Inter Federal Committee Tracing & Testing

Info session

1st & 5th of March 2021

Guidelines

🎤 **Keep your microphone muted when not speaking**

🙋 **During the Q&A, ask questions by raising your hand**

💬 **Throughout the presentation, ask questions using the chat function**

📹 **Use the option to share your screen**

📞 **In case of emergency, call the hotline +32 2 897 35 85**
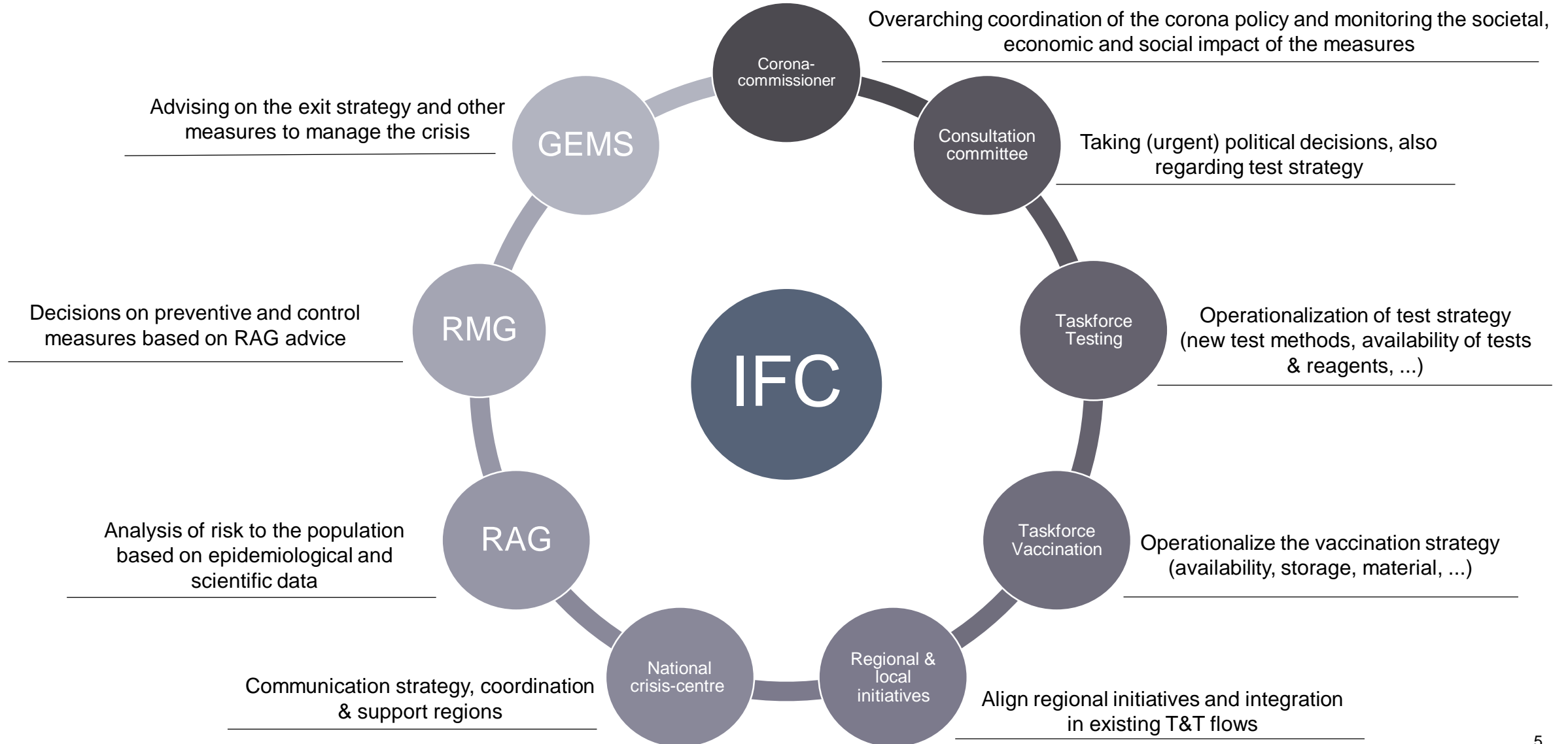Conference ID: 534 134 323# (FR) - 969 845 106# (NL)

