and level of detail, as well as the update of the information available on the website of some EU-RLs could be enhanced. These aspects are relevant for six EU-RLs.[23]
- A significant number of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed do not collect and summarise the feedback provided by participants in workshops or in ad hoc training activities. This is relevant for 17 EU-RLs.[24]

[21] EU-RLs for milk and milk products, pesticides in food of animal origin, pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, residues of trace elements.

[22] EU-RLs for pesticides in food of animal origin, for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, and for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin.

[23] EU-RLs for *Staphylococci*, residues of trace elements, bivalve molluscs, residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists, milk and milk products, and *Listeria monocytogenes*.

[24] EU-RLs for animal proteins, antimicrobial resistance, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *E. Coli*, marine biotoxines, bivalve molluscs, *Staphylococci*, milk and milk products, *Listeria monocytogenes*, residues of trace elements, residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin, antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin, pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, pesticides in food of animal origin, food contact materials, and feed additives.

Table 13: Overview of assessments of the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed safety

	EU-RLs in the field of biological risks											EU-RLs in the field of contaminants				EU-RLs in the field of pesticides				EU-RLs in the field of residues				EU-RLs in other fields		
	Animal proteins	Antimicrobial resistance	*Listeria monocytoges*	*Campylobacter*	Parasites	*Salmonella*	Bivalve molluscs	*E. coli*	Marine biotoxins	Milk and milk products	*Staphylococci*	Dioxins and PCBs	Heavy metals	Mycotoxins	PAH	Fruit and vegetables	Single residue methods	Food of animal origin	Cereals and feedingstuff	Veterinary medicines and beta-agonists	Antimicrobials and dyes	Trace elements	Hormones, mycotoxins	GM food and feed	Food contact materials	Feed additives
Overall assessment	A	A	A^-	A^-	A^-	A^-	B^+	B^+	B^+	B^+	B^+	A^-	A^-	A^-	A^-	B^+	B^+	B	B^-	A^-	A^-	A^-	B^+	A	A^-	B^+
1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	(B)	B	A	B	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	(A)	B	A	B	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	A	B	B	B	A	A	B
4.Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	*	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	C	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
5. Fulfilment of the requirements laid down in EU legislation	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	A	B	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	A	A	(A)	A	A	A	B

Source: Surveys of NRLs, EU-RL and Commission official, interviews and desk research. See evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II) for more detail.

Note: The following scale is used to assess overall performance: excellent performance (A, A^-), adequate performance (B^+, B, B^-) and underperformance (C). See section 2.5 for more details. * No assessment possible. Assessments provided in brackets indicate that a low number of NRLs/ONLs provided a rating for the related indicators.

3.2. Evaluation results by evaluation theme

The evaluation of the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed covered for each of the EU-RLs the following five themes:

1. Adequacy of assistance to National Reference Laboratories;
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques;
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL;
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action;
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation.

In addition, at a horizontal level, the evaluation scrutinised the contribution of the EU-RLs to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation, and the adequacy and appropriateness of the requirements for the EU-RLs set in the EU legislation and in the work programmes. This sub-section presents an overview of the evaluation results per theme.

Adequacy of assistance to National Reference Laboratories

Evaluation question: Has the assistance of EU-RLs to the NRLs been adequate in order to improve analytical methods and/or the quality of analytical data generated in the EU?

One of the main tasks of the EU-RLs is to provide assistance to the National Reference Laboratories to improve and harmonise analytical methods and the quality of analytical data generated. For this aim, EU-RLs:

- Develop, validate, assess and transfer analytical methods;
- Develop and transfer Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs);[25]
- Supply standard or reference materials;
- Organise Proficiency Tests (PTs);[26] and
- Provide training (workshops and ad hoc training activities).

Evaluation results indicate that the assistance of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed to the NRLs has globally been adequate in order to improve analytical methods and/or the quality of analytical data generated in the EU. Assistance provided is at least “adequate”, with four of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed even having provided overall “excellent” assistance to NRLs (the EU-RLs for animal proteins, antimicrobial resistance, *Staphylococci*, and GM food and feed). These EU-RLs have performed very well regarding most of the sub-evaluation themes related to assistance.

Table 14 on the following page provides assessments regarding adequacy of assistance for each EU-RL, including assessments of each of the six related sub-evaluation themes.

[25] A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is a written document or instruction detailing all steps and activities of a process or procedure.
[26] Proficiency tests allow the assessment of the technical capacity of the NRLs to identify serotypes or to detect the pathogen or substance as well as the sensitivity of the techniques and methods in use in the laboratories (see section 4.3.2.).

Table 14: Assessment of adequacy of assistance of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed to NRLs during the evaluation period

	EU-RLs in the field of biological risks											EU-RLs in the field of contaminants				EU-RLs in the field of pesticides				EU-RLs in the field of residues				EU-RLs in other fields		
	Animal proteins	Antimicrobial resistance	*Staphylococci*	*Listeria monocytoges*	Parasites	*Campylobacter*	*Salmonella*	Bivalve molluscs	*E. coli*	Marine biotoxins	Milk and milk products	Dioxins and PCBs	Heavy metals	Mycotoxins	PAH	Fruit and vegetables	Single residue methods	Cereals and feedingstuff	Food of animal origin	Veterinary medicines and beta-agonists	Trace elements	Hormones, mycotoxins	Antimicrobials and dyes	GM food and feed	Food contact materials	Feed additives
Adequacy of assistance	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	(B)	B	B	A	B	B
Development, validation, assessment of analytical methods	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	B	B	B	B	B	(B)	B	B	A	B	B
Distribution of SOPs	B	n.a.	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	B	(B)	B	B	A	B	n.a.
Distribution of standard materials	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	B	C	C	C	A	(A)	B	B	A	B	n.a.
Contribution of Proficiency Tests to improvements	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	(A)	A	B	B	B	n.a.
Contribution of training activities to improvements	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	(B)	B	B	A	B	B
Contribution of other activities to improvements	B	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	(B)	B	B	A	B	B
Number of analytical methods	15	4	1	6	5	10	4	5	3	15	10	7	13	9	6	15	10	6	9	-	7	7	23	79	3	134
Number of SOPs	4	n.a.	1	10	1	6	8	9	3	8	2	4	8	n.a.	n.a.	-	3	n.a.	2	-	5	15	8	50	6	-
Number of standard / reference materials	6	6	10	3	11	7	5	12	9	5	-	6	4	5	5	15	0	4	5	-	7	12	12	41	14	4

Source: Evaluation reports and technical annexes (see Part II). Notes: n.a.: not applicable. -: no data. Assessments provided in brackets indicate that a low number of NRLs/ONLs provided a rating for the related indicators. The following scale is used to assess performance: excellent performance (A), adequate performance (B) and underperformance (C). Figures provided relate to evaluation period (2006-2010). See section 2.5 for more details.

Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques

Evaluation question: To what extent do the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RLs respond to state of the art standards and are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety?

Based on the feedback from NRLs received and the other evidence collected, the evaluation concludes that analytical methods and techniques developed, validated, or assessed by the EU-RLs are considered to respond to state-of-the-art standards and to be appropriate to ensure food and feed safety. 14 of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed have performed "excellently" regarding this aspect during the evaluation period, while the remaining 12 EU-RLs have performed "adequately" (see overview table at the begin of this section, Table 13).

Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RLs

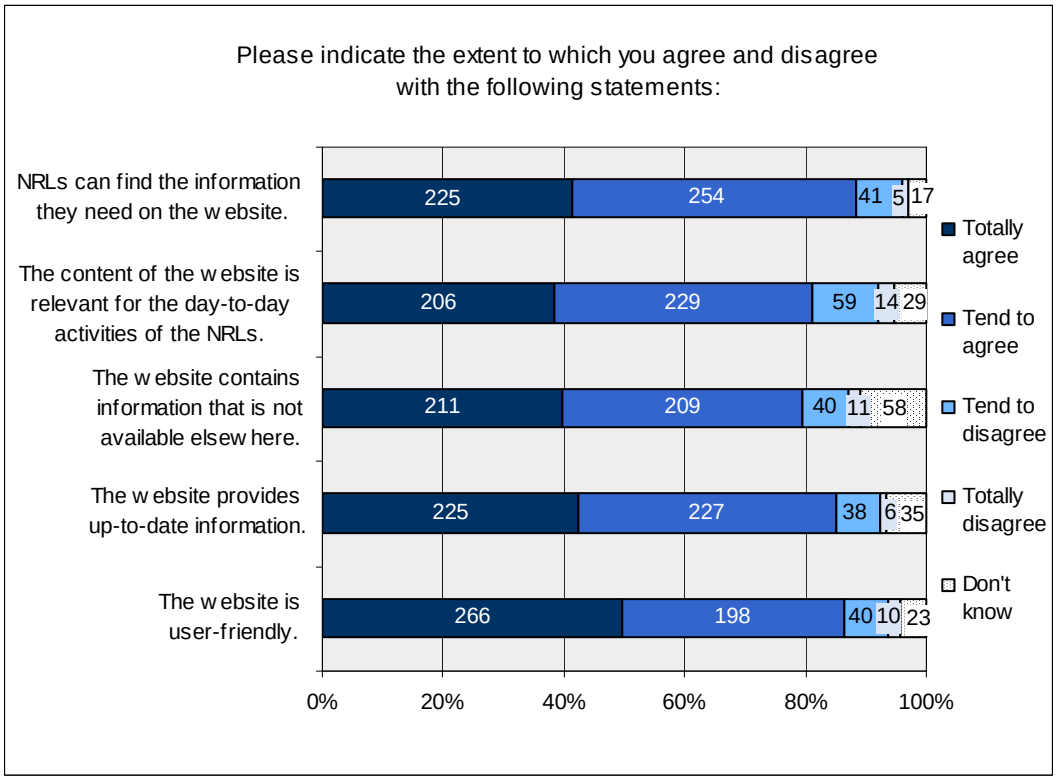
Evaluation question: Have the coordination and training activities carried out by EU-RLs been satisfactory?

Coordination and training activities carried out by EU-RLs in the field of food and feed have been overall satisfactory. All EU-RLs have provided at least "adequate" (nine of the 26 EU-RLs even "excellent") coordination and training during the evaluation period.

In more detail, the evaluation concludes:

- Key tools of EU-RLs to communicate with NRLs are their *websites*, which are positively assessed by NRLs concerning content and user-friendliness (see Figure 2, below).

Figure 2: Satisfaction of NRLs with websites of EU-RLs

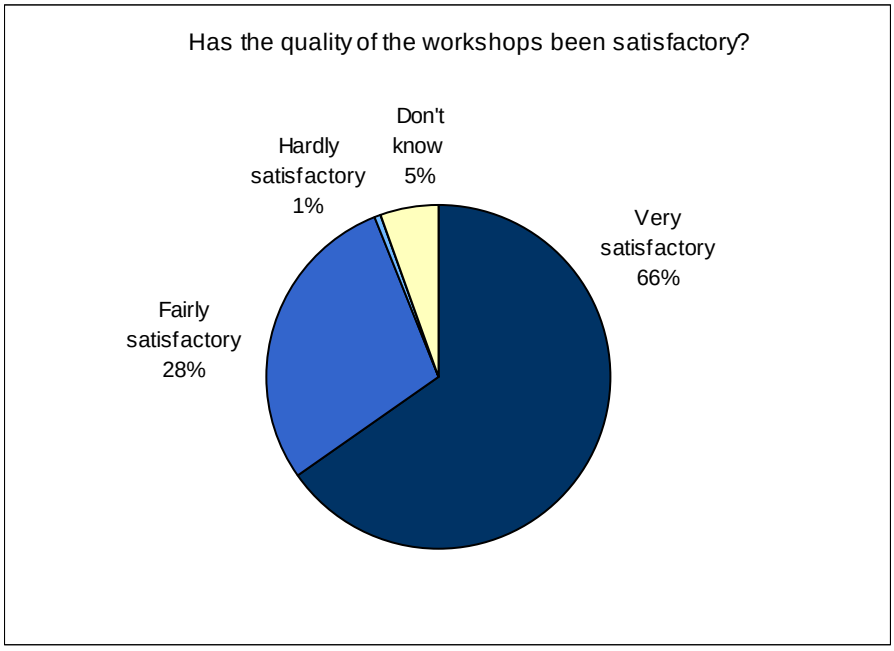


Source: Survey of NRLs (529<N<542).

- *Proficiency tests* (PTs) allow the assessment of the technical capacity of the NRLs to identify serotypes or to detect the pathogen or substance as well as the sensitivity of the techniques and methods in use in the laboratories. Proficiency tests constitute the activity for which the highest number of EU-RLs (18) score "excellently" (the others score "adequately"). Most EU-RLs for which an assessment is possible, organised at least one proficiency test per year over the last five years.

- *Workshops* constitute an important tool for developing an effective EU-RLs-NRLs network. The overall assessment regarding workshops organised by EU-RLs is "excellent" for 10 EU-RLs. The other 16 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed perform "adequately" in this respect. All EU-RLs in the field of food and feed organised workshops at least once a year over the period 2007 – 2010.[27] The positive assessments are reflected in the high level of satisfaction of NRLs with the quality and relevance of the workshops. 94% of the NRLs are fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of the workshops (see Figure 3, below). Similarly, 93% of the NRLs find that workshops have been fairly or very relevant to their needs.

Figure 3: Quality of workshops provided by EU-RLs



Source: Survey of NRLs (N=565).

- EU-RLs may also organise *ad hoc trainings* for selected NRLs, for example, to increase the knowledge and skills of participants in specific analytical methods, e.g. following poor performance on PTs or specific demands of NRLs. The overall assessment of ad hoc trainings is "excellent" for four EU-RLs. Assessments are "adequate" for all other EU-RLs except one.[28]

Table 15 on the following page provides for each EU-RL the assessments of the five sub-evaluation themes related to coordination and training.

[27] Only three EU-RLs, the EU-RLs for antimicrobial resistance, *Staphylococci* and *Listeria*, did not organise any workshops in 2006, the year in which they started to operate.

[28] The EU-RL for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff underperformed regarding ad hoc trainings.

Table 15: Assessment of coordination and training activities

	EU-RLs in the field of biological risks											EU-RLs in the field of contaminants				EU-RLs in the field of pesticides				EU-RLs in the field of residues				EU-RLs in other fields		
	Animal proteins	Antimicrobial resistance	*Listeria monocytoges*	Parasites	*Campylobacter*	Marine biotoxins	Milk and milk products	*Salmonella*	Bivalve molluscs	*E. coli*	*Staphylococci*	Heavy metals	PAH	Dioxins and PCBs	Mycotoxins	Single residue methods	Cereals and feedingstuff	Food of animal origin	Fruit and vegetables	Veterinary medicines and beta-agonists	Antimicrobials and dyes	Hormones, mycotoxins	Trace elements	Food contact materials	GM food and feed	Feed additives
Coordination and training activities	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	B	B	A	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	A	A	B
Communication tools	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	B
PTs	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	A	A	A	B	B	A	B	n.a.
Workshops	A	B	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	A	A	B
Ad hoc trainings	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	B	A	A	B	B	B	C	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B
Other activities	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	B	A	A	B
Number of PTs	5	19	10	8	7	14	7	13	19	10	4	11	7	8	5	7	4	5	12	6	14	9	5	24	2	-
Number of workshops	5	4	4	5	5	14	5	5	7	6	4	5	5	10	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	12	8	5

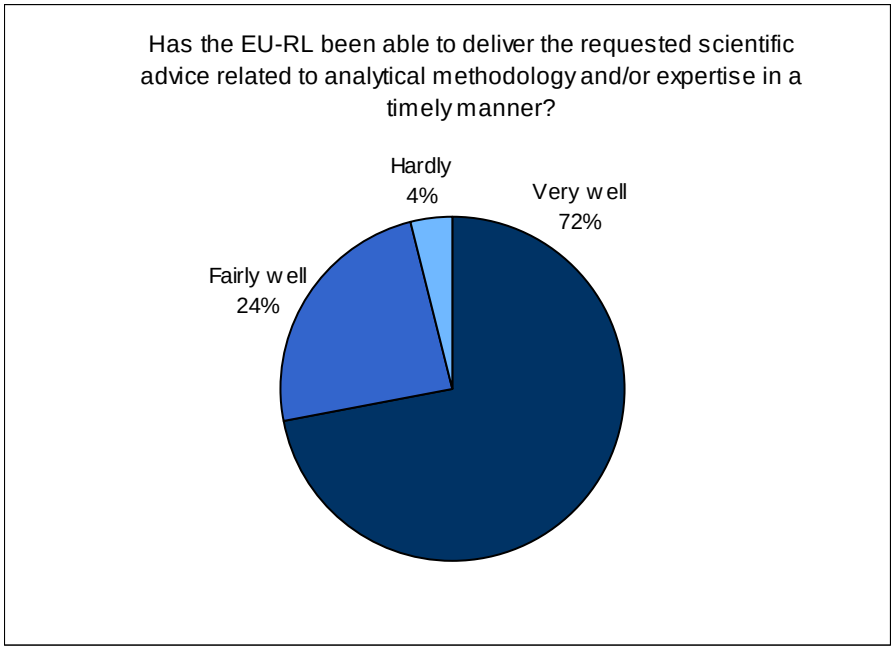
Source: Evaluation reports and technical annexes (see Part II). Note: n.a.: not applicable. -: no data. The following scale is used to assess performance: excellent performance (A), adequate performance (B) and underperformance (C). Figures provided relate to evaluation period (2006-2010). See section 2.5 for more details.

Activities carried out to support the Commission's action

Evaluation questions: Are the activities carried to support the Commission's action, for instance to provide scientific advice and/or expertise, or input to the work of international organisations, satisfactory? Are they timely delivered? Are they based on state of the art expert knowledge?

EU-RLs support the Commission's actions by providing scientific advice related to analytical methodology and expertise. EU-RLs may, for example, be invited to participate in expert groups, they may be requested, in crisis situations, to quickly provide an overview of information available, or they may provide scientific support during discussions of the Commission with third countries on analytical methods, which are relevant in the framework of bilateral or multilateral equivalence agreements. As the main client of this advice is the Commission, assessments of Commission officials regarding timely delivery of scientific advice and expertise provided an important input into the evaluation (see Figure 4 below).

Figure 4: Timely delivery of scientific advice and expertise by EU-RLs



Source: Survey of Commission officials (N=25; no assessment provided for the EU-RL for *Staphylococci*).

Activities carried out by EU-RLs to support the Commission's action have overall been satisfactory. A large majority (19) of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed have been able to provide scientific advice and expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge very well and to deliver this advice and expertise in a very timely manner, with the others mostly performing "adequately". Some shortcomings exist concerning the scientific advice and expertise delivered by the EU-RL for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, because scientific advice and expertise has hardly been delivered in a timely manner, as is reported by DG SANCO (see overview table at the beginning of this section, Table 13).

Fulfilment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation

Evaluation question: To what extent does the EU-RL fulfil the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation?

According to Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, EU-RLs shall fulfil specific requirements, including having suitably qualified staff with adequate training, possessing the equipment and products needed to carry out the tasks assigned to them, and having sufficient knowledge of international standards and practices.[29] There is a common agreement among stakeholders that EU-RLs in the field of food and feed fulfil the requirements laid down in EU legislation (see overview table at the begin of this section, Table 13).[30]

Contribution of the EU-RLs to the achievement of the objectives pursued by EU legislation

Evaluation question: To what extent does the EU-RLs in each specific area contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by EU legislation and improve food and feed safety in the EU?

The evaluation indicates that the activities carried out by the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed have contributed to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improved food and feed safety in the EU. This aspect is discussed in more detail in section 4 below which analyses the efficiency and effectiveness of the EU funding received by the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed.

Adequacy and appropriateness of the requirements for the EU-RLs set in the EU legislation and in the work programmes

Evaluation question: To what extent are the requirements for the EU-RLs set in the EU legislation and in the work programmes adequate and appropriate to achieve established food and feed safety ... objectives?

The question to what extent the requirements for the EU-RLs set in the EU legislation and in the work programmes[31] are adequate and appropriate to achieve established food and feed safety objectives can be asked at three levels:

a) At the level of existing individual EU-RLs in their field of competence;

b) At EU-RL network level, including all areas covered by existing EU-RLs;

c) In an overall perspective, i.e. including areas that are currently not covered by a EU-RL but where a EU-RL might potentially be necessary to achieve established food and feed safety objectives.

[29] See http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:165:0001:0141:EN:PDF

[30] Of the total of 26 EU-RLs, 17 EU-RLs have fulfilled the requirements "excellently", while the remaining 9 EU-RLs (all EU-RLs in the field of pesticides and the EU-RLs for bivalve molluscs, *E. Coli*, marine biotoxins, *Staphylococci*, and feed additives) have fulfilled the requirements "adequately".

[31] Every year, the Commission approves an annual work programme for each EU-RL specifying their tasks for the next year and grants financial support for the EU-RLs' operations. Only one EU-RL in the field of food and feed, the EU-RL for feed additives, has never delivered a work programme (and technical reports) to DG SANCO. The EU-RL for feed additives is also the only EU-RL in the field of food and feed that does not receive any financial support from DG SANCO. This EU-RL covers its expenses by fees paid by applicants for marketing authorisation. Its tasks are largely defined by the application process for authorisation for new additives or extension of use of additives.

The evaluation concluded that the requirements set in the EU legislation and in the work programmes for the EU-RLs in the field of food and feed are adequate and appropriate to achieve established food and feed safety objectives, at both the level of existing individual EU-RLs and at network level.

Regarding the third level to which this evaluation question refers, namely to the overall perspective that includes areas currently not covered by a EU-RL but where a EU-RL might potentially be necessary to achieve established food and feed safety objectives, no assessment is possible on basis of the data quoted above. This issue is therefore addressed in in section 4 (below) in the framework of the evaluation of network aspects and the potential need to cover new areas.

3.3. Key evaluation results for each of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed

On the following pages key evaluation results, including overall assessment, including recommendations (where applicable), assessment by evaluation theme, and an overview of strength and weaknesses are provided separately for each of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed.

Detailed evaluation reports and technical annexes with assessments of all evaluation indicators are presented in Part II of this report.

3.3.1. Key evaluation results for the EU-RLs in the field of biological risks

EU-RL for animal proteins

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Walloon Agricultural Research Centre – CRA-W (Belgium)

Number of employees: 13.5 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for animal proteins has performed excellently over the evaluation period.	**A**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	A
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 49 indicators and "adequately" on 15 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 2 indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of analytical methods to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of workshops organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of workshops organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of workshops organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the	Use of a specific protocol to follow up cases of lack of performance Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards.	
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety.	
Availability of EU-RL website and other tools	
NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL.	
The content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for the day-to-day activities of the NRL.	
The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	
The website provides up-to-date information.	
The website of the EU-RL is user-friendly.	
Extent to which PT results are satisfactory	
Preparation of reports presenting PT results	
Level of detail of information provided in PT reports	
Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory	
Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs	
Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	
Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops	
Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops	
Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Number of ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	
Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings	
Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities	
Quality of the ad hoc training activities	
Relevance of the ad hoc training activities	
Other activities carried out.	
Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge	
Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner	
Staff	
Administrative infrastructure	
Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects	
Knowledge of international standards and practices	
Updated list of available reference substances and reagents	
Taking into account of research activities	
Emergency situations	
Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for antimicrobial resistance

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: National Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark

Number of employees: 3 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for antimicrobial resistance has performed overall excellently over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could consider collecting feedback from participants in workshops in a more systematic way, i.e. through the use of questionnaires.	**A**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	A
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 44 indicators and "adequately" on 17 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 1 indicator.[(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of analytical methods to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of workshops organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	Collection of feedback from participants in workshops

Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	
Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards.	
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food safety.	
NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL	
The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	
The website provides up-to-date information.	
The website of the EU-RL is user-friendly.	
Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	
Extent to which PT results are satisfactory	
Preparation of reports presenting PT results	
Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory	
Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs	
Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops	
Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops	
Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings	
Quality of the ad hoc training activities	
Relevance of the ad hoc training activities	
Other activities carried out.	
Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge	
Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner	
Staff	
Equipment and products	
Administrative infrastructure	
Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects	
Knowledge of international standards and practices	
Updated list of available reference substances and reagents	
Taking into account of research activities	
Emergency situations	
Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food safety in the EU	
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards.	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for *Listeria monocytogenes*

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Laboratory for Studies & Research on Quality of Foods & on Food Processes (LERQAP) of the French National Agency on Food Safety, Environment, and Workplace Security (ANSES), France

Number of employees: 5.13 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for *Listeria monocytogenes* has performed overall excellently over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could collect feedback from participants in workshops in a systematic manner. A web forum could be developed.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 39 indicators and "adequately" on 23 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 3 indicators [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards. Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5	The web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs. Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety.	
Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website	
NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL.	
The content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for the day-to-day activities of the NRL.	
The website provides up-to-date information.	
The website of the EU-RL is user-friendly.	
Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	
Number of NRLs participating in PTs	
Extent to which PT results are satisfactory	
Preparation of reports presenting PT results	
Level of detail of information provided in PT reports	
Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory	
Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs	
Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops	
Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings	
Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities	
Quality of the ad hoc training activities	
Relevance of the ad hoc training activities	
Other activities carried out.	
Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge	
Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner	
Staff	
Equipment and products	
Administrative infrastructure	
Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects	
Knowledge of international standards and practices	
Taking into account of research activities	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for *Campylobacter*

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: National Veterinary Institute (SVA), Uppsala, Sweden

Number of employees: 3.3 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for *Campylobacter* has performed overall excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could summarise feedback from participants in workshops and training activities in a more systematic manner.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 27 indicators and "adequately" on 34 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 4 indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of other activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food safety. Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings	Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

Quality of the ad hoc training activities Relevance of the ad hoc training activities Other activities carried out Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Taking into account of research activities Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food safety in the EU	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for parasites

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy

Number of employees: 11.16 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for parasites has performed excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 32 indicators and "adequately" on 34 indicators. The EU-RL does not underperform on any indicators.[(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards. Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety. Availability of EU-RL website and other tools Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs	*No weaknesses identified.*

Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Quality of the ad hoc training activities Other activities carried out. Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Taking into account of research activities Emergency situations Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for *Salmonella*

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 1992

Host organisation: National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), Laboratory for Zoonoses and Environmental Microbiology (LZO), the Netherlands

Number of employees: 3.47 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment of the performance of the EU-RL

The EU-RL for *Salmonella* has performed excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could summarise the feedback provided by participants in workshops and training activities in a more systematic manner.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 28 indicators and "adequately" on 33 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 4 indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of analytical methods to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards. Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food safety. Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL. The website contains information that is not available elsewhere. The website of the EU-RL is user-friendly. Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Number of NRLs participating in PTs Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports	Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Use of a specific protocol to follow up cases of lack of performance Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the ad hoc training activities Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Taking into account of research activities	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for bivalve molluscs

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 1999

Host organisation: Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), Weymouth, UK

Number of employees: 3.6 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for bivalve molluscs has performed overall adequately over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could summarise the feedback provided by participants in the workshops and training activities. The EU-RL could improve the usefulness of the web forum for the NRLs.	**B+**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	B

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 16 indicators and "adequately" on 45 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 5 indicators [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Availability of EU-RL website and other tools Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Staff Equipment and products Knowledge of international standards and practices Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food safety in the EU	The web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs. Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for Escherichia Coli, including Verotoxigenis E. coli (VTEC)

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS), Italy

Number of employees: 6.65 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for Escherichia Coli, including Verotoxigenis E. coli (VTEC) has performed overall adequately over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could summarise the feedback provided by participants in workshops.	**B+**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	B

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 15 indicators and "adequately" on 47 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 2 indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards. Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Knowledge of international standards and practices Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU	Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for marine biotoxins

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 1993

Host organisation: Spanish Food Safety and Nutrition Agency (AESAN), Vigo, Spain

Number of employees: 11 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for marine biotoxins has performed overall adequately over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could collect and summarise the feedback from participants in workshops and training activities.	**B+**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	B
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	B

