

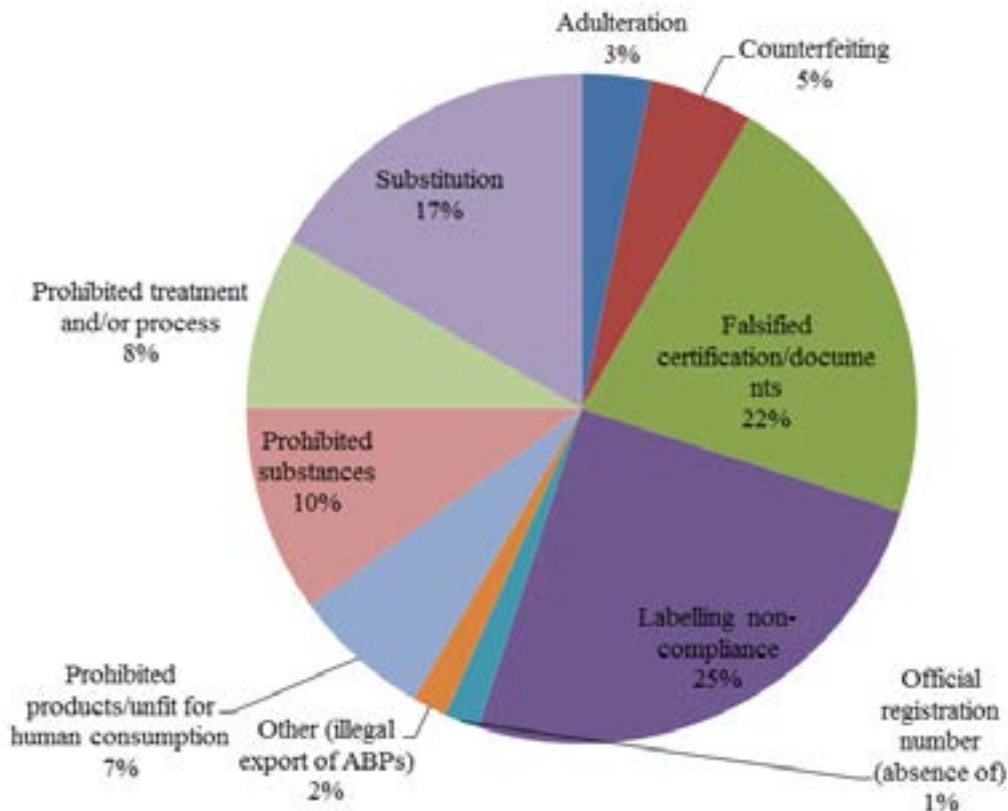
Food Fraud Network Activity Report 2014

The Food Fraud Network – Background and types of cases exchanged

The EU Food Fraud Network (FFN) is comprised of 28 national food fraud contact points which are the authorities designated by each EU Member States for the purposes of ensuring cross-border administrative assistance and cooperation, where action is required in more than one Member State, on matters that relate to potential fraudulent deceptive practices (“food fraud”). These national contact points are liaison bodies in the meaning of Article 35 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and are called food fraud contact points (FFCPs). The FFN enables exchanges on potential food fraud cases and also serves as a forum for discussion on the coordination and prioritisation of action at EU level on “food fraud” matters.

In 2014, interaction on 60 cases took place through the Network. As shown in the chart, alleged violations were mostly related to labelling non-compliances (for instance with regard to durability dates, addition of water or ingredients), falsified certification and/or documents and substitution, such as replacement of a higher value species with a lower value species.

Cases exchanged on the FFN by type of alleged violation in 2014



Meat products are the category of foodstuffs for which the majority of exchanges took place through the Network in 2014, followed by fish products and honey. Importantly, however, statistical conclusions related to potential “food fraud” cases in Europe cannot yet be drawn from these data given that Member States may also exchange information outside of the Food Fraud Network and that cases which do not have a cross-border dimension, i.e. which occur at purely national level, are not exchanged via the Network.

The Administrative Assistance and Cooperation System

During the horsemeat crisis in 2013, the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) was used for the purposes of disseminating relevant information and providing feedback relative to controls that had been carried out (see [RASFF 2013 Annual Report](#), page 24).

This experience showed that the RASFF model of communication could be used as a starting point to build a dedicated system for administrative assistance and cooperation, albeit with the appropriate adjustments required by the specificities of administrative assistance and cooperation exchanges. Indeed, these differ from the RASFF communication model primarily because they take place on a bilateral basis and because, as a rule, notifications in the form of requests should be followed by a response from the requested competent authority.

The Commission is currently finalising work to equip the Food Fraud Network with a dedicated IT tool – the Administrative Assistance and Cooperation (AAC) System – for the handling of cases.

The testing phase for the pilot version of the AAC System, planned for the first semester of 2015, foresees an internal testing phase within the European Commission as well as a subsequent testing phase between a few Member States. The AAC System should be operational by the second semester of 2015.