Agenda

1. Introduction

2. Testing & tracing

3. Speed & effectiveness

4. The public's role

5. Next steps

1. Introduction

Introduction
IFC Testing & Tracing Role

Overarching coordination of the corona policy and monitoring the societal, economic and social impact of the measures

Taking (urgent) political decisions, also regarding test strategy

Operationalization of test strategy (new test methods, availability of tests & reagents, ...)

Operationalize the vaccination strategy (availability, storage, material, ...)

Align regional initiatives and integration in existing T&T flows

Communication strategy, coordination & support regions

Analysis of risk to the population based on epidemiological and scientific data

Decisions on preventive and control measures based on RAG advice

Advising on the exit strategy and other measures to manage the crisis

Corona-commissioner

Consultation committee

Taskforce Testing

Taskforce Vaccination

Regional & local initiatives

National crisis-centre

RAG

RMG

GEMS

IFC

Introduction
IFC Testing & Tracing Governance

Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health				
Inter-Federal Committee testing & tracing				
Political coordination & validation	Official implementation & coordination	Supporting operational implementation	Scientific expertise	Specific expertise
Cabinets VL, BRU, WAL, Féd. WAL-BRU, OST	Federated entities services (health inspectors, ..)	Smals / Federal public services (FOD VG, RIZIV,..)	Sciensano	Ad-hoc experts in working groups
	HR (call agents, field agents, rapid field intervention teams)	Call center & field agent operations, e-learning, database management / Coordination of labs	Content & epidemiological input, coordination of health institutions & doctors, implementation, coordination crisis structures (RAG,..)	Additional support for specific projects such as communication, app development, consultation with GP associations, ...

Introduction
Overview of the history

Guiding principles at the start

IT-supported approach due to the expected scale of the pandemic (as opposed to a manual or individual approach)

Speed is crucial: the entire chain from the moment of contamination to the detection of contacts must be as short as possible

Relieve GPs as much as possible by reducing administrative workload and allowing them to focus on core business (analyze symptoms)

Structural coordination between all concerned regions, communities and parties is indispensable for successful contact tracing