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 19 indicators and "adequately" on 42 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 4 indicators [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards. Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food safety. Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Other activities carried out. Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge	Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

Staff Knowledge of international standards and practices Updated list of available reference substances and reagents	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for milk and milk products

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 1992

Host organisation: Laboratory for Studies & Research on Quality of Foods & on Food Processes (LERQAP) of the French National Agency on Food Safety, Environment, and Workplace Security (ANSES), France

Number of employees: 4.76 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for milk and milk products has performed overall adequately over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The user-friendliness of the website should be improved. The EU-RL should also ensure that the information it provides on its website is up-to-date. It could also consider developing a web-forum. The EU-RL could collect and summarise the feedback provided by participants in workshops in a more systematic manner.	**B+**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	B
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 18 indicators and "adequately" on 39 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 6 indicators.[(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities Relevance of the ad hoc training activities Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Knowledge of international standards and practices Taking into account of research activities	Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs The website provides up-to-date information. The website of the EU-RL is user-friendly. The web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs. Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for *Staphylococci*

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Laboratory for Studies & Research on Quality of Foods & on Food Processes (LERQAP) of the French National Agency on Food Safety, Environment, and Workplace Security (ANSES), France

Number of employees: 5.59 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment of the performance of the EU-RL

The EU-RL for *Staphylococci* has performed overall adequately over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could improve the user-friendliness of its website. It could also summarise the feedback provided by participants in workshops.	**B+**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	A
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	*
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	B

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 31 indicators and "adequately" on 30 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 2 indicators.[(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of SOPs distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of workshops organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of workshops organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of workshops organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	The website of the EU-RL is user-friendly. Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops

Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs	
Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	
Contribution of other activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	
Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website	
Extent to which PT results are satisfactory	
Preparation of reports presenting PT results	
Level of detail of information provided in PT reports	
Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs	
Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops	
Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings	
Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities	
Relevance of the ad hoc training activities	
Administrative infrastructure	
Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects	
Knowledge of international standards and practices	
Taking into account of research activities	
Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU (as appropriate for the EU-RL)	

Note: * No assessment possible. (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

3.3.2. Key evaluation results for the EU-RLs in the field of contaminants

EU-RL for dioxins and PCBs

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Chemisches und Veterinäruntersuchungsamt (CVUA), Freiburg, Germany

Number of employees: 6.2 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for dioxins and PCBs has performed overall excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 27 indicators and "adequately" on 29 indicators. The EU-RL does not underperform on any indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety. Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Number of participants Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities Quality of the ad hoc training activities Relevance of the ad hoc training activities Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products	*No weaknesses identified.*

Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Updated list of available reference substances and reagents Taking into account of research activities Emergency situations Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards.	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for heavy metals

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (IRMM), Joint Research Centre (JRC), Geel, Belgium

Number of employees: 2.63 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for heavy metals has performed excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 25 indicators and "adequately" on 31 indicators. The EU-RL does not underperform on any indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of other activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Number of NRLs participating in PTs Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities Quality of the ad hoc training activities Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise	*No weaknesses identified.*

based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for mycotoxins

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission, Geel, Belgium

Number of employees: 4.76 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for mycotoxins has performed overall excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 27 indicators and "adequately" on 29 indicators. The EU-RL does not underperform on any indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards. Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety. Number of NRLs participating in PTs Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice	*No weaknesses identified.*

and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Updated list of available reference substances and reagents Taking into account of research activities Emergency situations Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH)

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission, Geel, Belgium

Number of employees: 2.89 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH) excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 26 indicators and "adequately" on 30 indicators. The EU-RL does not underperform on any indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Quality of the ad hoc training activities Relevance of the ad hoc training activities Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure	*No weaknesses identified.*

Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Updated list of available reference substances and reagents Taking into account of research activities Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

3.3.3. Key evaluation results for the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides

EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Laboratorio Agrario de la Generalitat Valenciana (LAGV), Valencia, Spain

Number of employees: 10.02 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Overall assessment

The EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables has performed overall adequately over the evaluation period.	**B+**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	B

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 16 indicators and "adequately" on 47 indicators. The EU-RL does not underperform on any indicators.[(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs/ONLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs/ONLs Availability of EU-RL website and other tools Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner	*No weaknesses identified.*

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for pesticides - single residue methods

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Chemisches und Veterinäruntersuchungsamt (CVUA), Stuttgart, Germany

Number of employees: 5 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Overall assessment

The EU-RL for pesticides - single residue methods has performed overall adequately over the evaluation period. The EU-RL could collect feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities in a more systematic manner.	**B+**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	B
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	B

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 22 indicators and "adequately" on 37 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on four indicators.[(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs/ONLs Availability of EU-RL website and other tools Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website NRLs/ONLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL. The content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for the day-to-day activities of the NRLs/ONLs. The website contains information that is not available elsewhere. The website provides up-to-date information. The website of the EU-RL is user-friendly. Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities Other activities carried out Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge	Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Standard/reference materials produced/distributed (3 related indicators)

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for pesticides in food of animal origin

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Chemisches und Veterinäruntersuchungsamt (CVUA), Freiburg, Germany

Number of employees: 3.0 full-time equivalent staff members (not including administrative and support staff)

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Overall assessment

The EU-RL for pesticide residues in food of animal origin has performed adequately for the five evaluation themes over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could provide corrective actions and follow up to NRLs that underperformed on the proficiency tests. It should ensure that the standard/reference materials that it produces better contribute to the improvement and harmonisation of analytical methods and the quality of analytical data in the NRLs/ONLs. The EU-RL could better use the feedback received on the workshops. The EU-RL could also summarise the feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities in a more systematic manner.	**B**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	B
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	B

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 8 indicators and "adequately" on 46 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 8 indicators.[(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Availability of EU-RL website and other tools Number of NRLs participating in PTs Preparation of reports presenting PT results Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Other activities conducted	Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs/ONLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs/ONLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs/ONLs Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Use of feedback collected from participants in workshops Number of ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: DTU National Food Institute, Denmark

Number of employees: 2.15 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Overall assessment

The EU-RL for pesticide residues in cereals and feedingstuff has performed overall adequately over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could provide corrective actions and follow up to NRLs that underperformed on the proficiency tests. It could also improve its ability to deliver the scientific advice and expertise requested by the European Commission in a timely manner. The EU-RL could better use the feedback received on the workshops and should ensure that the standard/reference materials that it produces better contribute to the improvement and harmonisation of analytical methods and the quality of analytical data in the NRLs/ONLs. The EU-RL could summarise the feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities in a more systematic manner.	**B-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	C
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	B

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 6 indicators and "adequately" on 45 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 8 indicators.[(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs/ONLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs/ONLs Availability of EU-RL website and other tools Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Other activities carried out	Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs/ONLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs/ONLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs/ONLs Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Number of ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

3.3.4. Key evaluation results for the EU-RLs in the field of residues

EU-RL for residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 1994

Host organisation: Bundesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit (BVL), Berlin, Germany

Number of employees: 6.33 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists has performed overall excellently over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL could improve the user-friendliness of its website.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 29 indicators and "adequately" on 28 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 1 indicator. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards. Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food safety. Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	The website of the EU-RL is user-friendly.

Number of ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Quality of the ad hoc training activities Other activities carried out. Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Updated list of available reference substances and reagents Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food safety in the EU	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 1992

Host organisation: French National Agency on Food Safety, Environment, and Workplace Security (ANSES), Laboratory of Fougères, France

Number of employees: 10.0 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin has performed excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period. The EU-RL could summarise the feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities in a more systematic manner.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 20 indicators and "adequately" on 35 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 3 indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food safety. Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of reports presenting PT results Level of detail of information provided in PT reports Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Quality of the ad hoc training activities Relevance of the ad hoc training activities Activities conducted by the EU-RL include the provision of ad hoc expertise to NRLs by email/phone/letters, confirmation of analysis done by NRLs, and development of databases. Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Taking into account of research activities Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food safety in the EU	Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for residues of trace elements

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 1991

Host organisation: Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS), Italy

Number of employees: 7.3 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for residues of trace elements has performed overall excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL should ensure that analytical methods and SOPs better contribute to the improvement of the analytical methods in use in the NRLs. The quantity and level of detail of information available on the EU-RL's website could also be improved. The EU-RL could summarise the feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities in a more systematic manner.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	(B)
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	(A)
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	(A)

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 25 indicators and "adequately" on 28 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 5 indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards. Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food safety. Preparation of reports presenting PT results Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in	Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

ad hoc trainings Relevance of the ad hoc training activities Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Updated list of available reference substances and reagents Taking into account of research activities Emergency situations Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food safety in the EU	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. Assessments provided in brackets indicate that a low number of NRLs provided a rating for the related indicators. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 1991

Host organisation: RIKILT, Institute of Food Safety of the Wageningen University and Research Centre, Netherlands

Number of employees: 6.2 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin has performed adequately over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL should provide corrective actions and follow up to NRLs that underperform on proficiency tests.	**B+**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	B
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 15 indicators and "adequately" on 41 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 2 indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of reports presenting PT results Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Relevance of the ad hoc training activities Other activities carried out. Staff Equipment and products Administrative infrastructure Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food safety in the EU	Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

3.3.5. Key evaluation results for the EU-RLs in other fields

EU-RL for genetically modified food and feed

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2003

Host organisation: Joint Research Centre (JRC), Institute for Health and Consumer Protection, Italy

Number of employees: 16 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by host organisation. The EU-RL receives fee-based income. It also received EU funding in 2008 and 2009.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for genetically modified food and feed has performed overall excellently over the evaluation period.	**A**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	A
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	A
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 46 indicators and "adequately" on 19 indicators. The EU-RL does not underperform on any indicators. [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of analytical methods to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs Contribution of SOPs distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of workshops organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of workshops organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	*No weaknesses identified.*

Contribution of other activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards.	
Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety.	
Availability of EU-RL website and other tools	
Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website	
The content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for the day-to-day activities of the NRL.	
The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	
The website provides up-to-date information.	
Number of NRLs participating in PTs	
Level of detail of information provided in PT reports	
Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs	
Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	
Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops	
Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops	
Use of feedback collected from participants	
Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	
Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings	
Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities	
Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities	
Use of feedback collected from participants	
Quality of the ad hoc training activities	
Other activities carried out	
Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge	
Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner	
Staff	
Equipment and products	
Administrative infrastructure	
Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects	
Knowledge of international standards and practices	
Updated list of available reference substances and reagents	
Taking into account of research activities	
Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU (as appropriate for the EU-RL)	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for food contact materials

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2006

Host organisation: Joint Research Centre (JRC), Institute for Health and Consumer Protection, Italy

Number of employees: 9 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by EU and host organisation. The EU-RL does not receive any fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for food contact materials has performed overall excellently – partly adequately – over the evaluation period.	**A-**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	A
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	A

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 26 indicators and "adequately" on 39 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms on 1 indicator [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
Availability of EU-RL website and other tools Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website The website contains information that is not available elsewhere. The web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs. Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Extent to which PT results are satisfactory Preparation of reports presenting PT results Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings Quality of the ad hoc training activities Relevance of the ad hoc training activities Activities conducted by the EU-RL include the provision of ad hoc expertise to NRLs by email/phone/letters and development of databases (databank of substances and databank of methods). Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner	Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities

Staff Equipment and products Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects Knowledge of international standards and practices Taking into account of research activities Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU	

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

EU-RL for feed additives

Background information

Year of designation of the EU-RL: 2003

Host organisation: Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (IRMM) of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), Geel, Belgium

Number of employees: 8.3 full-time equivalent staff members

Funding: Provided by the host organisation.The EU-RL also receives fee-based income.

Summary assessment

The EU-RL for feed additives has performed overall adequately over the evaluation period. *Recommendation:* The EU-RL should ensure that it has trained personnel available for emergency situations occurring within the Community. The EU-RL could summarise the feedback provided by participants in workshops.	**B+**

Assessment by evaluation theme

1. Adequacy of assistance to NRLs	B
2. Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques	B
3. Coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL	B
4. Activities carried out to support the Commission's action	A
5. Fulfillment of the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation	B

Assessment by evaluation indicator

The EU-RL performs "excellently" on 8 indicators and "adequately" on 38 indicators. The EU-RL underperforms for 3 indicators [(a)]

Strengths and weaknesses of the EU-RL

Indicators on which the EU-RL performs excellently	Indicators on which the EU-RL underperforms
The website contains information that is not available elsewhere. Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops Collection of feedback from participants in workshops Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU	Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities Emergency situations

Note: (a) The number of indicators assessed for each EU-RL depends on the available data and its specific tasks. The total number of indicators assessed therefore differs by EU-RL. For more details, see evaluation reports and technical annexes (Part II of the report).

4. Effectiveness and efficiency of EU funding to the network of EU-RLs

Evaluation question: Is the EU financial aid for EU-RLs used in an effective and efficient manner as regards to the objectives above?

4.1. Overview of EU funding

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1754/2006[32] establishes detailed rules for the granting of EU financial assistance to EU-RLs in the field of food and feed and in the field of animal health. In accordance with Article 2 of this Regulation, the relationship between the Commission and the laboratory is laid down in a partnership agreement supported by a multi-annual work programme.[33] Within this framework, the financial contribution from the EU is granted for the implementation of an annual work programme on the condition that the activities are efficiently carried out as foreseen in the work programme and that the beneficiary supplies all required information within certain time limits.[34]

The EU-RL for feed additives is financed through fees paid by the applicants in the context of the authorisation procedure. So far, the EU-RL for feed additives has not used the possibility of using any financial contribution granted under Commission Regulation (EC) No 1754/2006. Similarly, for GMOs, fees have to be paid by the applicants for new authorisations, for renewal of authorisations, and in the case of modification of authorisations, where appropriate.[35]

The EU contributions provided for the operation of an EU-RL can be used to cover staff costs, capital equipment, consumables and workshops.

The EU financial support for the EU-RLs subject to this evaluation amounted in 2010 to 9,123,381 Euros. The total financial support provided during the evaluation period to each of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed is given in the following table:

[32] Commission Regulation (EC) No 1754/2006 of 28 November 2006 laying down detailed rules for the granting of Community financial assistance to Community reference laboratories for feed and food and the animal health sector.

[33] From 2012 onward, when the current partnership agreements will come to an end, new partnership agreements will no longer have to be prepared.

[34] See Article 6 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1754/2006. According to Article 13 of this Regulation, the financial report and the technical report on the operation of the laboratories shall be sent no later than 31 March of the year following the end of the period for which the financial assistance was granted. According to Article 14, the financial report on the workshops and the technical report on the operation of the laboratories shall be sent no later than two months after the workshop was held.

[35] See Commission Regulation (EC) No 1981/2006 of 22 December 2006 on detailed rules for the implementation of Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the Community reference laboratory for genetically modified organisms.

Table 16: Total EU funding for the period 2006 – 2010

Field of expertise	EU-RLs	Total EU funding for the period 2006 – 2010
EU-RLs for biological risks	Animal proteins	2,640,980
	Antimicrobial resistance	1,501,471
	Bivalve molluscs	1,242,494
	Campylobacter	1,192,830
	E. coli	917,207
	Listeria monocytoges	5,851,038
	Marine biotoxins	1,592,322
	Milk and milk products	1,165,714
	Parasites	1,281,305
	Salmonella	1,690,618
	Staphylococci	1,109,600
Total		*20,185,578*
EU-RLs for contaminants	Dioxins and PCBs	1,974,649
	Mycotoxins	1,168,527
	PAH	1,213,690
	Heavy metals	997,035
Total		*5,353,901*
EU-RLs in the field of pesticides	Cereals and feedingstuff	1,006,883
	Food of animal origin	1,003,203
	Fruit and vegetables	2,075,367
	Single residue methods	1,591,487
Total		*5,676,940*
EU-RLs in the field of residues	Antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin	2,289,358
	Hormones, mycotoxins	2,127,725
	Trace elements	1,316,000
	Veterinary medicines and beta-agonists	2,306,868
Total		*8,039,951*
EU-RLs in other fields	Feed additives	0
	Food contact materials	1,228,564
	GM food and feed	259,828
Total		*1,488,392*
Grand total		***40,744,762***

Source: Civic Consulting on basis of EU-RL data.

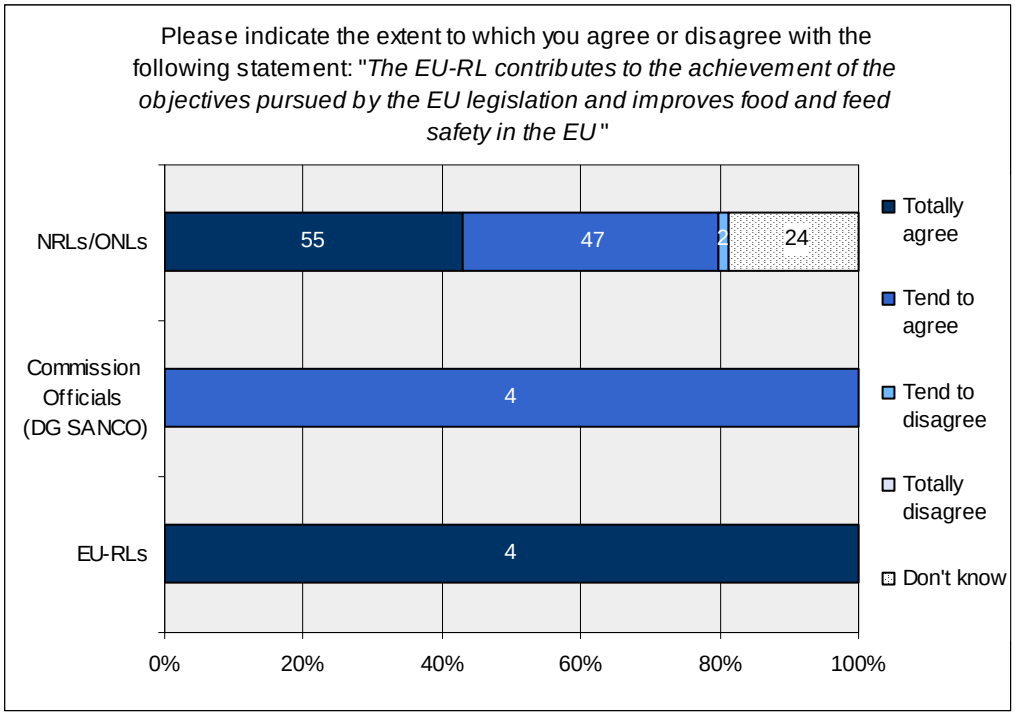
4.2. Effectiveness of EU funding

According to the management theorist Peter Drucker, effectiveness is *doing the right things*.[36] Or put differently and in more detail: Effectiveness refers to whether a specific task (for instance, organisation of a workshop) has been performed or an objective (for instance, food safety) has been met. In this evaluation effectiveness has been measured by assessing to what extent Commission officials, EU-RLs and NRLs agree that a specific EU-RL contributes to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improve food and feed safety in the EU.

4.2.1. Effectiveness of EU-RLs in the field of residues of pesticides

A large majority of the NRLs and ONLs agree that the EU-RLs contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improve food and feed safety in the EU, with 80% of NRLs and ONLs totally agreeing or tending to agree to the statement, and most of the remainder having no opinion. Also, Commission officials tend to agree to the statement. All four EU-RLs in the field of residues of pesticides totally agree (see Figure below). It is also stressed by EU-RLs that the field of pesticide residues is generally well covered.

Figure 5: Effectiveness of EU-RLs in the field of residues of pesticides



Source: Survey of NRLs and ONLs (N=128), EU-RLs (N=4) and Commission officials (N=4).

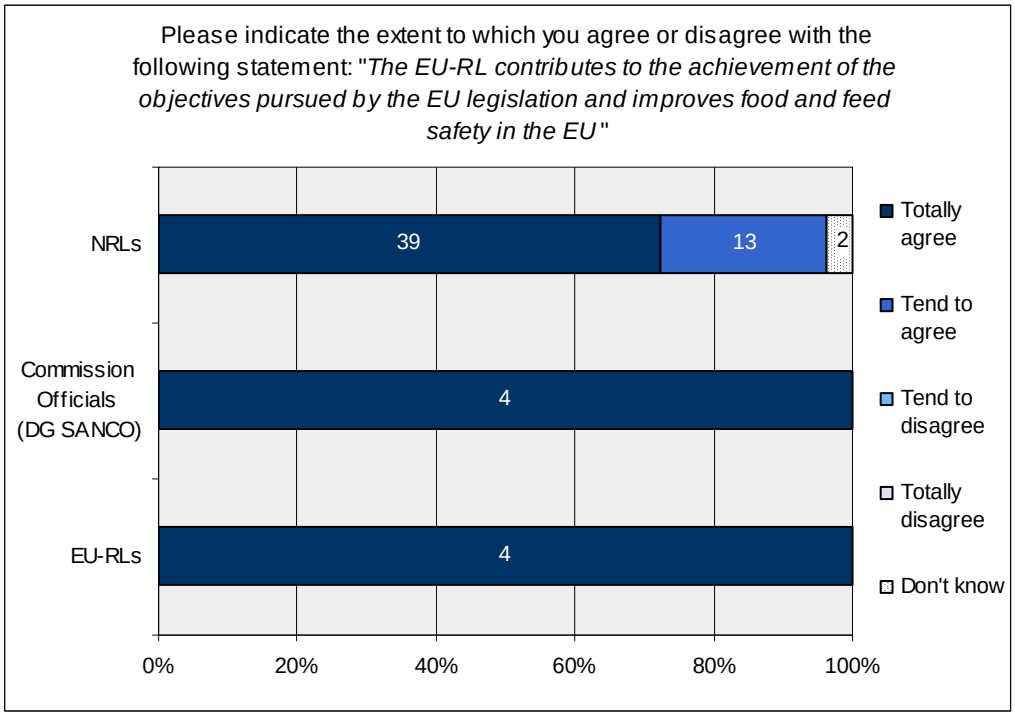
[36] Drucker 1993.

4.2.2. Effectiveness of EU-RLs in the field of residues

NRLs provide a very positive assessment of the EU-RLs' contributions to the achievement of policy objectives. EU-RLs as well as Commission officials totally agree that the four EU-RLs for residues contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improve food and feed safety in the EU. The various assessments reflect a high effectiveness of the EU-RLs currently in place in the field of residues.

One issue where EU-RLs see room for improvements with regard to effectiveness is their access to EU funding for new young scientists to be engaged in one or two year technical projects and for additional efforts to help NRLs with a lack of expertise.

Figure 6: Effectiveness of EU-RLs in the field of residues



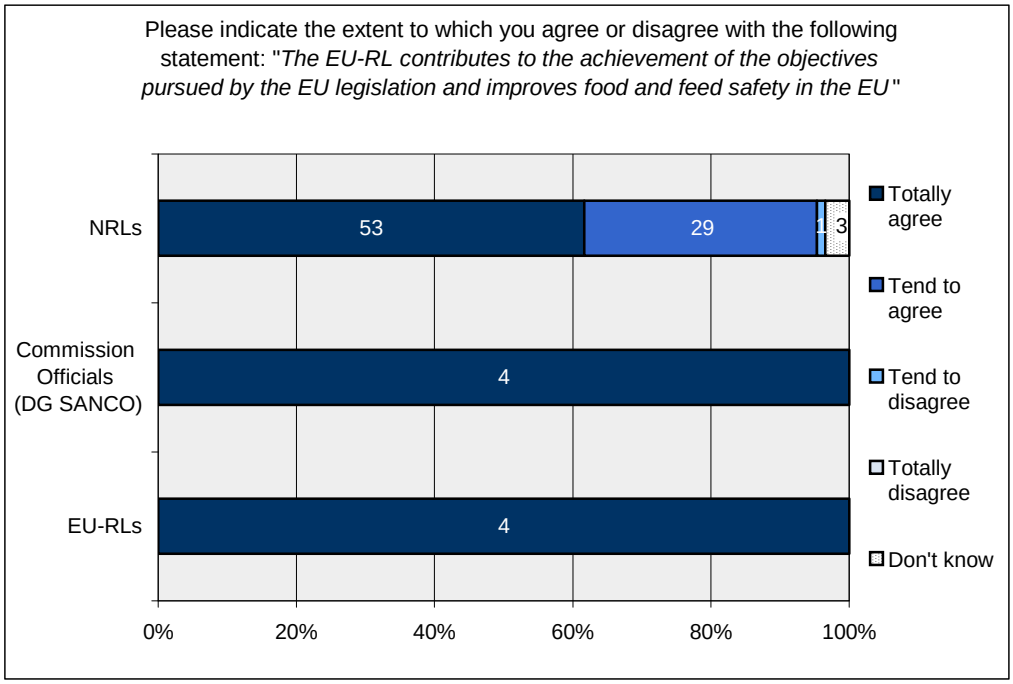
Source: Survey of NRLs (N=54), EU-RLs (N=4) and Commission officials (N=4).

4.2.3. Effectiveness of EU-RLs in the field of contaminants

In general, NRLs agree that the EU-RLs for contaminants contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improve food and feed safety in the EU. All EU-RL and Commission officials totally agree with the statement (see Figure 7).

Aspects that reduce effectiveness mentioned by EU-RLs in the field of contaminants concern the process of selecting and entrusting NRLs. This can take a significant amount of time so that these laboratories miss much of the discussions, trainings and experience gained prior to their appointment. Similarly, changes of NRLs result in a loss of information and experiences already acquired by the first laboratory and a backlog of the newly appointed laboratory.

Figure 7: Effectiveness of EU-RLs in the field of contaminants

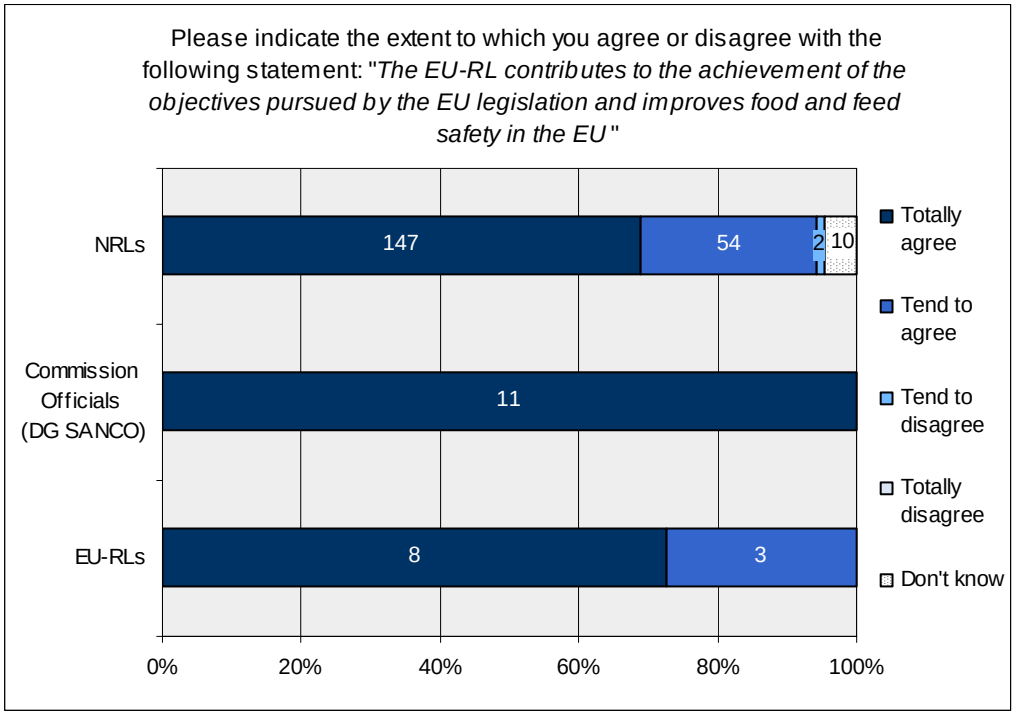


Source: Survey of NRLs (N=86), EU-RLs (N=4) and Commission officials (N=4).

4.2.4. Effectiveness of EU-RLs in the field of biological risks

In general, NRLs agree that EU-RLs in the field of biological risks contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improve food and feed safety in the EU. Commission officials totally agree with the statement. The picture is somewhat more mixed on the side of EU-RL representatives. Whereas the EU-RLs for bivalve molluscs, marine biotixins, *E. coli*, *Staphylococci*, *Campylobacter*, parasites, antimicrobial resistance, and animal proteins totally agree, the EU-RLs for milk and milk products, *Salmonella*, and *Listeria monocytogenes* only tend to agree. The EU-RL for *Listeria monocytogenes*, for example, sees the need to play a more active role in epidemio-surveillance at European level by setting-up a database on *Listeria* of food origin in order to fully contribute to the achievement of the objectives of EU legislation on food safety. It is also stressed that the efficacy of the EU-RL and NRL activities depends on the willingness of the individual EU Member States to provide sufficient financial support to NRLs in order to ensure their operativity.

Figure 8: Effectiveness of EU-RLs in the field of biological risks

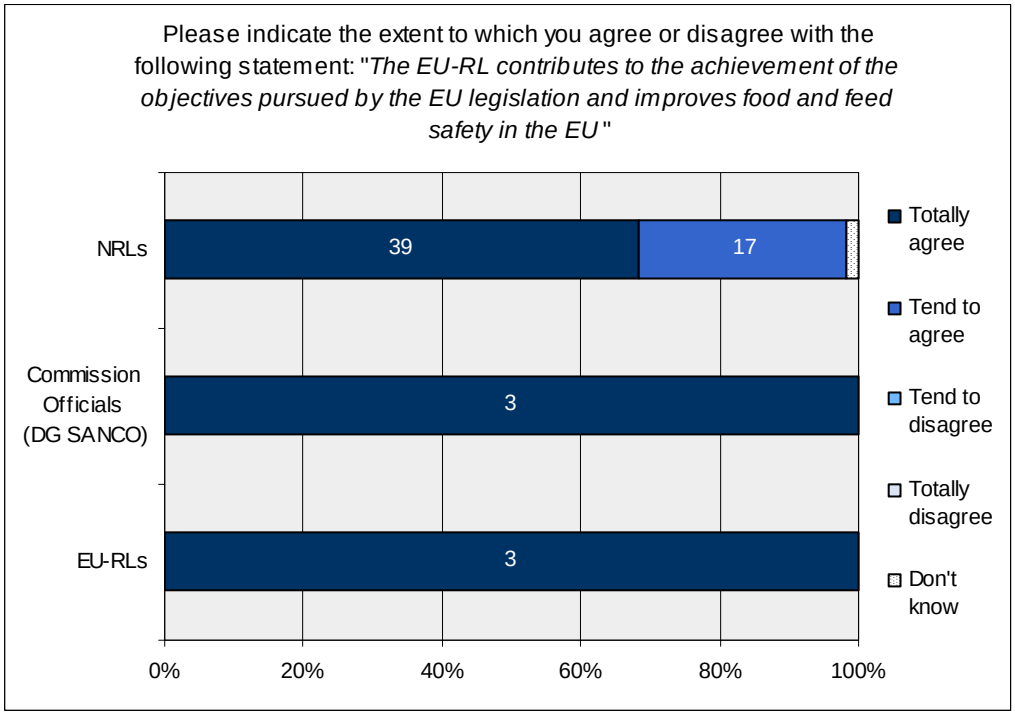


Source: Survey of NRLs (N=213), EU-RLs (N=11) and Commission officials (N=11).

4.2.5. Effectiveness of EU-RLs in other areas of expertise

Most NRL representatives as well as all Commission officials and all EU-RLs totally agree that the three EU-RLs in other areas of expertise contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improve food and feed safety in the EU (see Figure 9 below).

Figure 9: Effectiveness of EU-RLs in other field of expertise



Source: Survey of NRLs (N=57), EU-RLs (N=3) and Commission officials (N=3).

4.2.6. General assessment of effectiveness of EU-RL network

The previous sections have indicated that there is for all areas in which EU-RLs operate a widespread agreement between the NRLs, Commission officials, and EU-RLs that the EU-RLs contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and the improvement of food and feed safety in the EU.

In addition, effectiveness can be assessed by comparing the current situation with a (counterfactual) situation without a system of EU-Reference Laboratories in the field of food and feed safety. This would likely lead to a lack of appropriate harmonised analytical methods in the field of food and feed safety, at least in those areas where there is a lack of internationally recognised analytical standard methods and guidelines, which would be especially problematic for disputes related to contamination incidents and for confirmatory analysis in emergency situations. The existing network of EU-RLs has clear advantages over a (counterfactual) situation without an EU system for developing new analytical methods in the field of food and feed safety and for contributing to the harmonisation and improvement of analysis and providing confirmatory analysis in emergency situations. Since the existing system of EU-RLs builds on the long-standing expertise of existing laboratories in very diverse fields of expertise, it can also reasonably be assumed that the current system is more effective than a (hypothetical) central EU-RL responsible for all tasks currently performed by the EU-RLs in various EU Member States could possibly be.

4.3. Efficiency of EU funding

Efficiency is *doing things right*.[37] Or put differently: Efficiency reflects a relationship between inputs needed or used and outputs provided. In this evaluation input is measured by referring to funds provided by the EU and the host organisations and, where applicable, fees generated. Outputs are measured in all relevant categories: development of analytical methods, production of SOPs and standard/reference materials, organisation of proficiency tests and workshops, training activities, answers to DG SANCO's requests for information, and publication and presentation of scientific papers. All outputs are measured as outputs per 1 million Euro EU funding received[38] (for details, see Table 17).

4.3.1. Input-based versus output-based budgeting and controlling of EU-RLs

Generally speaking, there are two generic approaches to budgeting and controlling activities, which are relevant when considering efficiency: input-based and output-based.

Input-based budgeting takes into account the resource needs of a laboratory; these needs reflect the expected contributions of an EU-RL to EU policy objectives, for instance through the development, validation and assessment of methods, the organisation of workshops and proficiency tests and the provision of answers to requests for information from the Commission. Input-based measures for allocating resources are often used where tasks occur irregularly (for instance, in crisis management or if the ability to react to unforeseen events is important), creative tasks are included (for instance, development of new analytical methods) or high levels of accuracy or safety are required. With regard to controlling the efficiency of institutions, the main problem for the funding institution is that it needs to develop a deep understanding of the relevance of the tasks performed and the "production technology" of the EU-RLs and the input-output relationships (or transformation processes) in EU-RLs determined by this technology when negotiating or deciding on adequate budgets and assessing the efficiency of EU-RLs.[39] This is the more difficult the more complex the tasks to be funded and controlled are and the more volatile the external environment and, as a consequence, the more diverse the situations under which task accomplishment takes place are.[40]

An *output-based* (or performance-based) funding and controlling system uses actual performance as starting points for budgeting decisions and assessing efficiency. Budgets are calculated on a monetary unit (for instance, Euro) per performance unit (for instance, organisation of a workshop) basis. On the one hand, this has the advantage that the funding organisation does not need deep insights into the "production technology" of a reference laboratory. On the other hand, the use of performance indicators (such as number of workshops organised) as starting points for funding decisions and efficiency assessment is only possible if several criteria are met:[41]

[37] Drucker 1993.

[38] Outputs per 1 million Euro EU funding received are calculated by dividing the absolute output numbers for a specific EU-RL (as listed in the technical annexes of the individual evaluation reports) during the evaluation period by the amount of EU funding received in the same period, in million Euro. This approach allows for taking into account different levels of support received by different EU-RLs.

[39] See Ouchi 1977.

[40] See Theuvsen 2001.

[41] See Merchant 1985 and Theuvsen 2001.

- Outputs are measurable, i.e. can be counted (for instance, number of workshops or proficiency tests organised).
- Tasks occur on a regular basis and the demand for a task does not depend on chance or on uncontrollable external events (such as the outbreak of an animal disease, the occurrence of a food crisis or a request by DG SANCO).
- EU-RLs have an influence on their output, i.e. it is possible (and allowed) to increase, for instance, the number of workshops, participants in workshops or proficiency tests.
- Outputs can be compared over time and between different EU-RLs. This means that the "organisation of a workshop" always requires (nearly) the same amount of resources regardless of when an EU-RL organises a workshop or which EU-RL organises a workshop. If this condition is not met, it has to be possible to define criteria that reflect the (varying) need of resources (for instance, number of participants).
- The quality of outputs is irrelevant or the funding institution can control for the quality of the outputs of the EU-RLs.

If these conditions are met and output-based budgeting and performance assessment works well, the performance indicators are able to provide an equivalent to the discipline of the market in the private sector.[42]

Many tasks performed by EU-RLs, however, do not meet the requirements mentioned above. Tasks are diverse and cannot easily be compared over time and between different EU-RLs. Some tasks are difficult to measure since they include creativity and the need to create something new, for instance the development of new analytical methods. Last but not least, quality is highly relevant, some of the tasks depend on chance, and an expansion of outputs is not possible due to, for instance, time and budget restrictions of NRLs. Therefore, simple output-based budgeting does not appear to be feasible with regard to EU-RLs (however, this does not imply that performance indicators cannot be used for the budgeting process, see section 5.2, recommendation 6 on the importance of strengthening elements of output-based funding and creating a flexible funding mechanism).

4.3.2. Output indicators of EU-RLs

It can be concluded from this overview of generic approaches for input-based and output-based budgeting that it is not possible to easily assess the efficiency of the existing network of EU-RLs by calculations of simple performance figures. This is confirmed when the actual output data is scrutinised. Table 17 below presents the median and the 25th and 75th percentiles of the outputs provided by the EU-RLs per 1 million Euro of EU funding. The numbers calculated reflect large differences between the various EU-RLs and groups of EU-RLs. These differences are due to the diverse tasks of the various reference laboratories. Therefore, the numbers cannot reliably be used as performance indicators for assessing specific laboratories. In-depth analyses of the data per EU-RL conducted by the evaluation team revealed that there are no inefficient EU-RLs in the sense that they are in the 25th percentile of all categories of outputs. Where outliers can be observed, they cannot easily be interpreted as efficiency deficits, and are often compensated by outputs in other areas.

[42] McGill 2001.

Table 17: Output indicators of EU-RLs per 1,000,000 Euro EU funding (total for 2006 – 2010)

	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Number of analytical methods developed/ validated/assessed	3.5	5.5	8.4
Number of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) produced	1.9	3.8	6.0
Number of standard/reference materials produced	3.7	5.1	8.2
Number of proficiency tests organised	4.2	5.9	8.0
Number of workshops organised	3.0	4.1	5.0
Number of participating NRLs in workshops	82.8	100.3	120.6
Number of participants in workshops	124.5	162.9	215.1
Number of very complex requests from SANCO	2.5	4.5	12.5
Number of fairly complex requests from SANCO	1.7	2.6	4.3
Number of simple requests from SANCO	2.6	7.4	12.6
Number of scientific papers published	5.7	7.5	19.0
Number of scientific papers presented	6.7	17.5	26.8

Source: Civic Consulting based on EU-RL data.
Notes: Outputs per 1 million Euro EU funding received are calculated by dividing the absolute output numbers for a specific EU-RL (as listed in the technical annexes of the individual evaluation reports) during the evaluation period by the amount of EU funding received in the same period, in million Euro. This approach allows for taking into account different levels of support received by different EU-RLs.

4.3.3. General assessment of efficiency of EU-RLs network

Whether EU funding to the network of EU-RLs is used efficiently, can be assessed at three levels:

5. *Scrutinising empirical data on output indicators*. This has already been done in the previous section. The limitations discussed, however, do not allow a firm conclusion other than that no obvious outliers in terms of outputs provided by individual EU-RLs per 1 million Euro of EU funding exist;
6. *Confirming fulfilment of contractual obligations (including tasks outlined in annual work programmes) by EU-RLs.* This is an important efficiency indicator for input-based budgeting, as the budgets allocated take into account the resource needs of a laboratory, and according to the detailed rules in place for the granting of EU financial assistance to EU-RLs, financial contributions from the EU are granted for the implementation of an annual work programme on the condition that the activities are efficiently carried out as foreseen in the work programme and that the beneficiary supplies all required information within certain time limits. Whenever a specific task was not completed (e.g. a analytical method was not finally developed, as envisaged in the work programme), this has to be justified by the EU-RL to the

Commission. In the case that the tasks are not executed in a satisfactory manner, the financial contribution of the EU is not fully paid. Through this process an ex-post control of the use of resources is provided. During the evaluation period, all annual reports by the EU-RLs evaluated have been accepted, indicating that all tasks foreseen have been implemented or – if changes to the programmes were needed – they have been accepted by the Commission as being appropriate.

7. *Comparing the status quo with a counterfactual situation and other available benchmarks.* This approach compares the current decentralised EU-RL network, which consists of specialised EU-RLs that are embedded in existing national laboratories in their respective field of expertise (the hosting organisations), with a counterfactual situation in which (a) No EU-RLs were existing or (b) One centralized EU-RL would be operated by the EU, which would be responsible for all tasks currently assigned to the EU-RLs in various EU Member States. In addition, an alternative scenario (c) between these two extremes is considered, where an existing network of laboratories in Canada, which has recently been evaluated, is used as a benchmark.

   Alternative (a) does not need to be considered in depth, because the implications of a lack of conformity in analytical methods in official controls in the area of food and feed can be grave. For example, a lack of conformity could lead to (unjustified) restrictions for food or feed imports that are found to be contaminated by official controls in one EU country, but this finding is not uphold by official laboratories in all other EU countries. A lack of conformity can increase differences in policy choices of competent authorities when addressing food alerts, crisis or scares, and may even lead to such scares which potentially cause large losses for both the private sector and the public sector (e.g. if food has to be destroyed because of possibly unjustified findings of official laboratories that use inconsistent and unharmonised analytical methods). These potential losses to the economy are very likely to significantly outweigh the EU contribution of about 8 million Euros per year to the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed.

   Alternative (b), however, deserves more detailed consideration. When comparing the efficiency of EU funding to the existing network of EU-RLs with the (counterfactual) situation of funding one centralized EU-RL operated by the EU and responsible for all tasks currently assigned to the EU-RLs in various EU Member States, three major advantages of the current situation can be identified:

   - First, EU-RLs are established where already experienced and well-established national laboratories exist. As a consequence, EU-RLs benefit from the experience and knowledge already there;
   - Second, the EU funding only covers the basic needs of the EU-RLs. In these cases the host organisations often contribute to the operations of the EU-RLs by, for instance, enabling access to state-of-the-art laboratory equipment, providing administrative (for instance, financial management) and housing services, supporting the organisation of workshops (for instance, through offering intense hands-on training by trained technicians), covering parts of the consumables, generating/collecting datasets for the EU-RL datapool (for instance, about analytical properties of various

pesticides including recovery rates from various spiked commodities) and sharing depreciation costs of laboratory equipment. As a consequence, there are indications that EU-RLs are currently not really run on a full-cost basis but benefit from positive side-effects that result from being attached to a well-functioning laboratory infrastructure;

- Third, the close collaboration between the EU-RLs and the various host organisations ensures fast reactions to emergency problems such as in the case of PCP in guar gum, amitraz in pear, chlormequat in grapes, or isofenphos-methyl in sweet peppers.

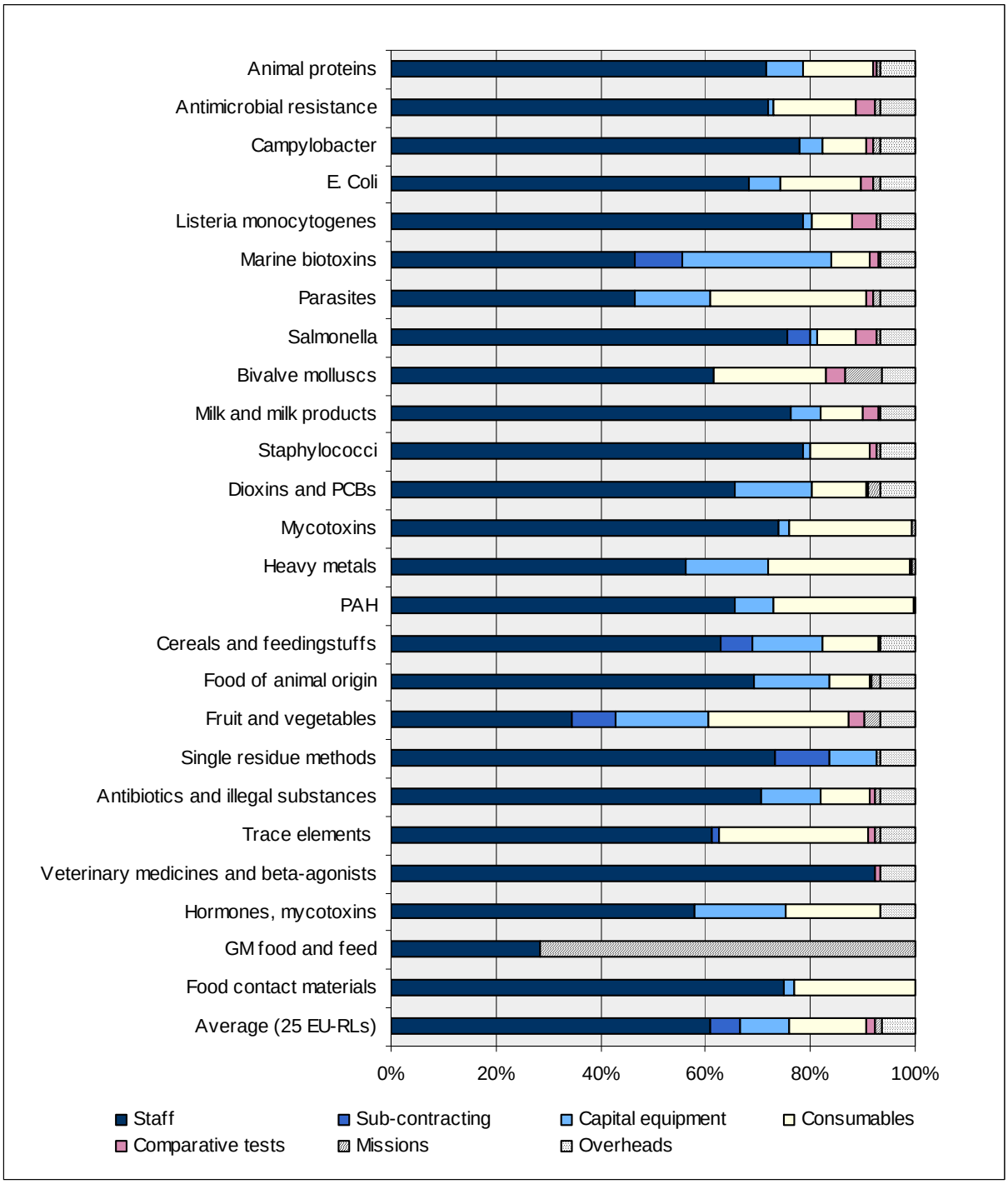
These advantages that accrue to the current system based on national host organisations would be lost if a centralized approach under direct EU control would be established. In this case, the establishment of a full-fledged laboratory infrastructure would be required. It can be assumed that this would result in reduced cost efficiency since economies of scale and scope as well as learning curve effects stemming from the combination with existing laboratories would get lost.

On the other hand, there are also potential disadvantages of a decentralized solution as the current network of EU-RLs, which may reduce cost efficiency. The most important potential disadvantage is a possible lack of coordination of activities. Gaps and overlaps may occur, which could reduce efficiency. The evaluation has identified several potential overlaps and gaps, which are separately analysed in the next section.

Alternative (c) uses the results of an evaluation of the National Integrated Pathogen Surveillance (C-EnterNet) Programme commissioned by the Public Health Agency of Canada, which includes an overview of the allocation of costs for a network of relevant laboratories, as a benchmark.[43] This can be compared with the allocation of EU funding in the case of the EU-RLs according to the categories of eligible expenditures, as presented in the financial reports of the EU-RLs and graphically presented for the year 2009 in Figure 10 below. The figure reveals that staff costs absorb the largest share of EU funding (67% of EU funding on average), followed by expenditures for consumables (14% of EU funding on average). Only a few EU-RLs in the field of food and feed report the use of EU funding to cover the costs of services delivered by sub-contractors. Funding of direct costs for proficiency tests and for missions also represents a low share of the total EU funding (1% of total EU funding for proficiency tests and for missions, respectively). EU funding is more often used for capital equipment, absorbing 9% of total EU funding on average. 6% of total EU funding is used to cover overheads.

[43] See Government Consulting Services (GCS) 2009. The C-EnterNet Programme is designated to support activities to reduce the burden of enteric disease in Canada through sentinel site surveillance.

Figure 10: Funding received by EU-RLs in the field of food and feed safety from DG SANCO in 2009 (in Euro)



Source: Financial reports of EU-RLs. Note: The EU-RL for feed additives has not used the possibility of using any financial contribution granted under Commission Regulation (EC) No 1754/2006.

When the expenditures of the EU-RLs as presented in the previous figure are compared with data of the National Integrated Pathogen Surveillance (C-EnterNet) Programme, the following differences can be noted:

- EU-RLs in the area of food and feed use *more* EU funding to cover staff costs working on scientific activities of the EU-RLs (67% of EU funding for EU-RLs in the field of food and feed on average, compared to 39% for the C-EnterNet Programme).
- EU-RLs in the area of food and feed use *less* EU funding to cover overheads. The C-EnterNet Programme evaluation finds that overall indirect costs[44] for the Programme represent 31% of total programme expenses, compared to 6% for the EU-RLs. Overheads (including expenses on administration, business travel other than missions, and secretarial services) covered by EU funding are calculated at a flat rate of 7% of the direct costs, but not all EU-RLs have charged them to the Commission.[45]

The C-EnterNet programme and the network of EU-RLs covered by this evaluation have very different scopes (i.e human enteric disease vs. food and feed safety respectively), and the financial data for the Canadian network relates to 2006/7, whereas the data for the EU-RL network relates to 2009. In addition, the two networks use different definitions of the costs which are not associated directly with the services that they offer ('indirect costs' vs 'overheads').[46] Although it is therefore not possible to draw definitive conclusions, the available evidence appears to indicate that a higher proportion of funding is used to finance activities of the EU-RLs which directly support NRLs (such as development of analytical methods, proficiency tests etc.), as is the case in example of the Canadian network.

4.4. Overlaps and synergy potentials

<u>Evaluation questions:</u> In view of the policy objectives referred to above, can synergies between different EU-RLs be increased? Are there overlaps between different laboratories?

"Synergy" refers to an increase in the value of assets as a result of their combination. The term was introduced into management literature by Igor Ansoff who distinguished, with regard to business activities, between sales, operations, investment and managerial synergies.[47] Synergies describe a potential to increase the efficiency of operations by combining activities where "sharing has the potential to reduce cost if the cost of a value activity is driven by economies of scale, learning or the pattern of capacity utilization".[48]

[44] The evaluation of the C-EnterNet Programme defines indirect costs as "costs not directly linked to program components. They include accommodation, office expenses, management costs including the salaries of managers and assistants, and other program support". Direct costs are those that "link directly to one or more of the [..] major components of the programme, to the development of publications, or to the operation of the C-EnterNet Advisory Committee. They include related salaries, employee benefits, expenses and contracts".

[45] See Commission Regulation (EC) No 1754/2006 of 28 November 2006 laying down detailed rules for the granting of Community financial assistance to Community reference laboratories for feed and food and the animal health sector.

[46] The evaluation of the C-EnterNet Programme defines these costs as 'indirect costs' (see footnote 44 for a definition) whereas Commission Regulation (EC) No 1754/2006 (see footnote 45) defines these costs as 'overheads' (i.e. expenses on administration, business travel other than missions, and secretarial services). 'Indirect costs' and 'overheads' (as defined by the Government Consulting Services of Cananda and by the EU, respectively) differ slightly and are, therefore, not directly comparable.

[47] Ansoff 1965.

[48] Porter 1985, p. 328.

Synergies have turned out to be a major driver of the reorganisation of business activities in industry and service sectors as well as in private and public organisations.

The EU-RLs are tools to implement policies which are addressed to manage specific hazards. Therefore, EU-RLs primarily work on specific hazards in specific domains with regard to contaminants, pathogens or residues. In doing so, matrices and analytical methods are necessary although, to some degree, secondary aspects. Nonetheless, as a consequence, three *potential* areas for identifying synergies can be distinguished:

8. EU-RLs address the same hazards (contaminants, pathogens, residues, etc.): This situation may imply a duplication of efforts. But even where no duplication of efforts occurs, addressing the same contaminants, pathogens, residues, etc. can mean that very similar laboratory equipment is required, similar training is needed or similar training has to be provided to NRLs. Such similarities can provide an opportunity to reduce costs or increase the quality of work by sharing or coordinating these activities between the EU-RLs involved.
9. EU-RLs analyse the same food or feed products or matrices: Synergies can occur where food- or feed-related information can be shared or the same food or feed products or matrices require similar equipment or training that could be purchased or provided in a coordinated way.
10. EU-RLs apply the same analytical methods: Similar to 2., synergies can be realised where similar equipment or training is needed. Joint purchasing and training provide potentials to reduce costs or increase the efficiency and quality of operations.

The potential overlaps described above indicate synergy potentials, i.e. potentially untapped opportunities for increasing the efficiency of operations. The existence of such potentials can imply:

- A *reorganisation* of activities (for instance, a merger of two EU-RLs) if a clear duplication of efforts exists that increases costs,
- A (better) *coordination* of activities where a merger seems inadequate but coordination has the potential to share experience (for instance, with regard to training needs), improve the effectiveness of EU-RLs (for instance, through the set-up of a joint website) or reduce costs (for instance, through the organisation of joint training sessions).