April 2020

19 GEES Task Force decision to create Sciensano database with personal test results

23 Federated entities agree to use central ICT platform contact centers for contact tracing

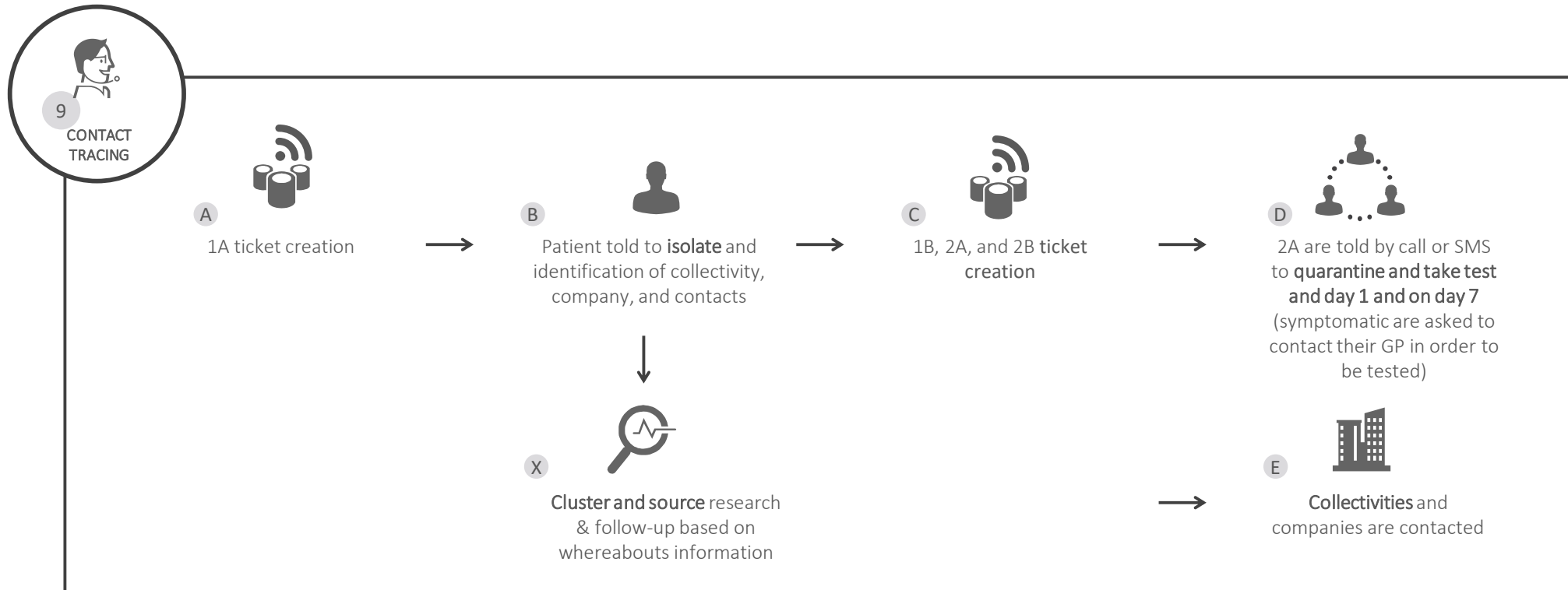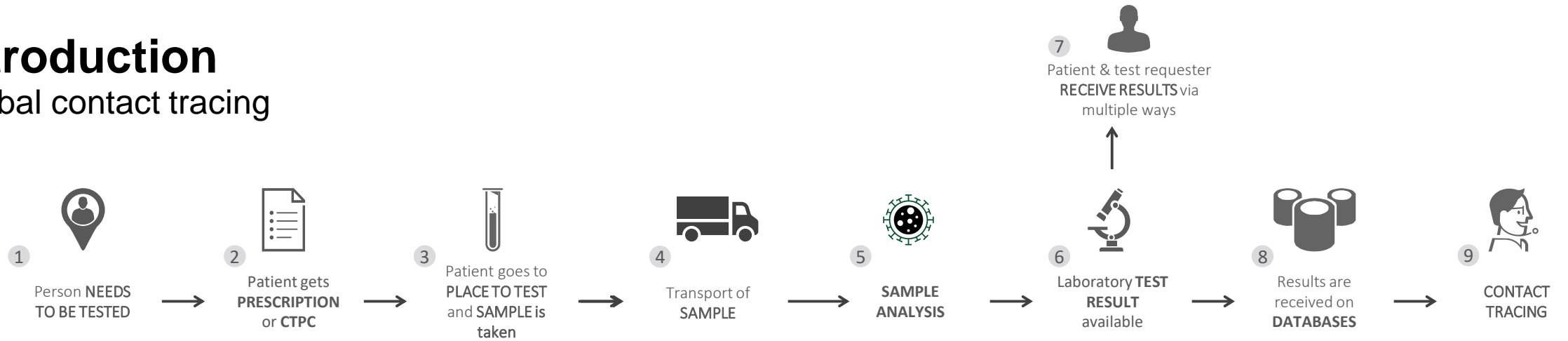**27** Tendering for ICT platform contact centers

29 IMC decision to start IFC

May 2020

7 ICT platform contact centers in use for contact tracing

Introduction
Global contact tracing

1 Person **NEEDS TO BE TESTED**

→

2 Patient gets **PRESCRIPTION** or **CTPC**

→

3 Patient goes to **PLACE TO TEST** and **SAMPLE** is taken

→

4 Transport of **SAMPLE**

→

5 **SAMPLE ANALYSIS**

→

6 Laboratory **TEST RESULT** available

→

8 Results are received on **DATABASES**

→

9 **CONTACT TRACING**

7 Patient & test requester **RECEIVE RESULTS** via multiple ways

---

9 CONTACT TRACING

A 1A ticket creation

→

B Patient told to **isolate** and identification of collectivity, company, and contacts