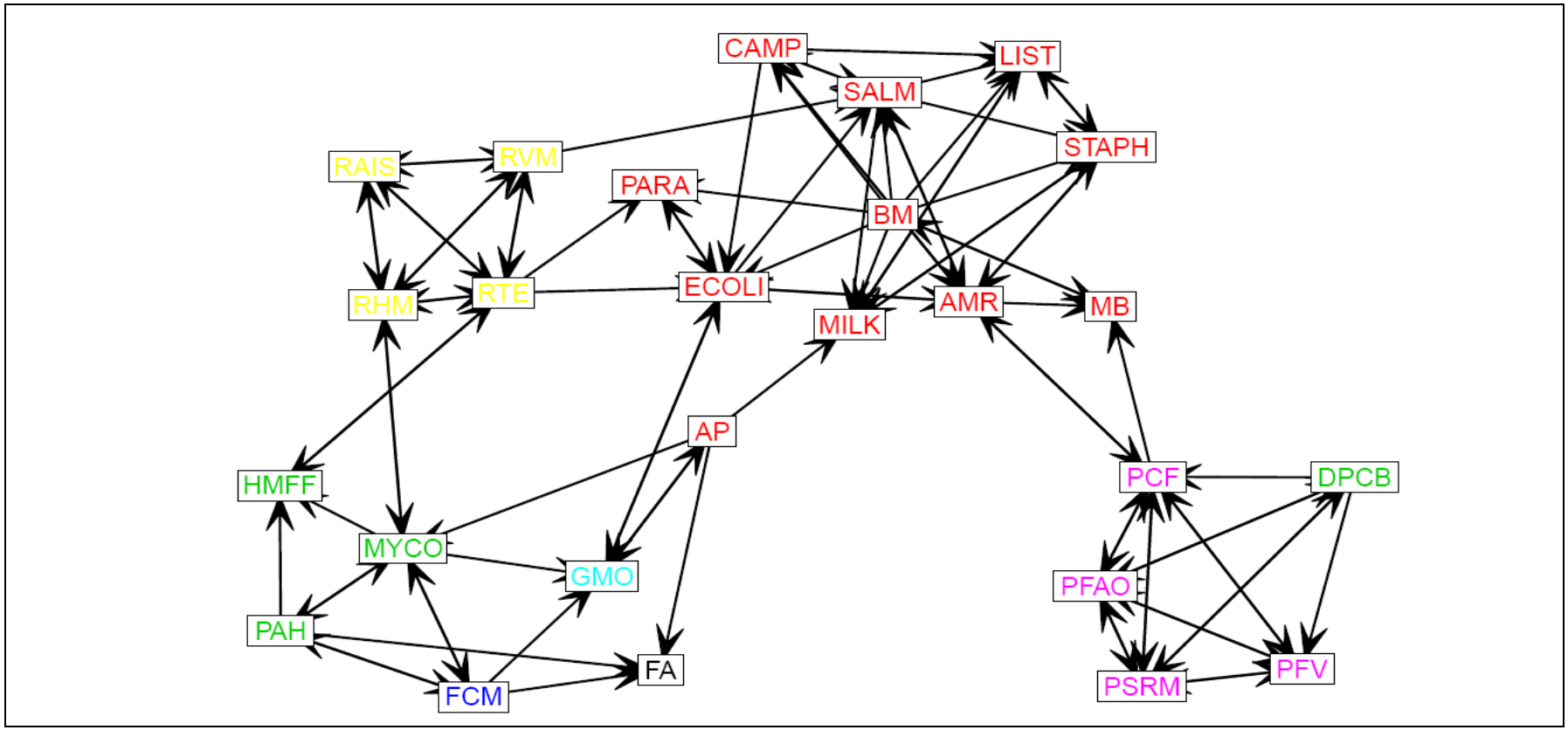
Where synergy potentials are tapped, synergies will occur. Nonetheless, it has to be taken into account that the realisation of these potentials implies costs (for instance, the time, money and efforts needed for coordinating activities between EU-RLs). Only if the expected increase in efficiency through a reorganisation or better coordination of activities are larger than the reorganisation or coordination costs that will occur, tapping synergy potentials makes sense from an economic perspective. Therefore, none of the three reasons mentioned above implies by default the need to change the work of EU-RLs. This is most likely where secondary aspects such as matrices or analytical methods are involved that are not in the major focus of EU-RLs.

A starting point for identifying synergy potentials is the analysis of current interactions between EU-RLs. Overlaps with regard to products or matrices; or methods; or contaminants, pathogens, residues, etc. can be assumed where intensive interactions between EU-RLs take

place. One reason could be that overlaps require intensive coordination and, therefore, are factors contributing to more intensive interactions.

Figure 11 on the following page depicts current interactions between EU-RLs in the field of food and feed, based on EU-RL data. The figure is based on the answers of EU-RLs to the question: “Does your EU-RL exchange information/collaborate with other EU-RLs?”.

Figure 11: Current interactions between EU-RLs in the field of food and feed as reported by EU-RLs



Source: Civic Consulting based on survey of EU-RLs (responses of EU-RLs to question 15a. Does your EU-RL exchange information/collaborate with other EU-RLs?)

Notes:

EU-RLs in the field of pesticides (in pink): PCF (pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff); PFAO (pesticides in food of animal origin); PSRM (pesticide analysis using single residue methods); PFV (and pesticides in fruits and vegetables)

EU-RLs in the field of residues (in yellow): RVM (residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists); RTE (residues of trace elements); RHM (residues of hormones and mycotoxins); and RAIS (residues of antimicrobials and dyes).

EU-RLs in the field of biological risks (in red): CAMP (*Campylobacter*); SALM (*Salmonella*); LIST (*Listeria monocytogenes*); BM (bivalve molluscs); MB (marine biotoxins); PARA (parasites); ECOLI (*E. coli*); MILK (milk and milk products); AMR (antimicrobial resistance); STAPH (*Staphylococci*); and AP (animal proteins).

EU-RLs in the field of contaminants: HMFF (heavy metals in food and feed); MYCO (mycotoxins); PAH (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons); DPCB (dioxins and PCBs)

EU-RLs in other fields: FA (feed additives, in black); FCM (food contact materials, in dark blue); and GMO (genetically modified food and feed, in light blue)

Figure 11 reveals that there are currently four clusters:[49]

- *Pesticides-RL cluster (in pink):* EU-RLs for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, pesticides in food of animal origin, pesticide analysis using single residue methods, and pesticides in fruits and vegetables, plus (in the field of contaminants) the EU-RL for dioxins and PCBs (in green)
- *Residues-RL cluster (in yellow):* EU-RLs for residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists, residues of trace elements, residues of hormonal growth promoter, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin, and residues of antimicrobials and dyes.
- *Biological risks-RL cluster (in red):* EU-RLs for *Campylobacter*, *Salmonella*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, bivalve molluscs, marine biotoxins, parasites, *E. coli*, milk and milk products, antimicrobial resistance, *Staphylococci* and animal proteins.
- *A mixed cluster*, consisting of three EU-RLs for contaminants (EU-RLs for heavy metals in food and feed, mycotoxins, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons; in green), the EU-RL for genetically modified food and feed (in light blue), the EU-RL for food contact materials (in dark blue) and the EU-RL for feed additives (in black).

In all cases, interactions between cluster members are significantly more intensive than interaction between different clusters.

4.4.1. Overlaps and synergy potentials in the field of pesticides

There are currently four EU-RLs for residues of pesticides:

- EU-RL for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, hosted by the National Food Institute, Denmark;
- EU-RL for pesticides in food of animal origin and commodities with high fat content hosted by the *Chemisches und Veterinäruntersuchungsamt* (CVUA) Freiburg, Germany;
- EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables, including commodities with high water and high acid content, hosted by the *Laboratorio Agrario de la Generalitat Valenciana* (LAGV), Spain;
- EU-RL for single residue methods hosted by the *Chemisches und Veterinäruntersuchungsamt* (CVUA) Stuttgart, Germany.

The evaluation indicated the following overlaps and synergy potentials with regard to EU-RLs for residues of pesticides:

(1) The EU-RLs for pesticides in fruits and vegetables and pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff both cover matrices of plant origin

Pesticide residues is a very broad area since more than 1,200 active substances are used worldwide in and on many different crops. The large number of active substances and crops both contribute to the high complexity of residue analyses. Against this background, the

[49] The two EU-RLs in the field of animal health that were subject to this evaluation are considered separately, see Part III of this report.

harmonisation of methods is of minor relevance; instead, the harmonisation of results, independently from the methods a laboratory applies, is paramount. This objective is currently achieved through the development of analytical quality control guidelines and running proficiency tests. In the field of pesticides, NRLs develop their own standard operating procedures (SOPs) on the basis of quality control guidelines developed by the four EU-RLs in this field. This guidance document describes the method validation and analytical quality control requirements to support the validity of the SOPs applied by the laboratories.[50] As explained by the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides, laboratories do not have to use prescribed SOPs; they can use any SOP as long as they fulfil the quality control criteria. This performance-based approach is laid down in Regulation (EC) No 396/2005.

Due to the high complexity of residue analyses, there is a certain need for specialisation on crops or materials analysed. For example, fruits and vegetables, which are often low-fat, are very different matrices compared to samples with high fat content. Nonetheless, NRLs repeatedly refer to overlaps between pesticides in fruits and vegetables and pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff with regard to the application of the same methods. This indicates that the need for specialisation with regard to, on the one side, fruits and vegetables and, on the other side, cereals and feedingstuff might be lower than, for instance, the need to specialize in matrices with high fat content such as food of animal origin. Therefore, the overlap between the EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables and pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff with regard to residues and matrices analysed may indicate a synergy potential that could be exploited.

(2) Potential overlap between the EU-RL for pesticide analysis using single residue methods and the EU-RLs for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, pesticides in fruits and vegetables, and pesticides in food of animal origin

Single residue methods are designed to measure a single analyte and, in many cases, its toxic metabolites and transformation products, whereas multi-residue methods can determine various pesticides in a single run. Due to the large number of pesticides and their wide range of relevant characteristics, multi-residue methods are widely used for purposes of monitoring quality, safety and productivity.[51] Since the single-residue methods are used for the analysis of various food and feed products, including fruits, vegetables and cereals, there is a kind of natural overlap between pesticide analysis using single residue methods and the other EU-RLs for residues of pesticides. This overlap has been observed frequently by the various stakeholders.[52] This overlap makes sense as long as specific tasks such as the development and further refinement of single-residue methods are concerned which are more in the focus of the EU-RL for pesticide analysis using single residue methods than in the focus of the other EU-RLs. In this case, the overlap is a precondition for improving state-of-the-art methods and contributes to the effectiveness of EU-RLs for residues of pesticides. Furthermore, the overlap is currently well recognised and coordinated in the sense that joint workshops are organised, a steady information exchange has been established, and the division of responsibilities is constantly clarified in order to avoid repetitive work and other duplications. Furthermore, a

[50] See "Method validation and quality control procedures for pesticide residues analysis in food and feed", available at: http://www.eurl-pesticides.eu/library/docs/fv/guidefinalversion.pdf.

[51] Ismail et al. 2010; Steinborn et al. 2010.

[52] For example, by the Commission official responsible for the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides as well as by several NRLs in this field.

common website for the four EU RLs has been established that warrants a separate zone to each of the EU-RLs. The overlap only reflects a synergy potential if the same tasks are performed by the EU-RL for pesticide analysis in single residue methods and the EU-RLs for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, for pesticides in fruits and vegetables, and for pesticides in food of animal origin. This could be the case with regard to the organisation of proficiency tests. For example, one NRL that responded to the survey noted that, given the limited resources of the NRLs, the costs of being involved in several proficiency tests due to the overlaps between the EU-RL for pesticide analysis using single residue methods and other EU-RLs are high.

(3) Potential overlap between the EU-RL for pesticides in food of animal origin and the EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables

The evaluation has revealed an overlap between the EU-RL for pesticides in food of animal origin and the EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables as far as food products with high fat content are concerned. This indicates a synergy potential stemming from the use of the same methods and the analyses of similar matrices in two different EU-RLs.

To address overlaps and synergy potentials of EU-RLs in the field of pesticides, several options for improvement are presented in section 5.1.

4.4.2. Overlaps and synergy potentials in the field of residues

There are currently four EU-RLs for residues:

- EU-RL for antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin, hosted by the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety (ANSES) Residues Fougeres, France;
- EU-RL for residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists hosted by the *Bundesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit*, Germany;
- EU-RL for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin hosted by RIKILT Institute of Food Safety, part of Wageningen University and Research Centre, The Netherlands;
- EU-RL for residues of trace elements hosted by the *Istituto Superiore di Sanità*, Italy.

The evaluation indicated the following overlaps and synergy potentials with regard to EU-RLs for residues:

(1) All four EU-RLs in the cluster cover residues

Despite the differences between the products and matrices analysed and the methods applied by the four EU-RLs, there is a common focus on residues. Furthermore, the EU-RL for residues of antimicrobials and dyes and the EU-RL for veterinary medicine and beta-agonists both cover veterinary medicines. In general these overlaps are well recognized and coordinated, for instance between the EU-RL for residues of antimicrobials and dyes and the EU-RL for veterinary medicine and beta-agonists. Nonetheless, there might be more relevant synergy potentials that could be tapped through a more intensive coordination between the

EU-RLs under evaluation, for instance in the field of communication with NRLs and ONLs and the wider public through a joint website.[53]

(2) The EU-RLs for residues in antimicrobials and dyes and the EU-RL for feed additives both cover feed additives

Some feed additives are under the scope of the EU-RL for feed additives whereas banned antimicrobial feed additives such as tylosin and spiramycin are under the scope of the EU-RL for residues of antimicrobials and dyes. As reported by one of the EU-RLs, this overlap would need to be clarified in the future.

(3) The EU-RL for residues of trace elements and the EU-RL for heavy metals in food and feed both cover heavy metals

The EU-RL for residues of trace elements is responsible for chemical elements in food products of animal origin such as milk, honey, cheese, salmon etc. The EU-RL for heavy metals in food and feed deals with chemical elements in food of vegetable origin, feed and wild caught fish. So both EU-RLs deal with the same analytes in different matrices. This overlap is most notable with regard to fish since the EU-RL for residues of trace elements is responsible for farmed fish whereas the EU-RL for heavy metals in food and feed has the responsibility for wild caught fish. The overlap is due to the current legislation on heavy metals:

- The EU-RL for heavy metals (hosted by the Joint Research Centre, Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements – JRC IRMM) deals with heavy metals in food and feed under Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006[54] (food) and Directive 2002/32/EC[55] (undesirable substances in feed). Maximum levels for products of animal origin are also established in Regulation (EC) No. 1881/2006.
- The EU-RL for residues of trace elements (hosted by the *Istituto Superiore di Sanità - ISS*) deals with heavy metals in food of animal origin under Directive 96/23/EC.[56] While the main focus of the Directive is on controls for residues of veterinary medicinal products in products of animal origin, controls for some contaminants in products of animal origin are also regulated in this Directive.

This overlap of legislation in some cases leads to a duplication of efforts, especially for the NRLs. Several of the NRLs belong to the networks of the EU-RL for residues of trace elements and the EU-RL for heavy metals so that these NRLs have to attend the workshops and participate in the proficiency tests organised by both EU-RLs. In countries where the same two NRLs belong to both networks, these NRLs have sometimes decided that one of them attends one of the workshops and the other NRL the other workshop, although both EU-RLs do invite all NRLs of their network to participate in the workshops. In these cases both NRLs miss one of the workshops and get second-hand information regarding the topics discussed.

[53] As noted by a Commission official.

[54] See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:364:0005:0024:EN:PDF

[55] See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/pri/en/oj/dat/2002/l_140/l_14020020530en00100021.pdf.

[56] See http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/residues/council_directive_96_23ec.pdf

In addition, the overlap regarding matrices of fish origin has several other disadvantages:

- In some cases there were conflicting views regarding whether the EU-RL for residues of trace elements or the EU-RL for heavy metals was responsible for a certain issue. This was illustrated by a dispute between two Member States regarding the levels of cadmium found in crabs, where the question arose which one of the two EU-RLs should deal with the Commission's request for assistance.
- NRLs of the network of the EU-RL for heavy metals which do not belong to the network of the EU-RL for residues of trace elements sometimes request a proficiency test for the determination of heavy metals in liver, milk, or honey from the EU-RL for heavy metals. In this case, this EU-RL has to redirect this request because those matrices belong to the mandate of the EU-RL for residues of trace elements.

In general, although the cooperation between the EU-RL for residues of trace elements and the EU-RL for heavy metals is reported to be good, there are problems which are inherent in the existence of two EU-RLs dealing with the same analytes but in different matrices and, therefore, cannot be completely solved, as one of the EU-RLs pointed out.

To address overlaps and synergy potentials of EU-RLs in the field of residues, several options for improvement are presented in section 5.1.

4.4.3. Overlaps and synergy potentials in the field of contaminants

The EU has nominated four EU-RLs for contaminants:

- EU-RL for heavy metals in food and feed hosted by the Joint Research Centre - Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (JRC-IRMM), Belgium;
- EU-RL for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) hosted by the Joint Research Centre - Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (JRC-IRMM), Belgium;
- EU-RL for mycotoxins hosted by the Joint Research Centre - Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (JRC-IRMM), Belgium;
- EU-RL for dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) hosted by the *Chemisches und Veterinäruntersuchungsamt* (CVUA) Freiburg, Germany.

The evaluation indicated the following overlaps and synergy potentials with regard to EU-RLs for contaminants:

(1) The EU-RL for mycotoxins and the EU-RL for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin both work on mycotoxins

The EU-RL for mycotoxins' mandate is on mycotoxins in plant products whereas the EU-RL for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives, and mycotoxins in food of animal origin is responsible for mycotoxins as residues in food of animal origin under Directive 96/23/EC. Since both EU-RLs keep a strict separation of responsibilities and the staff members of both EU-RLs collaborate closely on mycotoxin issues and in EU projects, there is no de facto overlap between both EU-RLs concerning product groups. Despite this clear division of responsibilities and the existing exchange on analytical issues, there is however an overlap with regard to methods applied and hazards addressed. This results in the somewhat awkward situation that, for instance, ochratoxin A is addressed by different EU-RLs

depending on the matrix in which it occurs. However, given that, according to DG SANCO, the presence of mycotoxins in food of animal origin is of minor importance, this does not pose currently a major problem.

(2) The EU-RL for heavy metals in food and feed and the EU-RL for residues of trace elements both cover heavy metals and matrices of fish origin

This overlap has already been discussed in the previous section.

To address overlaps and synergy potentials of EU-RLs in the field of contaminants, several options for improvement are presented in section 5.1.

4.4.4. Overlaps and synergy potentials in the field of biological risks

There are currently eleven EU-RLs nominated for biological risks:

- EU-RL for milk and milk products hosted by *Laboratoire de sécurité des aliments,* Maisons-Alfor, France;
- EU-RL for bivalve molluscs hosted by CEFAS Weymouth Laboratory, United Kingdom;
- EU-RL for marine biotoxins hosted by Marine Biotoxins Laboratory, Spain;
- EU-RL for *Salmonella* hosted by Laboratory for Zoonoses and Environmental Microbiology, The Netherlands.
- EU-RL for *Escherichia coli* hosted by *Istituto Superiore di Sanità,* Italy.
- EU-RL for *Listeria monocytoges* hosted by Laboratory for study and research on quality of foods and food processes, France.
- EU-RL for coagulase positive *Staphylococci*, including *Staphylococcus aureus* hosted by Laboratory for study and research on quality of foods and food processes, France.
- EU-RL for *Campylobacter* hosted by National Veterinary Institute, Sweden.
- EU-RL for parasites hosted by *Istituto Superiore di Sanità*, Italy.
- EU-RL for antimicrobial resistance hosted by National Food Institute, Denmark.
- EU-RL for animal proteins hosted by Walloon Agricultural Research Centre, Belgium.

The evaluation indicated the following overlaps and synergy potentials with regard to EU-RLs for biological risks:

(1) The EU-RL for milk and milk products and the EU-RLs for Salmonella, E. coli, Listeria monocytogenes, Staphylococci, residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin, and for antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin address the same pathogens and contaminants

Due to the importance of milk and milk products from a hygienic point of view, an EU-RL for milk and milk products was created long before other EU-RLs for specific hazards (e.g. EU-RLs for *Staphylococci, E. coli, Listeria monocytogenes)* were added to the EU-RL network. These EU-RLs were established because of the very specific nature of the hazards requiring specific knowledge and expertise. Currently, as EU-RLs exist for both the milk matrix and for

hazards that may be found in it (i.e. EU-RLs for *Salmonella*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, *E. coli*, mycotoxins, *Staphylococci*, and antibiotics), this can create unclear responsibilities and potentially increases the coordination efforts to determine the EU-RL responsible for a particular issue.

(2) The EU-RL for bivalve molluscs and the EU-RL for marine biotoxins both cover a specific food commodity

The EU-RL for bivalve molluscs is responsible for bacteriological and viral contamination of bivalve molluscs, whereas the EU-RL for marine biotoxins has a mandate for marine biotoxins, i.e. toxic compounds produced by phytoplankton or their associated bacteria. This situation creates a synergy potential with regard to the exchange of information on industry practices and the extent of harvesting areas, sampling, monitoring plans, and risk-based approaches to controls.

(3) The EU-RL for antimicrobial resistance deals with the same bacterial species as the EU-RLs for Salmonella, E. coli, Staphylococci, and Campylobacter

Antimicrobial resistance is a horizontal matter that involves various bacterial species such as *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Staphylococci*, methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), and *Campylobacter*. Possible overlaps of responsibilities have been discussed and clarified by these EU-RLs. For example, the EU-RL for *Staphylococci* and the EU-RL for antimicrobial resistance have agreed that the EU-RL for antimicrobial resistance conducts the proficiency tests covering MRSA. However, as reported by the EU-RLs specialised in microbiology, synergies could be further increased with regard to e.g. proficiency testing, database development dedicated to strain profiles for epidemiological surveillance, training on molecular methods, collaboration on evaluation methods and result interpretation, and the preparation of work programmes and reports. Synergy potentials exist between the EU-RL for antimicrobial resistance and the EU-RLs for *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Staphylococci*, and *Campylobacter* as well as among the latter mentioned EU-RLs.

To address overlaps and synergy potentials of EU-RLs in the field of biological risks, several options for improvement are presented in section 5.1.

4.4.5. Overlaps and synergy potentials in other fields of expertise

The EU has designated three EU-RLs with other areas of expertise:

- EU-RL for feed additives hosted by the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, Germany;
- EU-RL for GM food and feed hosted by the Joint Research Centre - Institute for Health and Consumer Protection, Italy;
- EU-RL for food contact materials hosted by the Joint Research Centre - Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (JRC-IRMM), Belgium.

The evaluation indicated the following overlaps and synergy potentials with regard to EU-RLs in other fields of expertise:

(1) The EU-RL for genetically modified food and feed and other EU-RLs dealing with detection of DNA

The EU-RL for GM food and feed has developed and established expertise in DNA-based detection methods, performance characteristics and validation which, according to the EU-RL, can benefit other EU-RLs dealing with detection of DNA targets of vegetal, animal, or microbial origin. This group includes all EU-RLs involved in the analyses of food-borne diseases where pathogens or contaminations could be detected through DNA-based detection methods.

4.5. Potential new areas

Evaluation question: Are there elements that could recommend the creation of new EU-RLs [or the extension of the area of competence of existing EU-RLs] and if so in which areas?

Potential new areas that could lead to a recommendation to create new EU-RLs or to extend the area of responsibility of existing EU-RLs can be identified by checking whether

a) New contaminants, pathogens, residues, or other hazards have to be analysed,

b) New food or feed products or matrices have come up that have to be analysed, or

c) New analytical methods or processing technologies have been developed.

In this evaluation, potential new areas have been identified through the combined expertise of Commission officials, EU-RLs, and NRLs. Feedback provided during interviews and in survey responses have indicated several potential new areas that could recommend the creation of new EU-RLs or the extension of the mandate of existing EU-RLs. The evaluation concludes that an appropriate mechanism should be set up to review the potential new areas listed below as well as other areas that may gain relevance in the future, to determine the priority and most appropriate way to cover each area by the EU-RL network (see section 5.2, recommendation 5).

Potential new areas identified by Commission officials, EU-RLs, or NRLs include:

- Processing contaminants such as acrylamide and furan
- Nanoparticles in foods
- Plant toxins, for instance pyrrolizidine alkaloids and tropane alkaloids
- New classes of compounds with hormonal activity
- Food additives, especially for illegal dyes in food items;
- Ectoparasitic agents, for instance amitraz, dicyclanil and others
- Brominated dioxins and biphenyls, and other brominated and fluorinated persistent organic pollutants
- Food-borne viruses
- Histamine (biogenic amines) in seafoods
- Botanical impurities considered as undesirable substances
- Cloned animals

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Evaluation questions: According to the results of the analysis carried out, the contractor shall identify possible problems, challenges and areas for improvement in the current structure of EU-RLs and propose options for improvement. The evaluators shall in particular consider the following issues:

- *How the potential of the EU-RLs to contribute to DG SANCO policy objectives, individually and as a network, could be fully deployed;*
- *How to address potential overlaps of responsibilities and tasks between some EU-RL;*
- *How to ensure that potential synergies between two or more EU-RLs are deployed (please consider the possibility to merge or better coordinate the work of two or several laboratories);*
- *How to ensure the most cost efficient use of EU funding.*

5.1. Summary of the key conclusions of the evaluation

The evaluation of the network of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed has led to the following key conclusions:

1. The EU-RLs subject to this evaluation perform in general adequately and partly excellently. The evaluation has indicated that:
   - ⇒ Assistance to NRLs during the evaluation period has been adequate in order to improve analytical methods and the quality of analytical data generated in the EU;
   - ⇒ Analytical methods and techniques developed, assessed, or validated can be considered responding to state-of-the-art standards and being appropriate to ensure food and feed safety;
   - ⇒ Coordination and training activities carried out such as proficiency tests and workshops have been satisfactory, as have been activities carried out to support the Commission's action, for instance to provide scientific advice and expertise;
   - ⇒ All EU-RLs are assessed to fulfil the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004;
2. There is broad agreement that the system of EU-RLs is an effective way to improve food and feed safety in the EU;
3. EU funding for the decentralised network of EU-RLs is used in a cost efficient manner when compared to the benchmark of a (hypothetical) centralised approach;
4. Overlaps and synergy potentials exist between several EU-RLs. To a certain degree such overlaps are unavoidable in a decentralised network where different issues are addressed by different, specialised reference laboratories. However, the analysis of overlaps revealed a number of issues that deserve attention and provide opportunities to improve the efficiency of the current network of EU-RLs;

5. There are several potential new areas suggested that could lead to a recommendation to create new EU-RLs or to extend the area of responsibility of existing EU-RLs.

Taking into account these conclusions, this section presents six recommendations for improvement to safeguard that the potential of the EU-RLs to contribute to DG SANCO policy objectives could be fully deployed, that overlaps and synergy potential are addressed, and that EU funding is used efficiently, also taking into account that new areas identified might need to be covered by the network in the future.

5.2. Recommendation for improving the EU-RL network

Recommendation 1: Improving coordination by actively promoting the creation of clusters of EU-RLs

Current situation: Within different groups of EU-RLs significant efforts for ensuring coordination are being undertaken. These efforts include, but are not restricted to, joint websites and joint or at least coordinated organisation of workshops. Despite these efforts, further coordination between EU-RLs is possible, for instance with regard to work programmes, method development and validation, training and publication strategies (including joint websites), and harmonisation of approaches.

Recommendation: The evaluation has identified the option to actively promote the creation of clusters of EU-RLs in order to improve coordination between laboratories and avoid duplication of efforts by NRLs. The clustering could be based on the use of similar methods, the analysis of similar matrices, or similar hazards. Clustering can mean, for instance, the organisation of regular meetings (e.g. on a yearly/every two years basis) of representatives of the EU-RLs and relevant Commission officials by clusters, the set-up of joint websites for clusters or sub-clusters, the joint organisation of workshops, or the coordination of proficiency tests. The possibility to develop these coordination activities would need to be assessed case by case for each cluster of EU-RLs. Examples of new coordination activities that were identified include:

- The EU-RLs for residues of antimicrobials and dyes, for veterinary medicines, for hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin, and for trace elements could further improve the collaboration in the residue cluster. Despite the already intensive coordination between the EU-RLs, activities such as the implementation of a joint website (similar to the approach in the pesticide cluster) would be a simple approach for further integration of the communication with NRLs. Another option is the organisation of joint workshops by the EU-RLs in the field of residues to ensure a cost-efficient use of EU funding and to reduce coordination efforts for NRLs. One option is to extend the duration of the workshops to two to three days and by combining sessions which are common to all NRLs (including presentations on new research areas, future challenges and legislative developments) and sessions which address the specific professional needs of the different groups of NRLs.
- It could be considered to strengthen cooperation between the EU-RLs for biological risks. A clustering of activities could help to more intensively coordinate the work of the EU-RLs for antimicrobial resistance, *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Listeria monocytogenes*,

Staphylococci, *Campylobacter*, and milk and milk products with regard to proficiency testing, database development dedicated to strain profiles for epidemiological surveillance, training on molecular methods, collaboration on evaluation methods and result interpretation, and the preparation of work programmes and reports. The EU-RLs for antimicrobial resistance and *Staphylococci* have already done a first step by establishing guidelines such that the EU-RL for antimicrobial resistance conducts work related to susceptibility testing of *Staphylococcus* and MRSA. This can be considered a starting point for more intensive clustering of activities, which could include joint workshops with NRLs belonging to different EU-RLs in the field of biological risks.

- In addition, a clustering and, therefore, better coordination of the various EU-RLs dealing with the detection of DNA targets of vegetal, animal or microbial origin could help to improve efficiency. Since the EU-RL for GM food and feed has developed and established expertise in DNA-based detection methods, performance characteristics and validation, it could play a role in coordinating the exchange of information between the various EU-RLs.

Other possible clusters, such as clusters of EU-RLs working on the same food or feed products, could be imagined. It is therefore recommended to apply a flexible and bottom-up approach for the definition of clusters, which could be proposed by the EU-RLs and formalised in coordination with the Commission and in due consideration of existing relationships and coordination requirements between EU-RLs. It could be considered to provide a separate budget for cluster activities such as joint websites, joint workshops and projects etc. (see also recommendation 6 below).

Recommendation 2: Addressing weaknesses of EU-RLs identified by the evaluation

Current situation: The evaluation has assessed the performance of each of the 26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed based on 72 indicators. In spite of the overall positive results of the evaluation, it has to be noted that 19 EU-RLs have underperformed on at least one indicator. Weaknesses identified include:

- In several cases, activities including the development, assessment, or validation of analytical methods, the distribution of reference materials, and the distribution of SOPs have insufficiently contributed to the improvement and the harmonisation of the analytical methods and to the quality of analytical data generated by the NRLs. This weakness has been identified for four EU-RLs.[57]
- Some EU-RLs did not provide corrective actions and follow up to NRLs that underperformed during Proficiency Tests. This shortcoming was identified for three EU-RLs.[58]
- The tools utilised by some EU-RLs to share information and communicate with NRLs could be improved. For example, the user-friendliness, the quantity and level of detail,

[57] EU-RLs for milk and milk products, pesticides in food of animal origin, pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, residues of trace elements.

[58] EU-RLs for pesticides in food of animal origin, for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, and for residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin.

as well as the update of the information available on the website of some EU-RLs could be enhanced. These aspects are relevant for six EU-RLs.[59]

- A significant number of EU-RLs in the field of food and feed do not collect and summarise the feedback provided by participants in workshops or in ad hoc training activities. This is relevant for 17 EU-RLs.[60]

Recommendation: The evaluation has found that some EU-RLs underperform on several indicators. EU-RLs and Commission officials could develop jointly appropriate actions to address the shortcomings identified.

Recommendation 3: Focusing EU-RL training activities on those NRLs that need it most

Current situation: During the evaluation it was emphasised in various instances that training needs may differ between groups of NRLs, notably between NRLs from some new Member States and candidate countries and NRLs from older Member States.

Recommendation: It could help to efficiently use limited budgets by focussing training activities on those laboratories that need improvement most. For example, ad-hoc training sessions for a limited number of NRLs could be organised outside regular workshops in the EU-RL where a sufficient quality of equipment is guaranteed and training of multiple laboratories would be possible. An alternative approach would be to integrate staff members from the NRLs in need of training for one or two months into the EU-RL's staff groups. Additional funds for extra capacity building and training in EU Member States where NRLs lack expertise and experience could help to bring all NRLs to the same level of expertise (see also option 6 below).

Recommendation 4: Addressing overlaps and synergy potentials of existing EU-RLs

The evaluation has identified the following specific options, addressing the most relevant overlaps and synergy potentials identified in section 4.4.2 above:

Recommendation 4a: Addressing overlaps and synergy potentials of EU-RLs in the field of pesticides

Current situation: In the pesticide cluster, which consists of the four EU-RLs for residues of pesticides, there is a clear overlap between the EU-RL for single residue methods and the other EU-RLs for multi residue methods. Then there are overlaps regarding matrices that occur at two levels: both EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables and EU-RL for pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff work with matrices of plant origin; and both, the EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables and the EU-RL for pesticides in food of animal origin, work with matrices of high fat content.

[59] EU-RLs for *Staphylococci*, residues of trace elements, bivalve molluscs, residues of veterinary medicines and beta-agonists, milk and milk products, and *Listeria monocytogenes*.

[60] EU-RLs for animal proteins, antimicrobial resistance, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *E. Coli*, marine biotoxines, bivalve molluscs, *Staphylococci*, milk and milk products, *Listeria monocytogenes*, residues of trace elements, residues of hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins in food of animal origin, antimicrobial and dye residues in food of animal origin, pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff, pesticides in food of animal origin, food contact materials, and feed additives.

Since the single-residue methods are used for the analysis of various food and feed products, including fruits, vegetables, and cereals, there is a kind of natural overlap between pesticide analysis using single residue methods and the other EU-RLs for residues of pesticides. This overlap has been observed frequently by the various stakeholders. Specific tasks such as the development and further refinement of single residue methods are more in the focus of the EU-RL for pesticide analysis using single residue methods than in the focus of the other EU-RLs. In this case, the overlap is a precondition for improving state-of-the-art methods and contributes to the effectiveness of EU-RLs for residues of pesticides.

The EU-RLs for pesticides in fruits and vegetables and pesticides in cereals and feedingstufs both cover matrices of plant origin. Due to the high complexity of residue analyses, there is a certain need for specialisation on crops or materials analyzed. For example, fruits and vegetables, which are often low fat, are very different matrices compared to samples with high fat content. Nonetheless, NRLs repeatedly refer to overlaps between pesticides in fruits and vegetables and pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff with regard to the application of the same methods. The overlap between the EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables and pesticides in cereals and feedingstuff with regard to residues and matrices analysed may indicate a synergy potential that could be exploited.

The evaluation has also revealed an overlap between the EU-RL for pesticides in food of animal origin and the EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables as far as food products with high fat content are concerned. This indicates a synergy potential stemming from the use of the same methods and analyses of similar matrices in two different EU-RLs.

The overlaps between the EU-RLs mentioned above are well understood and coordinated and, to a certain degree, considered necessary by EU-RLs for methodological reasons. Nonetheless, the current situation leads to a higher coordination effort and higher effort for participating NRLs because some NRLs may need to participate in PTs organised by different EU-RLs. A certain duplication in terms of communication may be occurring, as in several countries contact points for the different EU-RLs are not only the same institutions, but also the same persons in these institutions.

Recommendation: Two approaches for improvement can be identified: a) reducing overlaps by reducing the number of EU-RLs in the area of pesticides, e.g. by merging two EU-RLs in this area or b) a better coordination of activities to further reduce any duplications of activities for NRLs/ONLs that are part of the network of more than one EU-RL.

When reviewing the different options, it is recommended to take into account that the EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables has a special role in the cluster of EU-RLs for pesticides: 71 national laboratories (NRLs/ONLs) that provided an assessment indicated that this is a EU-RL with which the laboratory “mainly cooperates”, compared to between 21 to 33 national laboratories that indicated they “mainly cooperate” with one of the other three EU-RLs. Also, the number of PTs organised by this EU-RL is the highest in the cluster (12 compared to 4 to 7 for the others), and it reported the highest number of Commission requests for expertise and scientific advice (over 400 in the evaluation period). Any possible reorganisation would need to take this prominent role of the EU-RL for pesticides in fruits and vegetables into account.

Recommendation 4b: Addressing overlaps and synergy potentials between the EU-RL for residues of trace elements and the EU-RL for heavy metals

Current situation: The overlap between the EU-RL for residues of trace elements and the EU-RL for heavy metals is a consequence of a so far overlap of legislation (Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 and Directive 1996/23/EC) on heavy metals. The EU-RL for residues of trace elements is responsible for chemical elements in food products of animal origin, whereas the EU-RL for heavy metals deals with food of vegetable origin, feed and wild caught fish. So both EU-RLs deal with the same analytes but in different matrices. An overlap with regard to matrices exists only with regard to heavy metals in fish; the EU-RL for residues of trace elements deals with farmed fish whereas the EU-RL for heavy metals has responsibilities for wild caught fish.

The existing overlap requires additional coordination efforts between both EU-RLs mainly with regard to fish and similar matrices such as crabs where responsibilities are not always clearly defined. A duplication of efforts occurs when NRLs belong to the networks of both EU-RLs. In this case the NRLs have to participate in the workshops and the proficiency tests organised by both EU-RLs. In countries where the same two NRLs belong to both networks, these NRLs have adapted to the current situation by selectively participating in the workshops of the EU-RLs. As a consequence, NRLs get only second-hand information regarding some of the workshops.

Recommendation: An improvement of this situation requires an adaptation of the legal framework; discussions are already underway to repeal requirements on official controls on contaminants currently laid down in Directive 96/23/EC. In this process, the distribution of responsibilities of the two existing EU-RLs could be clarified. Another approach would be the reduction of the number of EU-RLs dealing with heavy metals. If this approach was to be chosen, efforts should be made to avoid that expertise is not lost as the current activities of the EU-RLs are not fully overlapping. When reviewing these options, attention should be paid to the divergent centrality of both EU-RLs in their respective clusters. Only 4 NRLs have indicated in their answer that they “mainly cooperate” with the EU-RL for residues of trace elements, whereas for the EU-RLs for heavy metals, this was indicated by 27 NRLs. Furthermore, the EU-RL for residues of trace elements organised 5 proficiency tests and received 4 requests from DG SANCO during the evaluation period; the numbers for the EU-RL for heavy metals are 11 proficiency tests and 10 requests received from DG SANCO in the same period.

Recommendation 4c: Addressing overlaps and synergy potentials between the EU-RLs for bivalve molluscs and the EU-RL for marine biotoxins

Current situation: In the biological risk cluster, there is an overlap between the EU-RLs for bivalve molluscs and for marine biotoxins since both EU-RLs cover a specific food commodity. This overlap can result in a duplication of efforts and coordinative challenges with regard to the development of sampling and monitoring plans, risk-based approaches to controls, and the use of global information systems for establishing the extent of harvesting areas and sharing knowledge of industry practices. Since seafoods, and in particular live bivalve molluscs, represent a particular challenge for public health protection, this overlap deserves particular attention.

Recommendation: There are again two approaches for the improvement of efficiency with regard to this overlap. One option is to better coordinate the activities of both EU-RLs and increase synergies through the sharing of information on sampling, monitoring and control plans and industry practices and the development of a jointly used information system. A second option is the reduction of the number of EU-RLs in the field of biological risks with regard to seafoods and establish a single EU-RL covering all aspects of seafood safety.

Recommendation 4d: Addressing synergy potentials between the EU-RL for milk and milk products and several other EU-RLs for biological risks

Current situation: Due to the importance of milk and milk products from a hygienic point of view, an EU-RL for milk and milk products was created long before other EU-RLs for specific pathogens (e.g. EU-RLs for *Staphylococci, E. coli, Listeria monocytogenes)* were added to the EU-RL network. These EU-RLs were established because of the very specific nature of the pathogens requiring specific knowledge and expertise. Currently, as EU-RLs exist for both the milk matrix and for hazards that may be found in it, this can create unclear responsibilities and potentially increases the coordination efforts to determine the EU-RL responsible for a particular issue.

Recommendation: It would be helpful to formally clarify the responsibilities of the EU-RLs that deal with the hazards that can be found in milk and milk products and the modes of cooperation between them. One possible approach would be that the EU-RL for milk and milk products formally becomes the central contact point on hygiene of milk and dairy products and advises DG SANCO when milk or a milk product is involved in a sanitary problem, regardless of which pathogen is involved, as has been suggested by this EU-RL. The EU-RL would then coordinate the expertise/investigations to be conducted either by itself or by other EU-RLs. Alternatively, since milk is a significant matrix for *Staphylococci*, the two relatively small EU-RLs for milk and *Staphylococci* could be merged in order to increase synergies, also taking into account that both laboratories are hosted by the same host organisation, in the same location.

Recommendation 5: Creating a mechanism to regularly review the mandates of the existing EU-RLs and the need to create new EU-RLs

Current situation: The designation of EU-RLs is carried out following a defined procedure (adoption of a Commission act) where Member States are involved and where discussions, in the framework of policy implementation, take place. The role and tasks of EU-RLs are defined in the EU legislation and annual budgets of EU-RLs are discussed and endorsed by the MS.

The need for an EU-RL in a specific field of expertise depends on a variety of factors. These include:

- Emergence of new contaminants, pathogens, residues, etc.;
- Emergence of new food or feed products or matrices;
- Development of new analytical methods or processing technologies;
- Availability of internationally approved standards and guidelines;
- Evidence for EU level problems related to unharmonised analytical methods.

Because of the time dependence of these factors, the areas covered by EU-RLs need regular assessment and fine-tuning where necessary. This is evidenced by the existing overlaps and synergy potentials described above, and also by the list of potential new areas presented in section 4.5. The mandates of the existing EU-RLs and issues such as the creation of new EU-RLs are discussed at a working level at DG SANCO and, where relevant, with other relevant bodies such as EFSA and Member States. It could be considered to formalise this process and to conduct more formal regular reviews of the mandates of the existing EU-RLs and the need to create new EU-RLs.

Recommendation: The European Commission could develop a mechanism for more formal regular reviews of the mandates of the existing EU-RLs and the need to create new EU-RLs. One option would be that an EU-RL advisory board is created to assess increased or decreased food and feed safety relevance of areas covered and not covered by EU-RLs. This advisory board, which would be chaired by the Commission, could include representatives of all SANCO units responsible for EU-RLs, representatives of each EU-RL cluster, selected NRLs and Member States representatives as well as representatives of EFSA, if needed supported by EFSA's scientific panels. The advisory board would regularly (e.g. annually) review mandates, activities and structures of EU-RLs and prepare recommendations regarding the possible need to extend the field of competence of existing EU-RLs or the creation of a new EU-RL. Alternatively, an internal working group of DG SANCO could be formally set up to take on this task across all SANCO units responsible for EU-RLs. It would be the main role of the advisory board/the working group to support setting priorities in resource allocation for EU-RLs in a changing environment.

Recommendation 6: Strengthening elements of output-based funding and creating a flexible funding mechanism

Current situation: The large diversity and high complexity of the tasks of EU-RLs make output-based funding difficult, and controlling is therefore often limited to a comparison of work plans against actual outputs and budgets planned against actual expenses. This input-based funding process provides little room for assessing efficiency of individual EU-RLs compared to the other members of the network (for a discussion of input vs. output-based funding see section 4.3.1 above).

Recommendation: In spite of the difficulty to define performance indicators for EU-RLs that can be related to budget allocation decisions, it appears to be important to strengthen elements of output-based funding. Measurable outputs that could be relevant for funding decisions include:

- Number of analytical methods/SOPs developed, validated or assessed;
- Number of proficiency tests and number of participating NRLs;
- On site follow up visits to NRLs;
- Number of workshops and participating NRLs;
- Satisfaction of NRLs with the services provided by the EU-RL, for instance satisfaction with the organisation of proficiency tests and workshops as reported in feedback forms.

It has also been suggested during the evaluation to focus on outcomes, for instance the levels of contamination with residues in certain products, instead of measuring outputs. It is, however, questionable whether outcome-based measures meet the minimum requirements of controllability, from an EU-RL's perspective.[61]

In a situation where it is difficult for the funding institution to decide on input-based budgets and a simple output-based budgeting on basis of performance data is not feasible, the current process to determine the level of EU funding for EU-RLs could be refined as follows, combining top-down and bottom-up elements:

1. *Developing draft EU-RL work programme:* As a first step the Commission and each EU-RL jointly develop suggestions for the work programme for the next budgeting period.
2. *Suggestion of funding needs by the EU-RL:* The EU-RL on this basis suggests its funding needs to the Commission. Work programmes would be presented in a format that clearly establishes the link between each activity and the need in staff and other resources.
3. *Comparison of funding needs suggested by the EU-RL with benchmarks established by the Commission:* The Commission then uses performance indicators (for instance, costs per participating NRLs in workshops or PTs) to determine a budget suggestion from its side. Table 18 below presents a list of performance indicators that could be used for this purpose.

Table 18: Possible performance indicators to develop budget plans for main activities

Performance indicator	Assessment of funding needs
Workshops	
Cost per workshop *(alternative 1)*	Funding needs would be assessed by multiplying the average cost per workshop with the number of workshops foreseen for the year.
Cost per participating NRL in workshop *(alternative 2)*	Funding needs would be assessed by multiplying the average cost per participating NRL in a workshop with the number of NRLs that will participate in the workshop(s) foreseen for the year.
Proficiency tests (PTs)	
Cost per PT *(alternative 1)*	Funding needs would be assessed by multiplying the average cost for organising a PT with the number of PTs foreseen for the year. The level of funding allocated for the organisation of a PT would need to take into account various levels of complexity of different PTs.
Cost per participating NRL in PT *(alternative 2)*	Funding needs would be assessed by multiplying the average cost per participating NRL in a PT with the number of NRLs expected to participate in the PT(s) foreseen for the year. Similarly to alternative 1, the level of funding allocated for each NRL participating in the PT would need to take into account the complexity of the PT.

[61] Theuvsen 2001.

Analytical methods/SOPs developed, validated or assessed	
Cost per analytical method/SOP developed, validated or assessed	Funding needs would be assessed by multiplying the average cost for developing, validating or assessing a method/SOP with the number of analytical methods/SOPs foreseen to be developed, validated or assessed during the year. The level of funding allocated would need to take into account the level of complexity of the analytical method or the SOP.
On site follow up visits to NRLs	
Cost per on site follow up visit to a NRL	Funding needs would be assessed by multiplying the average cost of an on site follow up visit to a NRL with the number of on site follow up visit(s) to NRL(s) foreseen for the year. The level of funding allocated would need to take into account the number of EU-RL staff involved and the duration of the follow up visit, and could therefore also be calculated as cost per EU-RL staff day used for follow up visits (with travel costs calculated separately).

Note: Benchmark values would be derived for each indicator through a benchmarking process (see step 2 above for more detail).

The performance indicators listed in the table would be derived through a benchmarking process in which the costs of specific activities of EU-RLs are compared on basis of past performance. A precondition for establishing such benchmarks is that EU-RLs in their annual reports would provide relevant data in a predefined template. For each activity (such as workshops, PTs, development of analytical methods), staff input of the EU-RL and other costs would be listed as well as the related details regarding the outputs such as the number of participants in workshops and PT's etc.

4. *Discussions on funding needs between the EU-RL and the Commission:* However, unlike in the case of strict output-based funding, performance indicators would not feed into a formula that mechanically determines budgets of individual EU-RLs, but would only support the budgeting process. A low number of workshops organised or analytical methods developed, for instance, does not necessarily indicate reduced relevance or low performance of the EU-RL (and lower EU funding), and could be related to the complexity of the particular task. Therefore, budgets derived from performance indicators simply serve as starting point for discussions.
5. *Determination of EU funding allocated to the EU-RL taking into account the needs of the network*: Finally, discrepancies between the bottom-up and top-down developed budget plans (i.e. resulting from the suggestion of funding needs by the EU-RL and the comparison of these needs with benchmarks established by the Commission; respectively) would be narrowed down to reach an appropriate budget allocation for a finally agreed work programme, also taking into account recommendations of the advisory board/working group regarding possible new areas to be covered or EU-RLs to be set up. It is important to note that the performance indicators would only used as supporting tool during the budgeting process and would not be part of the work programme and the agreed budget. The EU-RL should retain its flexibility in using the allocated annual budget as efficiently as possible to reach the agreed outputs. In case specific circumstances require a refocusing of activities, EU-RLs should be free to do so. Even with changed priorities, the EU-RL would report in its annual report details on staff time and other resources used for specific activities, which would allow the Commission to calculate benchmark values for the next budgeting period.

Other aspects of the budgeting procedure that could be reviewed by the Commission include:

- Several EU-RLs would prefer multiannual funding to have budgets available that could be used for all necessary activities and to get more financial flexibility in the sense that budgets could be transferred from one year to the other without losing funds that have not been spent at the end of the year (this could however only be done after the creation of the appropriate legal basis);
- The existence of only three budget lines for workshops (travel, accommodation, allowance) means that host organisations have to pay for some of the costs (venue, dinner, local transport);
- It could be considered to provide a separate budget for cluster activities such as joint websites, joint workshops and projects etc. (see recommendation 1 above);
- Additional funds for extra capacity building and training in EU Member States where NRLs lack expertise and experience could help to bring all NRLs to the same level of expertise (see recommendation 3 above).
- Access of EU-RLs to EU funding for new young scientists to be engaged in one or two year technical projects could be further improved.

Annex 1: Literature

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Annex 2: Assessment criteria for each evaluation theme/sub-theme and indicator for EU-RLs in the field of food and feed

Assessment criteria improve the transparency of the evaluation by making the assessment explicit. Assessment criteria set out the standard against which performance on a specific aspect can be assessed. Table 19 below presents indicators, the related basis for assessment and assessment criteria (i.e. the criteria used to determine the performance of the EU-RL).

For each indicator, an assessment has been made by the evaluator (and a score, A to C, assigned) according to the assessment criterion and on the basis of the information collected. The "basis for assessment", presented in Table 19, indicates the relevant data for the indicators listed. *The assessment criteria were applied to the data described in the column "basis for assessment", supplemented, where relevant, by complementary information collected through interviews and desk research.*

Table 19: Assessment criteria for each indicator

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
1. Evaluation theme: Adequacy of assistance to NRLs		
1.1. Development/validation/assessment of analytical methods		
1.1.1. Analytical methods developed/validated/assessed and distributed	Number of analytical methods developed/validated/assessed, distributed and used by the NRLs.	This indicator is not used as an assessment criterion as the adequacy of the number of analytical methods developed/validated/assessed, distributed and used by the NRLs needs to be assessed in view of the field of expertise of the EU-RL. Performance of the EU-RL depends on the need for developing/validating/assessing additional methods; e.g. on the availability of standardised/official methods and the number of analytical methods already developed/validated/assessed by the EU-RL before the evaluation period. Data on the number of analytical methods developed/validated/assessed, distributed and used by the NRLs are however considered in the analysis as background information when assessing the performance of the EU-RL for the sub-evaluation theme 1.1. (development/validation/assessment of analytical methods).
1.1.2. Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved analytical methods very well: 3 Improved analytical methods fairly well: 2 Hardly improved analytical methods: 1 Has not improved analytical methods at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Analytical methods have contributed very well to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Analytical methods have contributed fairly well to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Analytical methods have hardly/not contributed to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.1.3. Contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of the quality of analytical data in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of analytical methods to the improvement of the quality of analytical data in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved quality of analytical data very well: 3 Improved quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly improved quality of analytical data: 1 Has not improved quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Analytical methods have contributed very well to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Analytical methods have contributed fairly well to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Analytical methods have hardly/not contributed to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
1.1.4. Contribution of analytical methods to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of analytical methods to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data very well: 3 Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data: 1 Has not harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Analytical methods have contributed very well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Analytical methods have contributed fairly well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Analytical methods have hardly/not contributed to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.2. Distribution of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)		
1.2.1. SOPs produced and distributed	Number of SOPs produced, distributed and used by the NRLs.	This indicator is not used as an assessment criterion as the adequacy of the number of SOPs produced, distributed and used by the NRLs needs to be assessed in view of the field of expertise of the EU-RL. Performance of the EU-RL depends on the need for producing additional SOPs; e.g. on the availability of standardised/official methods and the number of SOPs already produced by the EU-RL before the evaluation period. Data on the number of SOPs produced, distributed and used by the NRLs are however considered in the analysis as background information when assessing the performance of the EU-RL for the sub-evaluation theme 1.2. (distribution of Standard Operating Procedures).
1.2.2. Contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved analytical methods very well: 3 Improved analytical methods fairly well: 2 Hardly improved analytical methods: 1 Has not improved analytical methods at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* SOPs have contributed very well to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* SOPs have contributed fairly well to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* SOPs have hardly/not contributed to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
1.2.3. Contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of SOPs distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved quality of analytical data very well: 3 Improved quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly improved quality of analytical data: 1 Has not improved quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* SOPs have contributed very well to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* SOPs have contributed fairly well to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* SOPs have hardly/not contributed to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.2.4. Contribution of SOPs distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of SOPs distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data very well: 3 Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data: 1 Has not harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* SOPs have contributed very well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* SOPs have contributed fairly well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* SOPs have hardly/not contributed to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.3. Distribution of standard materials		
1.3.1. Standard/reference materials produced/distributed	Number of standard/reference materials produced/distributed produced, distributed and used by the NRLs.	This indicator is not used as an assessment criterion as the adequacy of the number of standard/reference materials produced, distributed and used by the NRLs needs to be assessed in view of the field of expertise of the EU-RL. Performance of the EU-RL depends on the need for producing standard/reference materials; e.g. if those are not commercially available. Data on the umber of standard/reference materials produced/distributed produced, distributed and used by the NRLs are however considered in the analysis as background information when assessing the performance of the EU-RL for the sub-evaluation theme 1.3. (distribution of standard materials).
1.3.2. Contribution of	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission	*Excellent performance:* Standard materials have contributed very well to improving

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs	official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved analytical methods very well: 3 Improved analytical methods fairly well: 2 Hardly improved analytical methods: 1 Has not improved analytical methods at all: 0	the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Standard materials have contributed fairly well to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Standard materials have hardly/not contributed to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.3.3. Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved quality of analytical data very well: 3 Improved quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly improved quality of analytical data: 1 Has not improved quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Standard materials have contributed very well to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Standard materials have contributed fairly well to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Standard materials have hardly/not contributed to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.3.4. Contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of standard/reference materials distributed to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data very well: 3 Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data: 1 Has not harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Standard materials have contributed very well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Standard materials have contributed fairly well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Standard materials have hardly/not contributed to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.4. Organisation of Proficiency Tests (PTs)		
1.4.1. Contribution of PTs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission	*Excellent performance:* PTs have contributed very well to improving the analytical

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs	official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved analytical methods very well: 3 Improved analytical methods fairly well: 2 Hardly improved analytical methods: 1 Has not improved analytical methods at all: 0	methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* PTs have contributed fairly well to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* PTs have hardly/not contributed to improving the analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.4.2. Contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of PTs organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved quality of analytical data very well: 3 Improved quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly improved quality of analytical data: 1 Has not improved quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* PTs have contributed very well to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* PTs have contributed fairly well to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* PTs have hardly/not contributed to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.4.3. Contribution of PTs organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of PTs organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data very well: 3 Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data: 1 Has not harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* PTs have contributed very well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* PTs have contributed fairly well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* PTs have hardly/not contributed to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.5. Organisation of training activities (workshops and ad hoc trainings)		
1.5.1. Contribution of workshops organised to the	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of	*Excellent performance:* Workshops have contributed very well to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs	workshops organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved analytical methods very well: 3 Improved analytical methods fairly well: 2 Hardly improved analytical methods: 1 Has not improved analytical methods at all: 0	assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Workshops have contributed fairly well to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Workshops have hardly/not contributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.5.2. Contribution of workshops organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of workshops organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved quality of analytical data very well: 3 Improved quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly improved quality of analytical data:1 Has not improved quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Workshops have contributed very well to the improvement of the quality of analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Workshops have contributed to the improvement of the quality of analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Workshops have contributed to the improvement of the quality of analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.5.3. Contribution of workshops organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of workshops organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data very well: 3 Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data: 1 Has not harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Workshops have contributed very well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Workshops have contributed fairly well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Workshops have hardly/not contributed to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.5.4. Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of analytical	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs.	*Excellent performance:* Ad hoc training activities have contributed very well to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Ad hoc training activities have contributed fairly well to the

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
methods in use in the NRLs	*Options for assessment:* Improved analytical methods very well: 3 Improved analytical methods fairly well: 2 Hardly improved analytical methods: 1 Has not improved analytical methods at all: 0	improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Ad hoc training activities have hardly/not contributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.5.5. Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved quality of analytical data very well: 3 Improved quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly improved quality of analytical data:1 Has not improved quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Ad hoc training activities have contributed very well to the improvement of the quality of analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Ad hoc training activities have contributed fairly well to the improvement of the quality of analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Ad hoc training activities have hardly/not contributed to the improvement of the quality of analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.5. 6. Contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of ad hoc training activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data very well: 3 Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data: 1 Has not harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Ad hoc training activities have contributed very well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Ad hoc training activities have contributed fairly well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Ad hoc training activities have hardly/not contributed to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.6. Other activities		
1.6.1 Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:*	*Excellent performance:* Other activities (see indicator3.5.1.) have contributed very well to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Other activities (see indicator3.5.1.) have contributed fairly well to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
	Improved analytical methods very well: 3 Improved analytical methods fairly well: 2 Hardly improved analytical methods: 1 Has not improved analytical methods at all: 0	NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Other activities (see indicator3.5.1.) have hardly/not contributed to the improvement of analytical methods in use in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.6.2. Contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of other activities organised to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Improved quality of analytical data very well: 3 Improved quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly improved quality of analytical data:1 Has not improved quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Other activities (see indicator3.5.1.) have contributed very well to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Other activities (see indicator3.5.1.) have contributed fairly well to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Other activities (see indicator3.5.1.) have hardly/not contributed to the improvement of the quality of the analytical data produced by the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
1.6.3. Contribution of other activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the contribution of other activities organised to the harmonisation of analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data very well: 3 Harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data fairly well: 2 Hardly harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data: 1 Has not harmonised analytical methods/quality of analytical data at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* Other activities (see indicator3.5.1.) have contributed very well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Other activities (see indicator3.5.1.) have contributed fairly well to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Other activities (see indicator3.5.1.) have hardly/not contributed to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data in the NRLs for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
2. Evaluation theme: Appropriateness of analytical methods and techniques		
2.1.1. Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the analytical methods developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art methods.

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards.	years respond to state-of-the-art standards. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the analytical methods developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art methods. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the analytical methods developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art methods.
2.1.2. Extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety.	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs regarding the extent to which the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the analytical methods developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the analytical methods developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the analytical methods developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety.
3. Evaluation theme: Extent to which coordination and training activities carried out by the EU-RL have been satisfactory		
3.1. Tools utilised to share information and communicated with NRLs		
3.1.1. Availability of EU-RL website and other tools	Availability of EU-RL website and other tools.	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has a website, used a mailing list or a newsletter and the website has a webforum. *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has a website. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has no website.
3.1.2. Quantity and level of detail of information available on the website	Availability and level of detail of the information on the website of the EU-RL.	*Excellent performance:* Information is available in full length for all items listed below (and no items with "no available"). *Adequate performance:* At least some information is available for most of the items listed below. *Underperformance:* No Information available for several of the items listed below. Items: - Results of PTs

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
		- SOPs - Information on standard materials - Description of analytical methods developed/validated/assed - Training/workshop reports - Contact details NRLs
3.1.3. NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL.	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL.
3.1.4. The content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for the day- to-day activities of the NRL.	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for the day- to-day activities of the NRL. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL.
3.1.5. The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the website contains information that is not available elsewhere. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the website contains information that is not available elsewhere. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the website contains information that is not available elsewhere. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the website contains information that is not available elsewhere.
3.1.6. The website provides	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
up-to-date information.	official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the website provides up-to-date information. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the website provides up-to-date information. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the website provides up-to-date information. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the website provides up-to-date information.
3.1.7. The website of the EU-RL is user friendly.	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the website of the EU-RL is user friendly. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the website of the EU-RL is user friendly. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the website of the EU-RL is user friendly *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the website of the EU-RL is user friendly
3.1.8. The web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs.	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs.
3.2. Organisation of Proficiency Tests (PTs)		
3.2.1 Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	Number of PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years.	*Excellent performance:* PTs have been organised more than once a year over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* PTs have been organised once a year over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* PTs have been organised less than once a year over the last 5 years.

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
3.2.2. Number of participating NRLs in PTs	Number of participating NRLs in PTs.	*Excellent performance:* All NRLs have participated in the PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* Most NRLs have participated in the PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* Few NRLs have participated in the PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years.
3.2.3. Extent to which PT results are satisfactory	Assessment of the relevant Commission official(s) concerning the extent to which PT results are satisfactory. *Options for assessment:* Very satisfied: 3 Fairly satisfied: 2 Hardly satisfied: 1 Not satisfied at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* The relevant Commission official(s) is very satisfied with the results of the PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* The relevant Commission official(s) is fairly satisfied with the results of the PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* The relevant Commission official(s) is hardly/not satisfied with the results of the PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years.
3.2.4. Preparation of reports presenting PT results	Extent to which reports presenting PT results are prepared.	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has prepared reports presenting the results of the PTs for all PTs organised over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has prepared reports presenting the results of the PTs for most PTs organised over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has prepared reports presenting the results of the PTs for some/none of the PTs organised over the last 5 years.
3.2.5. Level of detail of information provided in PT reports	Information provided in PT reports.	*Excellent performance:* Data presented in PT reports include all items listed below. *Adequate performance:* Data presented in PT reports include most items listed below. *Underperformance:* Data presented in PT reports include a few items listed below. Items: Homogeneity study Stability study Statistical analysis Reasons for failure Recommendations on how to improve performance on PTs
3.2.6. Extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory	Assessment of the relevant Commission official(s) concerning the extent to which reports presenting PT results are satisfactory.	*Excellent performance:* The relevant Commission official(s) is very satisfied with the reports presenting the PT results. *Adequate performance:* The relevant Commission official(s) is fairly satisfied with

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
	Options for assessment: Very satisfied: 3 Fairly satisfied: 2 Hardly satisfied: 1 Not satisfied at all: 0	the reports presenting the PT results. *Underperformance:* The relevant Commission official(s) is hardly/not satisfied with the reports presenting the PT results.
3.2.7. Extent to which follow-up activities are carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs	Follow-up activities carried out by the EU-RL for NRLs that failed the PTs.	*Excellent performance:* Follow-up activities have been organised by the EU-RL for all PTs. *Adequate performance:* Follow-up activities have been organised by the EU-RL for most PTs. *Underperformance:* Follow-up activities have been organised by the EU-RL for a few PTs.
3.2.8. Use of a specific protocol to follow up cases of lack of performance	Specific protocol used to follow up cases of lack of performance.	*Excellent performance:* n.a. *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL uses a specific protocol to follow up cases of lack of performance. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL does not use a specific protocol to follow up cases of lack of performance.
3.3. Workshops		
3.3.1. Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	Number of workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years.	*Excellent performance:* Workshops have been organised more than once a year over the last 5 years (i.e. more than 5 workshops were organised over the evaluation period). *Adequate performance:* Workshops have been organised once a year over the last 5 years (i.e. 5 workshops were organised over the evaluation period). *Underperformance:* Workshops have been organised less than once a year over the last 5 years (i.e. less than 5 workshops were organised over the evaluation period).
3.3.2. Number of participants	Number of participants in workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years.	*Excellent performance:* All NRLs have participated in the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* Most NRLs have participated in the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* A few NRLs have participated in the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years.
3.3.3. Preparation of reports on the outcome of the workshops	Extent to which reports on the outcome of the workshops are prepared.	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has prepared reports on the outcome of the workshops for all workshops organised over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has prepared reports on the outcome of the

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
		workshops for most workshops organised over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has prepared reports on the outcome of the workshops for some/none of the workshops organised over the last 5 years.
3.3.4. Collection of feedback from participants in workshops	Extent to which feedback from participants in workshops is collected.	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has collected feedback from participants for all workshops organised over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has collected feedback from participants for most workshops organised over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has not collected feedback from participants over the last 5 years.
3.3.5. Preparation of summary of feedback provided by participants in workshops	Extent to which feedback provided by participants in workshops is summarised.	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has prepared a summary of feedback provided by participants for most workshops organised over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has prepared a summary of feedback provided by participants for most workshops organised over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has prepared a summary of feedback provided by participants for some/none of the workshops organised over the last 5 years.
3.3.6. Use of feedback collected from participants	Extent to which the feedback collected from participants is used by the EU-RL.	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has implemented all the suggestions provided by participants over the last 5 years according to a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has implemented most/some of the suggestions provided by participants over the last 5 years according to a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). Non-consideration of relevant and/or feasible feedback was not reported. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has not implemented any of the suggestions provided by participants over the last 5 years according to a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s).
3.3.7. Quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs concerning the quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL. *Options for assessment:* Very satisfactory: 3 Fairly satisfactory: 2 Hardly satisfactory: 1 Not satisfactory at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* The quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years is very satisfactory for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* The quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years is fairly satisfactory for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* The quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years is hardly/not satisfactory for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
3.3.8. Relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs concerning the relevance of the workshops organised by the EU-RL. *Options for assessment:* Very relevant: 3 Fairly relevant: 2 Hardly relevant: 1 Not at all relevant: 0	*Excellent performance:* The workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are very relevant for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* The workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are fairly relevant for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* The workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are hardly/not at all relevant for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
3.4. Ad hoc training activities		
3.4.1. Number of ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years	Number of ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years.	This indicator is not used as an assessment criterion as the adequacy of the number of ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years depends on the needs of the NRLs. Data on the number of ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are however considered in the analysis as background information when assessing the performance of the EU-RL for the sub-evaluation theme 3.4. (ad hoc training activities).
3.4.2. Preparation of ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings	Extent to which ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings are prepared.	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has prepared ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings for all ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has prepared ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings for most ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has prepared ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings for some/none of the ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years.
3.4.3. Collection of feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities	Extent to which feedback from participants in ad hoc training activities is collected.	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has collected feedback from participants for all ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years. *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has collected feedback from participants for most ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has collected feedback from participants for some/none of the ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years.
3.4.4. Preparation of summary of feedback	Extent to which summary of feedback provided by participants in ad hoc training activities is prepared.	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has prepared a summary of feedback provided by participants for all ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years.

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
provided by participants in ad hoc training activities		*Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has prepared a summary of feedback provided by participants for most ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has prepared a summary of feedback provided by participants for some/none of the ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years.
3.4.5. Use of feedback collected from participants	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs concerning the use of feedback collected from participants. *Options for assessment:* The EU-RL has implemented all the suggestions: 3 The EU-RL has implemented most of the suggestions: 2 The EU-RL has implemented hardly any suggestions: 1 The EU-RL has not implemented any of the suggestions: 0	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has implemented all the suggestions provided by participants over the last 5 years according to a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has implemented most/some of the suggestions provided by participants over the last 5 years according to a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). Non-consideration of relevant and/or feasible feedback was not reported. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has not implemented any of the suggestions provided by participants over the last 5 years according to a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s).
3.4.6 Quality of the ad hoc training activities	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs concerning the quality of the ad hoc training activities. *Options for assessment:* Very satisfactory: 3 Fairly satisfactory: 2 Hardly satisfactory: 1 Not satisfactory at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* The quality of the ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years is very satisfactory for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* The quality of the ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years is fairly satisfactory for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* The quality of the ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years is hardly/not satisfactory for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
3.4.7. Relevance of the ad hoc training activities	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs concerning the relevance of the ad hoc training activities. *Options for assessment:* Very relevant: 3 Fairly relevant: 2 Hardly relevant: 1 Not at all relevant: 0	*Excellent performance:* Ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are very relevant for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Adequate performance:* Ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are fairly relevant for a majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s). *Underperformance:* Ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are hardly/not relevant for a majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s).
3.5. Other activities carried out		
3.5.1. Number and types of	Number and types of other activities carried out (not	*Excellent performance:* The EU-RL has carried out all the activities listed below.

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
other activities carried out	covered by indicators under sub-evaluation themes 3.1. to 3.4.).	*Adequate performance:* The EU-RL has carried out several of the activities listed below. *Underperformance:* The EU-RL has not carried out any of the activities listed below. Activities: - Provision of ad hoc expertise to the NRLs by email/phone/letters (answers to specific queries from the NRLs); - Confirmation of analysis done by the NRLs; - Development of databases In exceptional cases performance is assessed as being excellent if the EU-RL conducts additional activity/ies that contribute significantly to the assistance provided to the NRLs, even though performance would otherwise be assessed as adequate.
4. Evaluation theme: Extent to which activities carried out to support the Commission's action have been satisfactory		
4.1.1. Ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge	Assessment of the relevant Commission official(s) concerning the ability of the EU-RL to provide scientific advice and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge. *Options for assessment:* Very well: 3 Fairly well: 2 Hardly: 1 Not at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* The relevant Commission official(s) assess that the EU-RL has been able to provide scientific advice very well related to analytical methodology and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge. *Adequate performance:* The relevant Commission official(s) assess that the EU-RL has been able to provide scientific advice fairly well related to analytical methodology and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge. *Underperformance:* The relevant Commission official(s) assess that the EU-RL has been hardly/not able to provide scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge.
4.1.2. Ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner	Assessment of the relevant Commission official(s) concerning the ability of the EU-RL to deliver the requested scientific advice and/or expertise in a timely manner. *Options for assessment:* Very well: 3 Fairly well: 2 Hardly: 1 Not at all: 0	*Excellent performance:* The relevant Commission official(s) assess that the EU-RL has been able to provide scientific advice very well related to analytical methodology and/or expertise in a timely manner. *Adequate performance:* The relevant Commission official(s) assess that the EU-RL has been able to provide scientific advice fairly well related to analytical methodology and/or expertise in a timely manner. *Underperformance:* The relevant Commission official(s) assess that the EU-RL has been hardly/not able to provide scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or expertise in a timely manner.
4.1.3. Number of scientific papers published in	Number of scientific papers published in internationally recognised publications.	This indicator is not used as an assessment criterion because an assessment simply based on the number of scientific papers published in internationally

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
internationally recognised publications		recognised publications may be misleading, as it would not consider the relevance and quality of the publications of the EU-RL. Data on the number of scientific papers published in internationally recognised publications are however considered in the analysis as background information when assessing the performance of the EU-RL for the evaluation theme 4.1. (extent to which activities carried out to support the Commission's action have been satisfactory).
4.1.4. Number of scientific papers presented in international meetings	Number of scientific papers presented in international meetings.	This indicator is not used as an assessment criterion because an assessment simply based on the number of scientific papers presented in international meetings may be misleading, as it would not consider the relevance and quality of the presentations of the EU-RL. Data on the number of scientific papers presented in international meetings are however considered in the analysis as background information when assessing the performance of the EU-RL for the evaluation theme 4.1. (extent to which activities carried out to support the Commission's action have been satisfactory).
4.1.5. Participation in European/international research projects	Number of European/international research projects in which the EU-RL participated.	This indicator is not used as an assessment criterion but considered in the analysis as background information when assessing the performance of the EU-RL for the evaluation theme 4.1. (extent to which activities carried out to support the Commission's action have been satisfactory).
5. Evaluation theme: Extent to which EU-RLs fulfil requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation		
5.1.1. Staff	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the EU-RL has suitable qualified staff with adequate training in diagnostic and analytical techniques applied in its area of competence. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the EU-RL has suitable qualified staff with adequate training in diagnostic and analytical techniques applied in its area of competence. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the EU-RL has suitable qualified staff with adequate training in diagnostic and analytical techniques applied in its area of competence. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the EU-RL has suitable qualified staff with adequate training in diagnostic and analytical techniques applied in its area of competence.
5.1.2. Equipment and products	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the EU-RL possesses the equipment and products needed to carry out the tasks assigned to it.	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the EU-RL possesses the equipment and products needed to carry out the tasks assigned to it. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
	Options for assessment: Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the EU-RL possesses the equipment and products needed to carry out the tasks assigned to it. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the EU-RL possesses the equipment and products needed to carry out the tasks assigned to it.
5.1.3. Administrative infrastructure	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the EU-RL has an appropriate administrative infrastructure. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the EU-RL has an appropriate administrative infrastructure. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the EU-RL has an appropriate administrative infrastructure. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the EU-RL has an appropriate administrative infrastructure.
5.1.4. Respect the confidential nature of certain subjects	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the EU-RL ensures that its staff respects the confidential nature of certain subjects, results, or communications. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the EU-RL ensures that its staff respects the confidential nature of certain subjects, results, or communications. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the EU-RL ensures that its staff respects the confidential nature of certain subjects, results, or communications. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the EU-RL ensures that its staff respects the confidential nature of certain subjects, results, or communications.
5.1.5 Knowledge of international standards and practices	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the EU-RL has sufficient knowledge of international standards and practices. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the EU-RL has sufficient knowledge of international standards and practices. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the EU-RL has sufficient knowledge of international standards and practices. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
	Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	whether the EU-RL has sufficient knowledge of international standards and practices.
5.1.6. Updated list of available reference substances and reagents	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the EU-RL has available, if appropriate, an updated list of available reference substances and reagents and an updated list of manufacturers and suppliers of such substances and reagents. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the EU-RL has available, if appropriate, an updated list of available reference substances and reagents and an updated list of manufacturers and suppliers of such substances and reagents. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the EU-RL has available, if appropriate, an updated list of available reference substances and reagents and an updated list of manufacturers and suppliers of such substances and reagents. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the EU-RL has available, if appropriate, an updated list of available reference substances and reagents and an updated list of manufacturers and suppliers of such substances and reagents.
5.1.7. Taking into account of research activities	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the EU-RL takes account of research activities at national and Community level. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the EU-RL takes account of research activities at national and Community level. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the EU-RL takes account of research activities at national and Community level. *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the EU-RL takes account of research activities at national and Community level.
5.1.8. Emergency situations	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the EU-RL has trained personnel available for emergency situations occurring within the Community. *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the EU-RL has trained personnel available for emergency situations occurring within the Community. *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the EU-RL has trained personnel available for emergency situations occurring within the Community.

Indicator	Basis for assessment [(a)]	Assessment criteria
	Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the EU-RL has trained personnel available for emergency situations occurring within the Community.
5.1.9. Achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improvement of food and feed safety in the EU (as appropriate for the EU-RL)	Assessment of the EU-RL, the relevant Commission official(s) and the NRLs when asked whether the EU-RL contributes to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improves food and feed safety in the EU (as appropriate for the EU-RL). *Options for assessment:* Totally agree: 3 Tend to agree: 2 Tend to disagree: 1 Totally disagree: 0	*Excellent performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) totally agree when asked whether the EU-RL contributes to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improves food and feed safety in the EU (as appropriate for the EU-RL). *Adequate performance:* A majority of NRLs, the EU-RL (self-assessment) and the relevant Commission official(s) tend to agree when asked whether the EU-RL contributes to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improves food and feed safety in the EU (as appropriate for the EU-RL). *Underperformance:* A majority of NRLs or the EU-RL (self-assessment) or the relevant Commission official(s) tend to disagree/totally disagree when asked whether the EU-RL contributes to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improves food and feed safety in the EU (as appropriate for the EU-RL).

Note: (a) The "basis for assessment" indicates the relevant survey data for the indicators listed. The assessment criteria are applied to the data described in the "basis for assessment", supplemented, where relevant, by the data collected through interviews and desk research.

Annex 3: Survey questionnaire for EU-RLs in the field of food and feed safety

EVALUATION OF EU REFERENCE LABORATORIES IN THE FIELD OF FOOD AND FEED

*

SURVEY OF EU-RLS

Please fill in questionnaire no later than

15 September 2010

and return this questionnaire by email in Word-Format (.doc) to
evaluation@civic-consulting.de
Please do not pdf the questionnaire

The Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission has commissioned the Food Chain Evaluation Consortium (FCEC - Civic Consulting, Agra CEAS Consulting, Van Dijk Management Consultants and Arcadia International) to conduct an independent *Evaluation of EU Reference Laboratories (EU-RLs) in the field of food and feed and animal health and live animals.*

The purpose of the Evaluation is twofold: first, to assess the functioning and performance of 28 EU-RLs[1] and of the network of EU-RLs over the last 5 years; second, to provide the Commission with an assessment of the relevance of the tasks currently assigned to each EU-RL and of possible overlaps or synergies between EU-RLs. The Evaluation started in June 2010 and is expected to be finalised by December 2010.

As part of this assignment, we are carrying out a survey of EU-RLs. The objective of this survey is to collect your views on various aspects of the functioning of your EU-RL and of the network of EU-RLs as a whole. The information collected through this questionnaire will be crucial in determining the future orientations of the network. Your contribution is therefore both very useful and important.

We would be grateful if you would email the completed questionnaire to *evaluation@civic-consulting.de* by 15th September 2010. It should not take more than 20-30 minutes to complete once all requested information is at hand.

If you have any further questions regarding this survey or the Evaluation, please do not hesitate to contact:

Rémi Béteille (evaluation@civic-consulting.de); Phone: +49 30 2196 2287

[1] The Evaluation concerns 28 EU-RLs (26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed and 2 EU-RLs in the field of animal health). 11 other EU-RLs in the field of animal health and live animals and the EU-RL for TSE have already been evaluated in 2009. This questionnaire is only addressed to EU-RLs in the field of food and feed. The two EU-RLs in the field of animal health subject to this evaluation receive a separate questionnaire.

A. IDENTIFICATION DATA

1. Please identify yourself:

a. Please specify the name of your EU-RL:

Please specify

b. Please specify the name of the host organisation:

Please specify

c. Please identify the country in which your EU-RL is located:

Please specify

d. Please specify the year in which your EU-RL was designated:

Please specify

e. Questionnaire completed by:

Name, position, contact details

B. FUNDING AND STAFF

2. Please provide the following data regarding funding and staff:

a. Please specify in the following table your sources of funding for conducting EU-RL activities (please provide data in Euros and for EU-RL activities only):[2]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
European Commission					
Host organisation					
Fees for EU-RL services (if applicable)					
Other (please specify)					
Total budget for EU-RL activities (in Euro)					

Comments

[2] Please provide actual expenditures for the years 2006 – 2009 and planned expenditures for 2010.

b. Please specify in the following table the staff posts working on EU-RL activities as of 31 December 2009 (measured in Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff posts):[3]

	Number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff posts working on EU-RL activities
Senior scientist	
Scientist	
Technician	
Research assistant	
Administrative and technical support	
Total	

Comments

C. ASSISTANCE TO NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORIES (NRLS)

3. General data about National Reference Laboratories (NRLs)/Official National Laboratories (ONLs)

a. Please specify the total number of NRLs/ONLs in your field of expertise with which your EU-RL collaborates:

	2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Number of NRLs					
Number of ONLs in Member States, if relevant					
Number of ONLs in third countries, if relevant					

Please specify Member States not covered, if any, and Member States that have more than one NRL.

[3] One Full-Time Equivalent staff member (FTE) is defined as a full-time staff member working 40 hours per week. Part-time staff member or staff member working only partly on EU-RL functions are calculated by dividing the total number of hours worked per week by 40 (e.g. a staff member working 20 hours per week on EU-RL functions has a FTE count of 0.5).

4. Development/validation/assessment of analytical methods

a. Please provide the following information on the analytical methods that your EU-RL has developed/validated/assessed over the last 5 years:

Method	Was the method developed, validated or assessed?	Year in which development/ validation/ assessment was finalised	Was the method distributed to NRLs?[4]	Is the method used by NRLs?[4]
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify method	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*

Comments

b. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

The analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*

Comments

[4] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

5. Distribution of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)/standard material

a. Please provide the following information on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)[5] that your EU-RL has distributed over the last 5 years:

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)	Year in which SOP was produced	Was the SOP distributed to NRLs?[6]	Is the SOP used by NRLs?[6]
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify SOP	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*

Comments

b. Please provide the following information on the standard/reference materials that have been distributed by your EU-RL over the last 5 years:

Standard/reference material	Year in which standard/reference material was produced	Was the standard/reference material distributed to NRLs?[7]	Is the standard/reference material used by NRLs?[7]
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*

[5] Including method validation and quality control procedures for pesticide residues analysis in food and feed for the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.
[6] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.
[7] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Please specify standard/reference material	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*

Comments

6. Organisation of Proficiency Tests (PT)

a. Please provide the following information on the Proficiency Tests (PTs) that have been organised by your EU-RL over the last 5 years:

Short description of PT	Year in which PT was conducted	Number of participating NRLs[8]	Number of NRLs that passed the PT[8]	Number of NRLs that failed the PT[8]	What follow up activities did your EU-RL conduct for NRLs[9] that failed the PT?
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				
	Please select				

In case that not all NRLs participate in PTs, please explain the reasons.

[8] For EU-RLs in the field of pesticides, please include Official National Laboratories and laboratories in third countries that also participate in PTs.
[9] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

b. Has your EU-RL prepared reports presenting the results of the PTs organised over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

If Yes, please specify the data presented in these reports:

- ☐ Homogeneity study
- ☐ Stability study
- ☐ Statistical analysis
- ☐ Reasons for failure
- ☐ Recommendations on how to improve performance on PTs
- ☐ Other (*Please specify*)

Comments

c. In the case of a lack of performance, does your EU-RL follow up with NRLs[10] according to a specific protocol?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify protocol used:

Please specify

d. Does your EU-RL have a specific accreditation covering the organisation of PTs?

- ☐ Yes, the EU-RL has an accreditation covering the organisation of PTs (*Please specify the accreditation)*
- ☐ No, the EU-RL doesn't have an accreditation covering the organisation of PTs yet, but the accreditation process is underway (*Please specify the accreditation)*
- ☐ No, the EU-RL doesn't have an accreditation covering the organisation of PTs and no accreditation process is underway
- ☐ Don't know

Comments

[10] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

7. Organisation of workshops

a. Please provide the following information on the workshops organised by your EU-RL over the last 5 years:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total number of workshops					
Workshop 1					
Number of participating NRLs					
Number of participating ONLs, if relevant					
Number of participants					
Did your EU-RL collect evaluation feedback from participants at the end of the workshop?	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Workshop 2					
Number of participating NRLs					
Number of participating ONLs, if relevant					
Number of participants					
Did your EU-RL collect evaluation feedback from participants at the end of the workshop?	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*

Please specify workshops which have been joinlty organised with other EU-RL(s), if any.

Please specify the countries which are often not represented in the workshops (if this is the case).

b. Has your EU-RL prepared reports on the outcome of workshops organised over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

If Yes, how have these workshop reports been disseminated?

- ☐ Workshop reports are published on the EU-RL website
- ☐ Workshop reports are sent via email to participants
- ☐ Hard copies of the workshop reports are provided to participants
- ☐ Other (*Please specify*)

Comments

c. In these reports, or as a separate document, has your EU-RL summarised the evaluation feedback provided by participants in the workshops?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

d. Has your EU-RL used the evaluation feedback provided by participants in workshops?

Please select from the dropdown menu

If the EU-RL has implemented some of the suggestions of the participants or if the EU-RL has not implemented any of the suggestions of the participants, please specify the reasons.

e. In your opinion, has the quality of the workshops organised by your EU-RL over the last 5 years been satisfactory?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

f. In your opinion, have the workshops organised by your EU-RL over the last 5 years been relevant to the needs of the NRLs?[11]

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

8. Ad hoc training (i.e. training provided to NRLs, and other laboratories, in addition to / or organised in connection with the annual workshop(s))

a. Please specify the number of ad hoc trainings provided to NRLs and other laboratories over the last 5 years:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total number of NRLs trained per year					
Total number of staff members of NRLs trained per year					
Total number of staff members of laboratories located in the EU other than NRLs trained per year					
Total number of staff members of laboratories in third countries trained per year					

Please specify most common reasons for ad hoc trainings.

[11] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

b. Has your EU-RL collected evaluation feedback from participants in ad hoc trainings that were organised over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

If Yes, has your EU-RL summarised the evaluation feedback provided by participants in ad hoc trainings in a report?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

If Yes, has your EU-RL used the evaluation feedback provided by participants in ad hoc trainings?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

c. Has your EU-RL prepared ad hoc training reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings organised over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

If Yes, please specify ad hoc training reports/materials prepared:

Please specify

d. In your opinion, has the quality of the ad hoc training activities organised by your EU-RL over the last 5 years been satisfactory?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

e. In your opinion, have the ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years been relevant to the needs of the NRLs?[12]

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

[12] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

9. Other activities carried out to support NRLs[13]

a. Please specify other activities carried out by your EU-RL (not previously mentioned in questions 4 to 8) to assist NRLs[13] over the last 5 years.

- ☐ Provision of ad hoc expertise to NRLs[13] by email/phone/letters (answers to specific queries of NRLs[13])
- ☐ Confirmation of analysis done by NRLs[13]
- ☐ Development of databases
- ☐ Other (*Please specify*)

Comments

10. Impacts of activities conducted over the last 5 years

a. Please assess the extent to which the following activities have harmonised and improved analytical methods used by the NRLs and the quality of analytical data produced by the NRLs over the last 5 years:

EU-RL activity	**Has the activity contributed to <u>improving analytical methods</u> in use in the NRLs?[14]**	**Has the activity contributed to <u>improving the quality of the analytical data</u> produced by the NRLs?[14]**	**Has the activity contributed to <u>harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data</u> in the NRLs?[14]**
Development/ validation assessment of analytical methods	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Distribution of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) [15]	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Distribution of standard materials	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Organisation of Proficiency Tests (PT)	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Organisation of workshops	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Ad hoc training	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Other activities carried out to support NRLs (Please specify)	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*

[13] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.
[14] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.
[15] Including method validation and quality control procedures for pesticide residues analysis in food and feed for the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

Please provide examples of activities that have been particularly successful in harmonising and improving analytical methods and/or the quality of analytical data in the NRLs.

In case you answered improved […] very well, please provide insofar possible concrete evidence underpinning your statements.

11. Sharing information and communication with NRLs

a. Does your EU-RL have a website?[16]

Please select from the dropdown menu

If access to the website of your EU-RL is resctricted, please specify the types of organisations which have full access

If Yes, please indicate the website address:

Please specify

If No, please specify whether your EU-RL is currently developing or intends to develop a website:

Please specify

b. What other tools does your EU-RL utilise to share information and communicate with NRLs?[17]

- ☐ Web forum where messages can be posted
- ☐ Electronic newsletter
- ☐ Mailing list (unmoderated, i.e all members can directly contact all group members)
- ☐ Mailing list (moderated, i.e members can only contact the group members once moderator has accepted the message)
- ☐ Other (*Please specify)*

Comments

[16] A website whose accessibility is fully restricted means that the website is only accessible with a password: *a website whose accessibility is unrestricted means that is accessible without password for all visitors.*

[17] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

c. What type of information is available on the website of your EU-RL (with and/or without restricted access) and how detailed is the information provided?

Type of information	**How detailed is the information provided online?**
Results of PTs	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
Standard Operating Procedures[18]	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
Information on standard materials	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
Description of analytical methods developed/validated	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
Training/workshop reports	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
Contact details of NRLs	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
Other (Please specify)	*Please select from the dropdown menu*

Comments

d. Please specify the size of the EU-RL website and the volume of traffic for your website in 2010:

	2010
Size of EU-RL website	
Total number of pages of the EU-RL website	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
Total number of documents available on the EU-RL website	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
Volume of traffic per month (average January to June 2010)	
Total number of visitors (both for pages with restricted and unrestricted access)	
Average number of page views per visitor (both for pages with restricted and unrestricted access)	

Please specify whether there is a need to further improve the content and/or the design of the website of your EU-RL

e. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

NRLs[19] can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for the day-to-day activities of the NRL.[19]	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The website provides up-to-date information.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The website of the EU-RL is user friendly.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs.[19]	*Please select from the dropdown menu*

Comments

[18] Including method validation and quality control procedures for pesticide residues analysis in food and feed for the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.
[19] Including Official National Laboratories for EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

D. SCIENTIFIC ADVICE AND/OR EXPERTISE PROVIDED TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

12. Please provide the following information regarding the activities carried out to support the Commission's action:

a. Please specify the approximate number of requests for scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or for expertise from DG SANCO addressed to your EU-RL over the past 5 years:

	2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Number of very complex requests for scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or for expertise from DG SANCO per year[20]					
Number of fairly complex requests for scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or for expertise from DG SANCO per year[21]					
Number of simple requests for scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or for expertise from DG SANCO per year[22]					

Comments

b. In your opinion, has your EU-RL been able to provide scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

c. Has your EU-RL been able to deliver the requested scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or expertise in a timely manner?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

[20] Very complex requests require more than 1 day to answer.
[21] Fairly complex requests require between half a day and one day to answer.
[22] Simple requests require less than half a day to answer.

d. Please specify the number of scientific papers published/presented in internationally recognised publications and meetings over the last 5 years by EU-RL staff members relating to the area of expertise of your EU-RL:

	2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Number of scientific papers published in internationally recognised publications per year					
Number of scientific papers presented in international meetings per year					
Other (Please specify)					

Comments

e. Has your EU-RL participated in European/international research projects over the last 5 years?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify research projects:

Please specify

f. Is your EU-RL requested to provide expertise to European agencies (such as EMEA, EFSA)?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify the European agency and expertise provided:

Please specify

E. REQUIREMENTS OF EU LEGISLATION

13. Please provide the following assessment regarding the requirements of the EU legislation

a. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning your EU-RL:[23]

The EU-RL has suitable qualified staff with adequate training in diagnostic and analytical techniques applied in its area of competence.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL possesses the equipment and products needed to carry out the tasks assigned to it.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL has an appropriate administrative infrastructure.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL ensures that its staff respects the confidential nature of certain subjects, results or communications.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL has sufficient knowledge of international standards and practices.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL has available, if appropriate, an updated list of available reference substances and reagents and an updated list of manufacturers and suppliers of such substances and reagents.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL takes account of research activities at national and Community level.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL has trained personnel available for emergency situations occurring within the Community.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL contributes to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improves food and feed safety and animal health standards[24] in the EU.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*

Comments

F. NETWORK OF EU-RLS-NRLS

14. Please provide the following assessment regarding your cooperation with NRLs[25]

a. Please assess the extent to which your collaboration with NRLs[25] is functioning:

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please specify factors, if any, inhibiting your collaboration with NRLs

[23] These statements are derived mainly from Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 which lays down a list of requirements that shall be fulfilled by the EU-RLs. See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:165:0001:0141:EN:PDF.
[24] As applicable for your EU-RL.
[25] Including Official National Laboratories for the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

b. Do you have any suggestions for improving your collaboration with NRLs?[25]

Please specify

15. Please provide the following assessment regarding the network of EU-RLs

a. Does your EU-RL exchange information/collaborate with other EU-RLs?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

b. In your opinion, are there overlaps of responsibilities and tasks of your EU-RL and the responsibilities and tasks of other EU-RLs?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify overlaps and the other EU-RL(s) to which you refer:

Please specify

c. In your opinion, can synergies between your EU-RL and other EU-RLs be increased?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify how synergies can be increased and to which other EU-RL(s) you refer:

Please specify

d. In your view, is there a need to enlarge the field of competence of your EU-RL?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

Comments

e. In your opinion, is there a need for creating any additional EU-RL(s)?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify areas in which there is a need for creating additional EU-RL(s):

Please specify

16. Please provide the following assessment regarding your cooperation with DG SANCO

Please note that data collected through the following question will only be provided to the DG SANCO in aggregated form. Individual EU-RLs will not be identifiable.

a. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

The administrative procedures of the European Commission are clear.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The financial support received meets the needs of the EU-RL.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The exchange of information with your contact unit in the EC is satisfactory.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
There is a need for a single coordination by SANCO of all EU-RLs in the network.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*

Comments

b. In your opinion, to what extent are the requirements for your EU-RL set in the work programmes adequate and appropriate to achieve established food and feed safety objectives?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

G. CLOSING QUESTIONS

17. Other information

a. Has your EU-RL conducted other activities than training (i.e. activities not already mentioned in question 8a) for third countries over the last 5 years?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify activities conducted:

Please specify

b. Has your EU-RL conducted survey/monitoring programmes over the last 5 years?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify surveys/monitoring programmes carried out over the last 5 years:

Please specify

c. What have been the main challenges that your EU-RL has faced since its designation?

Please specify

d. In your opinion, how could the potential of the EU-RLs to contribute to DG SANCO policy objectives, individually and as a network, be further deployed?

Please specify

e. In your opinion, what could be done to ensure the most cost efficient use of the EU funding for the EU-RL network?

Please specify

Annex 4: Survey questionnaire for NRLs

EVALUATION OF EU REFERENCE LABORATORIES IN THE FIELD OF FOOD AND FEED AND ANIMAL HEALTH
*
SURVEY OF NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORIES (NRLs) AND OF OFFICIAL NATIONAL LABORATORIES (ONLs) IN THE FIELD OF PESTICIDES

The Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission has commissioned the Food Chain Evaluation Consortium (FCEC - Civic Consulting, Agra CEAS Consulting, Van Dijk Management Consultants and Arcadia International) to conduct an independent Evaluation of EU Reference Laboratories (EU-RLs) in the field of food and feed and animal health and live animals. The Evaluation started in June 2010 and is expected to be finalised by December 2010.

As part of this assignment, we are carrying out a survey of NRLs/ONLs. The objective of this survey is to collect your views on the quality and relevance of the assistance provided by the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL collaborates and on the functioning of the EU-RL-NRLs/ONLs network. The information collected through this questionnaire will be crucial in determining how the assistance provided by the EU-RL might be improved in the future to better meet your needs. Your contribution is therefore both very useful and important.

We would be grateful if you would complete the questionnaire by 15th September 2010. It should not take more than 15-20 minutes to complete once all requested information is at hand.

If you have any further questions regarding this survey or the Evaluation, please do not hesitate to contact:
Rémi Béteille (evaluation@civic-consulting.de); Phone: +49 30 2196 2287

Important information:
In case your NRL/ONL works with several EU-RLs, please fill in the questionnaire regarding the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL mainly cooperates.

TECHNICAL REMARKS

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire online. You may complete the survey in one sitting, or close it and return to complete it at a later time from the same computer. Each page that you fill in will be saved automatically when you proceed to the following page. For this purpose, please ensure that you have activated the cookies on your computer. In order to review the questions, you can always go back to the answers already provided by using the button << at the bottom of the page. You can also print out the survey to discuss the questions with your colleagues.

I. IDENTIFICATION DATA

1. Please identify yourself:

1a. Please specify whether your laboratory is a National Reference Laboratory (NRL) or an Official National Laboratory (ONL):

- ○ National Reference Laboratory
- ○ Official National Laboratory in the field of pesticides
- ○ Other. Please specify:

Comments:

1b. Please specify the name of your NRL/ONL:

1c. Please identify the country in which your NRL/ONL is located:

1d. Please identify the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL mainly cooperates:

Note:
All assessments that you provide in this questionnaire refer to this EU-RL.
Please note that data collected through this questionnaire will only be provided to DG SANCO in aggregated form. Individual NRLs/ONLs will not be identifiable.

1e. Questionnaire completed by (name, position):

1f. E-mail address (obligatory):

B. ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO YOUR NRL/ONL BY THE EU-RL

2. Development/validation/assessment of analytical methods

2a. Please provide the following information on the analytical methods that the EU-RL has developed/validated over the last 5 years:

Method Please specify method	Year in which development/validation /assessment was finalised	Is the method used by your NRL/ONL?

Comments:

2b. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

The analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards.	
The analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety (or to ensure the correct diagnosis of animal diseases for the EU-RL in the field of animal health)	

Comments:

3. Distribution of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)/standard material

3a. Please provide the following information on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that the EU-RL has distributed to your NRL/ONL over the last 5 years:
(for NRL/ONL in the field of pesticides: including method validation and quality control procedures for pesticide residues analysis in food and feed distributed by the EU-RL.)

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Please specify SOP	Year in which SOP was produced	Is the SOP used by your NRL/ONL?

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Please specify SOP	Year in which SOP was produced	Is the SOP used by your NRL/ONL?

Comments:

3b. Please provide the following information on the standard/reference materials that have been distributed by the EU-RL to your NRL/ONL over the last 5 years:

Standard/reference material Please specify standard/reference material	Year in which standard/reference material was produced	Is the standard/reference material used by your NRL/ONL?

Comments:

4. Organisation of Proficiency Tests (PT)

4a. Please provide the following information on the Proficiency Tests (PTs) that have been organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years:

PT Short description of PT	Year in which PT was conducted	Follow up activities What follow up activities were conducted by the EU-RL regarding your NRL/ONL following the results of the Proficiency test?

PT Short description of PT	Year in which PT was conducted	Follow up activities What follow up activities were conducted by the EU-RL regarding your NRL/ONL following the results of the Proficiency test?

In the case that your NRL/ONL did not participate in PTs, please explain the reasons:

5. Organisation of workshops

5a. Please provide the following information on the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total number of workshops in which your NRL/ONL participated					
Total number of participants from your NRL/ONL per year					

Comments:

5b. Has your NRL/ONL provided evaluation feedback to the EU-RL regarding the workshops that were organised over the last 5 years?

Comments:

If Yes, has the EU-RL used the evaluation feedback provided by your NRL/ONL?

Comments:

5c. In your opinion, has the quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years been satisfactory?

Please explain your assessment:

5d. In your opinion, have the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years been relevant to your needs?

Please explain your assessment:

6. Ad hoc training delivered by the EU-RL (i.e. training provided to your NRL/ONL in addition to / or organised in connection with the annual workshop(s))

6a. Please specify the number of ad hoc trainings provided to your NRL/ONL over the last 5 years:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total number of ad hoc training activities provided to your NRL/ONL					
Total number of staff members of your NRL/ONL trained per year					

Please specify most common reasons for ad hoc trainings:

6b. Has your NRL/ONL provided evaluation feedback to the EU-RL regarding the ad hoc trainings that were organised for your NRL/ONL over the last 5 years?

Comments:

If Yes, has the EU-RL used the evaluation feedback provided by your NRL/ONL?

Comments:

6c. In your opinion, has the quality of the ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years been satisfactory?

Please explain your assessment:

6d. In your opinion, have the ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years been relevant to your needs?

Please explain your assessment:

7. Other activities carried out to support your NRL/ONL

7a. Please specify other activities carried out by the EU-RL (not previously mentioned in questions 4 to 8) to assist your NRL/ONL over the last 5 years:

- ☐ Provision of ad hoc expertise to your NRL/ONL by email/phone/letters (answers to specific queries from your NRL/ONL)
- ☐ Confirmation of analysis done by your NRL/ONL
- ☐ Development of databases
- ☐ Other. Please specify:

Comments:

8. Impacts of activities conducted over the last 5 years

8a. Please assess the extent to which the following activities have harmonised and improved analytical methods used by your NRL/ONL and the quality of analytical data produced by your NRL/ONL over the last 5 years:

	Has the activity contributed to improving analytical methods in use in your NRL/ONL?	Has the activity contributed to improving the quality of the analytical data produced by your NRL/ONL? (not applicable for the EU-RL in the field of animal health)	Has the activity contributed to harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data with NRLs/ONLs in other MS working in your area?
Development/validation /assessment of analytical methods			
Distribution of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) (including method validation and quality control procedures for pesticide residues analysis in food and feed for the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides)			
Distribution of standard materials			
Organisation of Proficiency Tests (PT)			
Organisation of workshops			
Ad hoc training			
Other activities carried out to support NRLs/ONLs. Please specify:			

Please provide examples of activities that have been particularly successful in harmonising and improving analytical methods and/or the quality of analytical data in the NRLs. In case you answered improved [...] very well, please provide insofar possible concrete evidence underpinning your statements:

9. Sharing information and communication with your NRL/ONL

9a. What type of information is available on the website of the EU-RL (with and/or without restricted access) and how detailed is the information provided?

Results of PTs	
Standard Operating Procedures (Including method validation and quality control procedures for pesticide residues analysis in food and feed prepared by the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides)	
Information on standard materials	
Description of analytical methods developed/validated	
Training/workshop reports	
Contact details of NRLs	
Other. Please specify:	

Comments:

9b. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

We can find the information we need on the website of the EU-RL.	
The content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for our day-to-day activities.	
The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	
The website provides up-to-date information.	
The website of the EU-RL is user friendly.	
The web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs/ONLs.	

Comments:

C. REQUIREMENTS OF EU LEGISLATION

10. Please provide the following assessment regarding the fulfilment of the requirements of the EU legislation by the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL mainly cooperates

10a. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL mainly cooperates:

The EU-RL has suitable qualified staff with adequate training in diagnostic and analytical techniques applied in its area of competence.	

The EU-RL possesses the equipment and products needed to carry out the tasks assigned to it.

The EU-RL has an appropriate administrative infrastructure.

The EU-RL ensures that its staff respects the confidential nature of certain subjects, results or communications.

The EU-RL has sufficient knowledge of international standards and practices.

The EU-RL has available, if appropriate, an updated list of available reference substances and reagents and an updated list of manufacturers and suppliers of such substances and reagents.

The EU-RL takes account of research activities at national and Community level.

The EU-RL has trained personnel available for emergency situations occurring within the Community.

The EU-RL contributes to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improves food and feed safety/animal health standards (as applicable for the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL mainly cooperates) in the EU.

Comments:

D. NETWORK OF EU-RLs-NRLs-ONLs

11. Please provide the following assessment regarding the cooperation with the EU-RL

11a. Please assess the extent to which your collaboration with the EU-RL is functioning:

Please specify factors, if any, inhibiting your collaboration with the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL mainly cooperates:

11b. Do you have any suggestions for improving your collaboration with the EU-RL?

12. Please provide the following assessment regarding the EU-RLs which are relevant to your area of responsibility

12a. In your opinion, are there overlaps of responsibilities and tasks of the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL mainly cooperates and the responsibilities and tasks of other EU-RLs which are relevant for your NRL/ONL?
In case no other EU-RL is relevant for your NRL/ONL, please answer “no”.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If Yes, please specify overlaps and the other EU-RL(s) to which you refer:

12b. In your opinion, can synergies between the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL mainly cooperates and other EU-RLs be increased?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If Yes, please specify how synergies can be increased and to which other EU-RL(s) you refer:

12c. In your view, is there a need to enlarge the field of competence of the EU-RL with which your NRL/ONL mainly cooperates?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Comments:

12d. In your opinion, is there a need for creating any additional EU-RL(s)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If Yes, please specify areas in which there is a need for creating additional EU-RL(s):

Dear respondent,

By clicking next, you will submit your answers, and will not be able to change them. You will also not be able to complete the questionnaire again.

Annex 5: Survey questionnaire for Commission officials

EVALUATION OF EU REFERENCE LABORATORIES IN THE FIELD OF FOOD AND FEED AND ANIMAL HEALTH

*

ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUAL EU-RLS IN THE COMMISSION PERSPECTIVE

Please fill in questionnaire no later than

15 September 2010

and return this questionnaire by email in Word-Format (.doc) to
evaluation@civic-consulting.de
Please do not pdf the questionnaire

The Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission has commissioned the Food Chain Evaluation Consortium (FCEC - Civic Consulting, Agra CEAS Consulting, Van Dijk Management Consultants and Arcadia International) to conduct an independent *Evaluation of EU Reference Laboratories (EU-RLs) in the field of food and feed and animal health and live animals.*

The purpose of the Evaluation is twofold: first, to assess the functioning and performance of 28 EU-RLs[1] and of the network of EU-RLs over the last 5 years; second, to provide the Commission with an assessment of the relevance of the tasks currently assigned to each EU-RL and of possible overlaps or synergies between EU-RLs. The Evaluation started in June 2010 and is expected to be finalised by December 2010.

As part of this assignment, we are asking responsible DG SANCO desk officers to provide an assessment of individual EU-RLs in the Commission perspective. The objective of this survey is to collect your views on various aspects of the functioning of the EU-RL under your responsibility. The information collected through this questionnaire will be crucial in determining the future orientations of the network. Your contribution is therefore both very useful and important.

We would be grateful if you would email the completed questionnaire to evaluation@civic-consulting.de by 15th September 2010. It should not take more than 15-20 minutes to complete once all requested information is at hand.

If you have any further questions regarding this survey or the Evaluation, please do not hesitate to contact:

Rémi Béteille (evaluation@civic-consulting.de); Phone: +49 30 2196 2287

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

In case you are a DG SANCO contact point for several EU-RLs, please fill in a separate questionnaire for each EU-RL.

[1] The Evaluation concerns 28 EU-RLs (26 EU-RLs in the field of food and feed and 2 EU-RLs in the field of animal health). 11 other EU-RLs in the field of animal health and live animals and the EU-RL for TSE have already been evaluated in 2009. This questionnaire is only addressed to EU-RLs in the field of food and feed. The two EU-RLs in the field of animal health subject to this evaluation receive a separate questionnaire.

A. IDENTIFICATION DATA

1. Please identify yourself:

a. Please specify the name of the EU-RL which operate under your responsibility and for which you complete this questionnaire:

Please specify

b. Questionnaire completed by:

Name, position, contact details

B. ASSISTANCE TO NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORIES (NRLS)

2. Development/validation/assessment of analytical methods

a. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

The analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years respond to state-of-the-art standards.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RL over the last 5 years are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*

Comments

3. Organisation of Proficiency Tests (PT)

a. Has the EU-RL presented reports to the Commission summarising the results of the PTs organised over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

b. To which extent have you been satisfied with the content and quality of the reports presented by the EU-RL over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

c. To which extent have you been satisfied with the results of the PTs organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

d. Have you rejected a PT report of the EU-RL over the last 5 years?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify how often you have rejected a PT report, the reasons for the rejection, and actions undertaken:

Please specify

4. Organisation of workshops

a. Please provide the following information on the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total number of workshops					
Total number of Commission officials participating in workshop per year					

Comments

b. Has the EU-RL presented reports to the Commission on the outcome of the workshops organised over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

If Yes, how have these workshop reports been disseminated?

- ☐ Workshop reports are published on the EU-RL website
- ☐ Workshop reports are sent via email to participants
- ☐ Hard copies of the workshop reports are provided to participants
- ☐ Other (*Please specify*)

Comments

c. In these reports, or as a separate document, has the EU-RL summarised the evaluation feedback provided by participants in the workshops?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

d. In your opinion, has the EU-RL used the evaluation feedback provided by participants in workshops?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

e. In your opinion, has the quality of the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years been satisfactory?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

f. In your opinion, have the workshops organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years been relevant to the needs of the NRLs?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

5. Ad hoc training (i.e. training provided to NRLs in addition to / or organised in connection with the annual workshop(s))

a. Has the EU-RL presented to the Commission evaluation feedback from participants in ad hoc trainings organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

If Yes, has the EU-RL summarised the evaluation feedback provided by participants in ad hoc trainings in a report?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

If Yes, has, in your opinion, the EU-RL used the evaluation feedback provided by participants in ad hoc trainings?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

b. Has the EU-RL presented to the Commission reports/materials for participants in ad hoc trainings organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years?

Please select from the dropdown menu

If Yes, please specify ad hoc training reports/materials presented

c. In your opinion, has the quality of the ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years been satisfactory?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

d. In your opinion, have the ad hoc training activities organised by the EU-RL over the last 5 years been relevant to the needs of the NRLs?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Please explain your assessment

6. Other activities carried out to support NRLs

a. Please specify other activities carried out by the EU-RL (not previously mentioned in questions 4 to 8) to assist NRLs over the last 5 years.

- ☐ Provision of ad hoc expertise to NRLs by email/phone/letters (answers to specific queries from NRLs)
- ☐ Confirmation of analysis done by NRLs
- ☐ Development of databases
- ☐ Other (*Please specify*)

Comments

7. Impact of activities conducted over the last 5 years

a. Please assess the extent to which the following activities have harmonised and improved analytical methods used by the NRLs and the quality of analytical data produced by the NRLs over the last 5 years:

EU-RL activity	**Has the activity contributed to <u>improving analytical methods</u> in use in the NRLs?**	**Has the activity contributed to <u>improving the quality of the analytical data</u> produced by the NRLs?**	**Has the activity contributed to <u>harmonising analytical methods/quality of analytical data</u> in the NRLs?**
Development/ validation /assessment of analytical methods	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Distribution of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) [2]	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Distribution of standard materials	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Organisation of Proficiency Tests (PT)	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Organisation of workshops	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Ad hoc training	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*
Other activities carried out to support NRLs (Please specify)	*Please select*	*Please select*	*Please select*

Please provide examples of activities that have been particularly successful in harmonising and improving analytical methods and/or the quality of analytical data in the NRLs.

In case you answered improved […] very well, please provide insofar possible concrete evidence underpinning your statements.

8. Sharing information and communication with NRLs

a. Does the EU-RL have a website?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

[2] Including method validation and quality control procedures for pesticide residues analysis in food and feed for the EU-RLs in the field of pesticides.

If Yes, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the EU-RL website:

NRLs can find the information they need on the website of the EU-RL.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The content of the website of the EU-RL is relevant for the day-to-day activities of the NRL.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The website contains information that is not available elsewhere.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The website provides up-to-date information.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The website of the EU-RL is user friendly.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The web forum, if any, is useful for the exchange of information with other NRLs.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*

Comments

C. SCIENTIFIC ADVICE AND/OR EXPERTISE PROVIDED TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

9. Please provide the following information regarding the activities carried out to support the Commission's action:

a. Please specify the approximate number of requests for scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or for expertise from DG SANCO addressed to the EU-RL over the past 5 years:

	2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Number of very complex requests for scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or for expertise from DG SANCO per year[3]					
Number of fairly complex requests for scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or for expertise from DG SANCO per year[4]					
Number of simple requests for scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or for expertise from DG SANCO per year[5]					

Comments

[3] Very complex requests require more than 1 day to answer.
[4] Fairly complex requests require between half a day and one day to answer.
[5] Simple requests require less than half a day to answer.

b. In your opinion, has the EU-RL been able to provide scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or expertise based on state-of-the-art expert knowledge?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

c. Has the EU-RL been able to deliver the requested scientific advice related to analytical methodology and/or expertise in a timely manner?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

D. REQUIREMENTS OF EU LEGISLATION

10. Please provide the following assessment regarding the fulfilment of the requirements of the EU legislation by the EU-RL under your responsibility

a. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the EU-RL under your responsibility:[6]

The EU-RL has suitable qualified staff with adequate training in diagnostic and analytical techniques applied in its area of competence.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL possesses the equipment and products needed to carry out the tasks assigned to it.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL has an appropriate administrative infrastructure.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL ensures that its staff respects the confidential nature of certain subjects, results or communications.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL has sufficient knowledge of international standards and practices.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL has available, if appropriate, an updated list of available reference substances and reagents and an updated list of manufacturers and suppliers of such substances and reagents.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL takes account of research activities at national and Community level.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL has trained personnel available for emergency situations occurring within the Community.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*
The EU-RL contributes to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation and improves food and feed safety and animal health standards[7] in the EU.	*Please select from the dropdown menu*

Comments

[6] These statements are derived mainly from Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 which lays down a list of requirements that shall be fulfilled by the EU-RLs. See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:165:0001:0141:EN:PDF.

[7] As applicable for the EU-RL.

E. NETWORK OF EU-RLS-NRLS

11. Please provide the following assessment regarding the network of EU-RLs

a. In your opinion, are there overlaps of responsibilities and tasks of the EU-RL under your responsibility and the responsibilities and tasks of other EU-RLs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify overlaps and the other EU-RL(s) to which you refer:

Please specify

b. In your opinion, can synergies between the EU-RL under your responsibility and other EU-RLs be increased?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify how synergies can be increased and to which other EU-RL(s) you refer:

Please specify

c. In your view, is there a need to enlarge the field of competence of the EU-RL under your responsibility?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Comments

d. In your opinion, is there a need for creating any additional EU-RL(s)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

If Yes, please specify areas in which there is a need for creating additional EU-RL(s):

Please specify

F. CLOSING QUESTIONS

12. Other information

a. In your opinion, how could the potential of the EU-RLs to contribute to DG SANCO policy objectives, individually and as a network, be further deployed?

Please specify

b. In your opinion, what could be done to ensure the most cost-efficient use of the EU funding for the EU-RL network?

Please specify

c. In your opinion, to what extent are the requirements for the EU-RL set in the work programmes adequate and appropriate to achieve established food and feed safety and animal health objectives?

Please select from the dropdown menu

Comments

Annex 6: Funding received by EU-RLs in the field of food and feed safety from DG SANCO in 2009

Table 20: Funding received by EU-RLs in the field of food and feed safety from DG SANCO in 2009 (in Euro)

Field of expertise	EU-RL	Cost categories							
		Staff	Sub-contracting	Capital equipment (depreciation)	Consumables	Comparative tests	Missions	Overhead (7%)	Total operating expenditures
Biological risks	Animal proteins	401.633,06		39.031,99	74.702,03	2.767,07	5.410,13	36.648,10	560.192,38
	Antimicrobial resistance	255.205,21		3.149,38	56.549,72	12.277,04	4.647,25	23.228,00	355.056,60
	Campylobacter	201.145,26		11.030,95	21.721,99	2.746,88	4.217,80	16.860,40	257.723,28
	E. coli	160.601,52		14.340,47	36.426,53	4.933	3.774,86	15.405,35	235.481,73
	Listeria monocytoges	245.931,82		4.650,48	24.183,41	14.387,49	2.808,34	20.437,31	312.398,85
	Marine biotoxins	189.571,54	37.098,41	114.595,78	31.263,39	5.890,39	2.222,01	26.644,91	407.286,43
	Parasites	139.657,47		43.065,65	88.679,90	4.210,00	4.251,46	19.590,51	299.454,99
	Salmonella	246.505,22	14.665,48	3.808,20	24.852,81	12.366,77	2.876,02	21.355,21	326.429,71
	Bivalve molluscs	150.202,33			52.174,68	9.230,69	16.988,39	15.308,11	243.904,20
	Milk and milk products	197.029,92		14.215,05	20.489,25	7.856,14	1.530,90	16.878,49	257.999,75
	Staphylococci	224.182,65		3.997,62	32.309,57	4.172,56	1.982,93	18.665,17	285.310,50
Contaminants	Dioxins and PCBs	312.038,36		70.594,00	49.933,66	1.123,67	12.006,12	31.198,71	476.894,52
	Mycotoxins	190.765,09		4.939,92	60.695,65		1.509,89		257.910,55
	Heavy metals	141.118,41		39.227,50	67.941,65	869,73	2.059,51		251.216,80
	PAH	177.585,45		19.510,04	72.768,04		480,80		270.344,33
Pesticides	Cereals and feedingstuff	128.697,09	12.010,40	27.238,03	21.836,79	107,37	1.060	13.366,39	204.315,76
	Food of animal origin	164.755,82		34.842,14	18.026,22	855,80	4.253,23	15.591,32	238.324,53
	Fruit and vegetables	151.803,04	36.824,03	78.814,22	118.325,13	12.353,26	14.666,99	28.895,07	441.681,74
	Single residue methods	241.186,16	33.798,10	29.388,16			3.063,92	21.520,54	328.956,88
Residues	Antimicrobials and dyes	457.943,84		73.389,09	61.101,58	6.438,17	7.563,45	42.450,53	648.886,66
	Trace elements	144.289,88	3.451,81		67.087,02	3.455,85	2.604,91	15.462,26	236.351,73
	Veterinary medicines and beta-agonists	439.771,94				5.883,76	250,38	31.213,43	477.119,51
	Hormonal growth promoters, sedatives and mycotoxins	217.595,03		65.112,71	67.823,30			24.537,17	375.068,21
Other fields	GM food and feed	3.436,95					8.624,57		12.061,52
	Feed additives								0,00
	Food contact materials	151.428,75	0,00	4.542,60	46.427,28		0,00		202.398,63
Total		***5.334.081,81***	***137.848,23***	***699.483,98***	***1.115.319,59***	***111.925,64***	***108.853,55***	***455.256,98***	***7.962.769,79***

Source: Financial reports of EU-RLs

Annex 7: Terms of Reference

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Deputy Director General

TERMS OF REFERENCE CONCERNING THE EVALUATION OF EU REFERENCE LABORATORIES IN THE FIELD OF FOOD AND FEED AND ANIMAL HEALTH AND LIVE ANIMALS

1. TITLE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Evaluation of EU Reference Laboratories in the field of food and feed safety and animal health and live animals.

2. CONTEXT OF THE ASSIGNMENT

A number of EU Reference Laboratories[1] (former Community Reference Laboratories CRLs) have been gradually designated in the EU to provide scientific and technical support in the area of food and feed safety and animal health.[2]

23 RLs were designated in a number of legal acts before the entry into force of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council on official controls performed to ensure verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules. 17 RLs were designated in 2006 following a call for selection and designation launched in 2005, and finally 4 EU- RLs were designated in 2008 following a call for selection and designation launched in 2007. In total 44 EU-RLs for which EU financial support in 2010 amounted to 13.600.381 €.

Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 contains provisions which specify the general tasks, duties and requirements for EU-RLs and Annex VII established the consolidated list of EU-RLs within the areas of food and feed safety and animal health and live animals.

EU-RLs support the activities of the Commission in relation to risk management, and as appropriate risk assessment, mainly in the area of laboratory analysis, and coordinate activities of the National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) in the Member States. This network of EU and national RLs is also integral part of the contingency planning for major health risks such as foot-and-mouth disease, classical and African swine fever, Avian Influenza, African horse sickness etc. deeply rooted in the relevant vertical legislation on the control measures in relation to disease of which the EU is largely free and against which prophylactic vaccination is prohibited.

EU-RLs may receive EU financial aid for fulfilling their duties and functions within the framework of Council Decision 2009/470/EC on expenditure in the veterinary field. Commission Regulation (EC) No 1754/2006 of 28 November 2006 lays down detailed rules for the granting of EU financial assistance to EU-RLs for feed and food and the animal health sector pursuant to Article 31 of Decision 90/424/EEC. In accordance with Article 2 of this Regulation, the relationship between the Commission and the laboratory is laid down in a partnership agreement supported by a multi-annual work programme.

Within this framework, the financial contribution from the EU is granted for the implementation of an annual work programme, on condition that the activities are efficiently carried out as foreseen in the workprogramme, and that the beneficiary supplies all the necessary information within certain time limits.

In accordance with the Communication from the Commission on a new Animal Health Strategy and in the Action Plan of the new Animal Health strategy for the European Union

[1] Following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty the CRLs must now be named European Union Reference Laboratories

[2] http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/controls/reference_laboratories/index_en.htm

(2007-2013) [3], 11 of the EU-RLs in the field of animal health and live animals and the EU-RL for TSE have been evaluated in 2009. The main purpose of this evaluation was to assess the performance of the EU-RLs during the past 15 years (or since designation), especially as regards effectiveness and efficiency and to identify areas for improvement to ensure high quality and harmonisation of laboratory testing of animal diseases across the EU, taking into account the current animal health situation. The final report including the main conclusions of the evaluation is available on the SANCO website ("the 2009 evaluation").
http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/laboratories/eval_com_ref_labs_report_112009_en.pdf

The Commission considers necessary to complement the above evaluation by proceeding with the evaluation of the remaining existing EU-RLs, with the exclusion of those most recently designated (i.e. Equine diseases, Rabies, Crustacean diseases and Bovine Tuberculosis) .

As a result the following EU-RLs will be concerned by the evaluation envisaged in the present call: 26 laboratories in the field of food and feed safety: GMOs, Milk, Bivalve Molluscs, Salmonella, Marine Biotoxins, E. coli, Parasites, Listeria, Staphylococcus, Campylobacter, Anti-microbial Resistance, Animal Proteins, Food Contact Materials, Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, Heavy Metals, Mycotoxins, Pesticides in cereals, Pesticides in fruits and vegetables, Pesticides in food of animal origin, Pesticides with single residue methods, Dioxins and PCBs, Residues Fougères, Residues Berlin, Residues RIVM, Residues Rome, Feed additives; and 2 laboratories active in the field of animal health: brucellosis and foot and mouth disease. (See list of EU-RLs in Annex I). This evaluation will notably allow taking into account scientific and technical developments but also the recent enlargement exercises of the EU, and the entry into force of the Regulation 882/2004 in official controls.

The EU financial support for the EU-RLS subject to this evaluation amounted in 2010 to 9.123.381 € (67 % of the total budget).

In addition, the EU-RL for feed additives is financed through small fees paid by the applicants in the context of the authorisation procedure. The fees contribute to cover the cost of the evaluation of the methods of analysis for each feed additive as regards their fitness for official control purposes and also the maintenance of representative samples. The functioning of the consortia of NRLs ensures that all NRLs have the information and knowledge to use the methods for official control purposes. So far the EU-RL feed additives have not used the possibility of using any financial contribution granted under Commission Regulation (EC) N 1754/2006. Also, for the validation of GMOs, there is a specific fee system in place to be paid by the applicants for new authorisations, for renewal of authorisations and in the case of modification of authorisations where appropriate (see Commission Regulation (EC) No 1981/2006).

It is to be noted that EU-RLs belong to institutions (in all cases public institutions) not exclusively devoted to the tasks established in the EU legislation, and most of them are also the National Reference Laboratory for the Member State in which they operate, or as the case may be to further profit from synergistic effects, Regional Reference Laboratories of the World Organisation for Animal Health. The present evaluation will solely assess the tasks of the EU-RL in relation with the requirements laid down in the EU legislation (Regulation 882/2004 and other relevant acts) for the last 5 years.

[3] http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/strategy/index_en.htm

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The purpose of the present call is twofold:

1. provide the Commission with an evaluation of the functioning and performance of each of the laboratories listed in chapter 2 as well as the EU-RL network as a whole having regard to the obligations and duties of the EU-RLs laid down in EU law and in the approved working programmes.

2. provide the Commission, for each of the areas covered by the laboratories listed in chapter 2, with an assessment of:
    a) the relevance of the tasks currently assigned to the respective EU-RL for the overall objectives of EU legislation in the field of food and feed safety and animal health,
    b) possible overlaps or synergies between EU_RLs in a particular field , and the appropriateness of their current mandate.

The evaluation shall specifically take into account:

3. for the EU-RLs in the animal health field, the objectives and results of the 2009 evaluation, in order to complement its conclusions in relations to the 2 laboratories subject to the present exercise,
4. for the laboratories for food and feed, how the assistance provided by the EU-RLs contributes to the overall objective of ensuring food and feed safety and the protection of public health, notably through their task of providing expertise on analytical questions (e.g. method development, method validation, proficiency testing, etc).

The work of the contractor shall be aimed at providing:

5. sound and evidence-based responses to the questions under chapter 5.1 and 5.2 below
6. reasoned conclusions in relation to possible problems and or issues to be addressed,
7. challenges (present and foreseeable) and areas for improvement in relation to questions in chapter 5.3.

The contractor should also suggest options for improvement of the current structure and functioning of the EU-RLs network.

4. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

A steering group will be established by DG SANCO to monitor the evaluation. The evaluation will include the following tasks:

4.1. Planning and methodology

The evaluators are expected to develop and implement a methodology that ensures that all the evaluation questions are sufficiently well covered and that clear conclusions and recommendations for improvement of current EU-RLs individually and as a network can be drawn , including:

1. a detailed planning of the evaluation, at least covering: a project plan, detailed timetable, budget, a list of experts and their CVs to be committed to each task in

the project plan in the scope of this contract; [Note: no on the spot visits are foreseen in this evaluation].

2. a description of the methodology proposed for assessing the items presented in chapter 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, including surveys to EU-RLs, Competent Authorities in the MS, and NRLs (National Reference Laboratories);

3. a description of the methodology for assessing possible options for the future. (items presented in chapter 5.2.3) and the relevance effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the EU-RLs' network)

The evaluators shall provide an overview of answers received from the stakeholders and EU-RLs.

4.2. Evaluation questions

4.2.1. Evaluation of the fulfilment of the duties and tasks established in the legislation and in the work programmes.

The contractor must carry out the evaluation taking into account the obligations and tasks established for each EU-RL in the EU legislation and in the approved multi-annual and annual work programmes. This part of the evaluation will consist in collecting data and analysing in detail particular factors of the functioning of EU-RL's in order to evaluate their performance as regards effectiveness and efficiency. A summary of the main findings shall be elaborated for each EU-RL. The evaluators shall assess at least the following issues:

For the EU-RLs food and feed

a) Has the assistance of EU-RLs to the NRLs been adequate in order to improve analytical methods and/or the quality of analytical data generated in the EU (e.g. contaminants)?

   The evaluators shall assess the performance of the EU-RL during the last 5 years (where applicable) taking into account in particular the activities carried out to ensure harmonisation and improvement of analytical methods and/or quality of analytical data in the NRLs by e.g. developing and validating state of the art analytical methods, distribution of SOPs and standard materials and dissemination of information/knowledge about new analytical methods through the EU-RL-NRLs network.

b) To what extent do the analytical methods and techniques developed and/or validated and/or assessed by the EU-RLs respond to state of the art standards and are appropriate to ensure food and feed safety?

c) Have the coordination and training activities carried out by EU-RLs been satisfactory? The evaluators shall assess the coordination and training activities of the EU-RLs taking particular into account:

   1. the organisation of proficiency tests (PT): quality, frequency, level of participation by the NRLs (and for the pesticides EU-RLs also of the routine laboratories and third countries, follow-up in case of lack of performance;

2. the quality and performance of the tools utilised to share information and communicate with NRLs, in particular of restricted access web based tools which include as well the results of PTs;

3. the quality and relevance of training activities organised (including workshops and ad hoc training), based on how the training is planned, how evaluation feedback from trainees (including Member States' representatives in the case of workshops) is used, and how training/workshop reports are disseminated following the training session;

d) Are the activities carried to support the Commission's action, for instance to provide scientific advice and/or expertise, or input to the work of international organisations, satisfactory? Are they timely delivered? Are they based on state of the art expert knowledge? Are there scientific papers published in internationally recognised meetings or publications?

e) To what extend does the EU-RL fulfil the requirements laid down in Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation?

For the EU-RLs brucellosis and foot and mouth disease:

a) To what extend does the EU-RL fulfil the requirements laid down in Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and other relevant EU legislation and respond to the needs arising from 64/432/EEC and 91/68/EEC?

b) Does the EU-RL for Foot and Mouth disease fulfil the requirements laid down in Council Directive 2003/85/EC of 29 September 2003 on Community measures for the control of foot-and-mouth disease repealing Directive 85/511/EEC and Decisions 89/531/EEC and 91/665/EEC and amending Directive 92/46/EEC ?

c) Has the assistance of EU-RLs to other laboratories been adequate in order to improve diagnostic of animal diseases in the EU? The evaluators shall asses how the EU-RLs have contributed to improve the diagnosis of animal diseases since their designation taking into account:

1. Activities and methods used by EU-RLs to ensure the correct diagnosis of animal diseases by National Reference Laboratories.

2. Ring trails carried out and assessment of their effectiveness.

3. Development of new diagnostic tools by the EU-RLs.

4. Supply of diagnostic tools to other laboratories.

5. Assistance to other laboratories for diagnosis in case of an outbreak.

c) Have the coordination activities carried out by EU-RLs been satisfactory? The evaluators shall assess the coordination activities of the EU-RLs taking particular attention to:

1. Activities carried out to ensure harmonisation of diagnostic methods

2. Coordination with National Reference Laboratories.

3. Regular consultation to the Commission on these coordination activities.

4. Exchange of information with other international reference laboratories.

d) Has the training carried out by the EU-RLs been sufficient to improve the diagnosis of animal diseases since the designation? Are these training activities sustainable in the long term? The evaluators shall analyse the activities carried out for training and retraining of experts and staff (courses, documents). The evaluators shall also assess the activities carried out to provide scientific advice and expertise as regards disease surveillance and controls.

4.2.2. Evaluation of the current network of EU-RLs

Taking into account the objectives of EU legislation and policy in the fields of food and feed safety, plant and animal health and welfare, the existing and future potential threats to human, animal and plant health, and the new challenges in these areas resulting from scientific, technical and societal developments, the contractor shall respond to the questions below.

a) To what extend does the EU-RLs in each specific area contribute to the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EU legislation in the field of animal health and food and feed safety and improve food and feed safety and animal health standards in the EU?
b) In which cases (if any) the activities of the EU-RLs do not contribute efficiently/satisfactorily to the development and the implementation of SANCO policy objectives above and for what reasons, providing appropriate examples and suggesting proposals for change.

c) In view of the policy objectives referred to above, can synergies between different EU-RLs being increased? Are there overlaps between different laboratories? Are there elements that could recommend the creation of new EU-RLs and if so in which areas?
d) To what extent are the requirements for the EU-RLs set in the EU legislation and in the work programmes adequate and appropriate to achieve established food and feed safety and animal health objectives?

e) Is the EU financial aid for EU-RLs used in an effective and efficient manner as regards to the objectives above?

4.2.3. Identification of possible problems, challenges and areas for improvement, proposed

According to the results of the analysis carried out, the contractor shall identify possible problems, challenges and areas for improvement in the current structure of EU-RLs and propose options for improvement. The evaluators shall in particular consider the following issues:

a) how the potential of the EU-RLs to contribute to DG SANCO policy objectives, individually and as a network, could be fully deployed,

b) how to address potential overlaps of responsibilities and tasks between some EU-RLs,

c) how to ensure that potential synergies between two or more EU-RLs are deployed (please consider the possibility to merge or better coordinate the work of two or several laboratories),

d) how to ensure the most cost efficient use of EU funding.

5. EU-RLs FEEDBACK

The evaluators shall collect relevant feedback from the EU-RLs, in particular on the issues raised by questions 5.2.1.and 5.2.2 above, and on the difficulties they might experience in the implementation of their tasks and in communicating with the Commission services.
Their proposals in view of resolving such issues and of improving the efficiency of output delivery should be recorded and reported.

6. REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED

6.1. Inception report

The evaluator must provide the Commission services with an inception report on the detailed planning of the evaluation, including methodology, and data sources to be used. The report will describe evaluators understanding of the functioning of the EU-RLs network and of the evaluation objectives, issues and questions. This document will present in detail how the method proposed by the evaluator is going to be implemented and in particular how the method will answer each evaluation question and provide a judgement. This document will provide the steering group with the opportunity to make a final check of the feasibility of the method proposed and the extent to which it corresponds with the information needs outlined in the terms of reference.

The inception report will be submitted at the latest 6 weeks after the signature of the contract. The steering group of the evaluation will provide the evaluators with comments and remarks at the latest 2 weeks after the presentation of the inception report.

6.2. Intermediate results and progress report

The evaluator must provide the Commission services with a written and oral presentation of the intermediate results of the evaluation including a summary of the main findings for each EU-RL. This progress report will provide the steering group with the opportunity to check whether the evaluation is on schedule and whether the evaluation has actually focused on the specified information needs.

This task will be carried out 3 months after the signing of the contract at latest. The steering group will provide the evaluators with comments and remarks at the latest 2 weeks after the presentation of the intermediate results.

6.3. Draft final report and final report

a) Draft final report:

The evaluator must provide the Commission services with a written and oral presentation on the draft final results. The draft final report will provide the conclusions of the evaluator in respect to the evaluation questions in the terms of reference. These conclusions will be clearly based on evidence generated through the evaluation. Judgements provided should be clear, objective and explicit. This document will also contain recommendations developed on the basis of the conclusions reached by the evaluator. The structure of the draft final report will respect the structure set up by common Evaluation Standards and include an executive summary (synthesis of main analyses and conclusions, added value of the proposals including cost/benefits), main report (presenting in full the results of the analyses, conclusions and recommendations), technical annexes, and a one-page summary on the Key Messages of the evaluation.

The draft final report will be submitted at the latest 6 months after the signature of the contract. The steering group will provide the evaluators with comments and remarks at the latest 2 weeks after the presentation of the draft final report.

b) Final report

The evaluator must provide the Commission services with a written and oral presentation on the final results. The final report will take into account the results of quality assessment and discussions with the steering group about the draft final report insofar as they do not interfere with the autonomy of the evaluators in respect to their conclusions. The final executive summary and Key Messages page will be part of it.

The following requirements will separately apply for each part of the study.

- The reports and presentations will be provided in English under electronic format compatible with Commission's software. Each deliverable will be followed by a presentation in Commission's office in Brussels.

- Deliverables will be submitted to the established steering group, which may ask for complementary information or propose adjustments in order to redirect the work when necessary. Deliverables must be accepted by the Commission. With work progressing and in the light of new findings, revisions of deliverables already approved may be necessary.

- Deliverables shall be drafted in a concise and easily understandable language. The presentation of the texts, tables and graphs has to be clear and complete and correspond to commonly recognised standards for studies to be published.

- The volume of final deliverable text will not exceed 150 pages (Times New Roman 12 or equivalent, excluding annexes). The core text has to be concentrated on the assessment of the main study items. An executive summary of not more than five pages should be included in the final report. Background information should be presented in annexes.

7. TIMETABLE OF THE CONTRACT

The evaluation will be performed within 6 months from the date of signature of the contract. The contractor is expected to start working immediately after the contract has been signed.

The contract involves regular meetings in Brussels between the Steering Group and the contractor in accordance with the programme set up in Table 1. Deadlines of the table refer to the date of delivery by the contractor to the Commission. Oral presentation should take place in Brussels in Commission's office after each delivery within two weeks after the delivery. The Steering Group will provide its comments to the evaluators two weeks after the presentations at the latest.

Timetable and deliverables

Deliverables	**Deadline after signature**
Kick off meeting	15 days
Inception report	4 weeks
Electronic presentation intermediate results + progress report	3 months
Draft final report	5 months
Final report	6 months

ANNEX I

LIST OF EU REFERENCE LABORATORIES (EU-RL) ANIMAL HEALTH

NAME OF LABORATORY	Address
EU-RL for Brucellosis	AFSSA Alfort Unité zoonoses bactériennes 23 avenue du Général de Gaulle 94 706 Maisons Alfort CEDEX France
EU-RL for Foot and Mouth disease	Institute for Animal Health, Pirbright Laboratory, Pirbright, Woking, Surrey GU24 ONF United Kingdom

LIST OF EU REFERENCE LABORATORIES (EU-RLs) FOOD AND FEED

NAME OF LABORATORY	Address
GMOs (JRC)	Joint Research Centre TP 260, Via E. Fermi, 1 I-21020 Ispra
Milk	AFSSA — Laboratoire d'études et de recherches sur la qualité des aliments et sur les procédés agroalimentaires (LERQAP) 23, avenue du Général de Gaulle F-94700 Maisons-Alfort, France
Bivalve molluscs	The laboratory of the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) Weymouth Laboratory Barrack Road, The Nothe, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 8UB, UK Director: David
Salmonella	Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezondheid en Milieu (RIVM) Postbus 1 3720 BA Bilthoven, The Netherlands
Marine biotoxins	Agencia Española de Seguridad Alimentaria (AESAN) Estación Marítima, s/n E-36200 Vigo, Spain
Eschirichia Coli	Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS) Viale Regina Elena 299

	I-00161 Roma, Italy
Parasites	Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS) Viale Regina Elena 299 I-00161 Roma, Italy
Listeria (AFSSA, Paris, FR)	AFSSA — Laboratoire d'études et de recherches sur la qualité des aliments et sur les procédés agroalimentaires (LERQAP) 23, avenue du Général de Gaulle F-94700 Maisons-Alfort, France
Staphylococci	AFSSA — Laboratoire d'études et de recherches sur la qualité des aliments et sur les procédés agroalimentaires (LERQAP) 23, avenue du Général de Gaulle F-94700 Maisons-Alfort, France Director: Bertrand
Campylobacter	Statens Veterinärmedicinska Anstalt (SVA) SE-751 89 Uppsala, Sweden
Anti-microbial resistance	The national Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark, Anker Engelunds Vej 1, DK-2800, Denmark
Animal Proteins	Centre wallon de recherches agronomiques (CRA-W) Chaussé de Namur, 24 B-5030 Gembloux, Belgium
Food contact materials	Joint Research Centre TP 260, Via E. Fermi, 1 I-21020 Ispra
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons	Joint Research Centre Retieseweg 111 B-2440 Geel. Belgium
Heavy metals in food and feed	Joint Research Centre Retieseweg 111 B-2440 Geel. Belgium
Mycotoxins	Joint Research Centre Retieseweg 111 B-2440 Geel. Belgium
Pesticides (cereals and feedingstuffs)	Technical University of Denmark National Food Institute Anker Engelunds Vej 1 DK-2800 Lyngby Denmark
Pesticides (food of animal origin)	Chemisches und Veterinäruntersuchungsamt (CVUA) Freiburg Bissierstrasse 5 D-79114 Freiburg Germany

Pesticides (single residue methods)	Chemisches und Veterinäruntersuchungsamt (CVUA) Stuttgart Schaflandstrasse 3/2 D-70736 Stuttgart Germany
Pesticides (fruit and vegetables)	Grupo de Residuos de Plaguicidas de la Universidad de Almería (PRRG) Carretera Sacramento s/n E-04120 Almería Spain
Dioxins and PCBs	CVUA Freiburg Postfach 100462 79123 Freiburg
Residues (antibiotics and illegal substances)	AFSSA-Fougères LERMVD Agence Française de Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments Laboratoire d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Médicaments Vétérinaires et les Désinfectants - Site de Fougères BP 90203 - La Haute Marche - Javene F-35302 Fougères - France
Residues (veterinary medicines and beta-agonists)	Bundesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit Diedersdorfer Weg 1 D-12277 Berlin, Germany
Residues (trace elements)	Istituto Superiore di Sanità- ISS Viale Regina Elena, 299 I-00161 Rome - Italy
Residues (hormones, mycotoxins)	RIVM-RIKILT - Instituut voor Voedselveiligheid Akkermaalsbos 2, gebouw 123 6708 WB Wageningen The Netherlands
Feed additives (JRC Geel)	Community Reference Laboratory for Feed Additives Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (IRMM) Joint Research Centre Retieseweg 111 B-2440 Geel. Belgium

ANNEX II. RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION (non_exhaustive)

- Commission Regulation (EC) N 1754/2006 of 28 November 2006 laying down detailed rules for the granting of Community financial assistance to Community reference laboratories for feed and food in animal health sector.

- Regulation (EC) N 882/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules.

- Council Directive 88/320/EEC of 7 June 1988 on inspection and verification of Good Laboratory Practice.

- Commission Decision 2007/337/EC of 8 May 2007 on financial aid from the Community for the year 2007 for certain Community reference laboratories in the field of animal health and live animals

- Council Directive 96/23/EC of 23 may 1996 on measures to monitor certain substances and residues thereof in live animals and animal products.

- Regulation (EC) N 396/2005 of the European Parliament and the Council on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin.

- Council Directive 2003/85/EC of 29 September 2003 on Community measures for the control of foot-and-mouth disease repealing Directive 85/511/EEC and Decisions 89/531/EEC and 91/665/EEC and amending Directive 92/46/EEC

- Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2003 on additives for use in animal nutrition.

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 378/2005 of 4 March 2005 on detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the duties and tasks of the Community Reference Laboratory concerning applications for authorizations of feed additives. (amended by Commission Regulation Commission Regulation (EC) No 850/2007 and by Commission Regulation (EC) No 885/2009)

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 1981/2006 of 22 December 2006 on detailed rules for the implementation of Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the Community reference laboratory for genetically modified organisms

- Details on the legal bases, the list of laboratories, their tasks and the financing and the Work Programmes of the Community Reference Laboratories in the Field of Animal Health and Live Animals for 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 can be found in **http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/laboratories/index_en.htm**

Links:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/controls/reference_laboratories/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/laboratories/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/controlmeasures/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/strategy/index_en.htm

http://www.crl-pesticides.eu/docs/public/home.asp?LabID=100&Lang=EN
Regulation on feed additives:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/animalnutrition/feedadditives/index_en.htm

CRL feed additives specific site:
http://www.irmm.jrc.be/html/CRLs/crl_feed_additives/index.htm