→

C 1B, 2A, and 2B **ticket creation**

→

D 2A are told by call or SMS to **quarantine and take test and day 1 and on day 7** (symptomatic are asked to contact their GP in order to be tested)

X Cluster and source research & follow-up based on whereabouts information
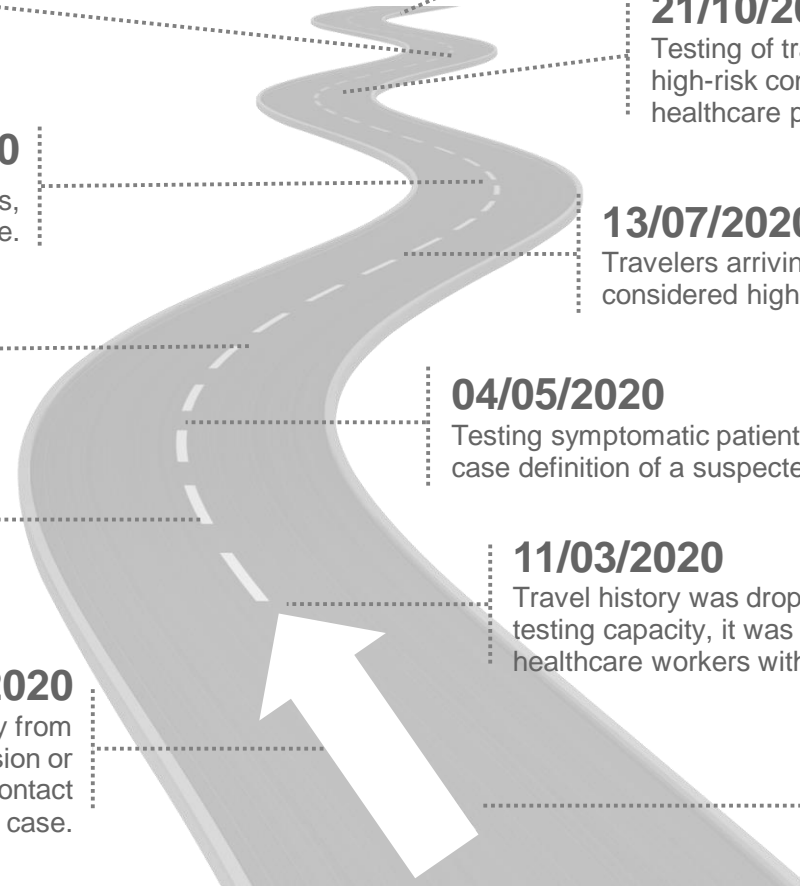
E Collectivities and companies are contacted

2. Testing & tracing

Testing & tracing
Timeline Changes in Test Strategy

Starting from 25/01/2021
Asymptomatic high-risk contacts are tested on day 1 and 7. The 1st test allows additional measures to be taken in case of a positive test result. The second test covers the incubation period.

Starting from 31/12/2020
Travelers returning from a red zone are tested on day 1 and day 7.

21/10/2020-23/11/2020
Testing of travelers from high-risk areas abroad and testing of asymptomatic high-risk contacts was temporarily suspended (exceptions were made for healthcare professionals or those from essential sectors).

Starting from 01/10/2020
The quarantine is shortened to 10 days, 7 days if the test negative.

13/07/2020
Travelers arriving in Belgium from areas that are considered high-risk abroad are also tested.

12/06/2020
Asymptomatic high-risk contacts from a confirmed COVID-19 case are also tested.

04/05/2020
Testing symptomatic patients meeting the case definition of a suspected case.

28/03/2020
Testing is extended to inlcude the the first cases (up to a maximum of 5) of a cluster in a nursing home that meets the case definition.

11/03/2020
Travel history was dropped as a criterion for testing. Due to the limited testing capacity, it was decided to test only hospitalized patients and healthcare workers with respiratory symptoms and fever.
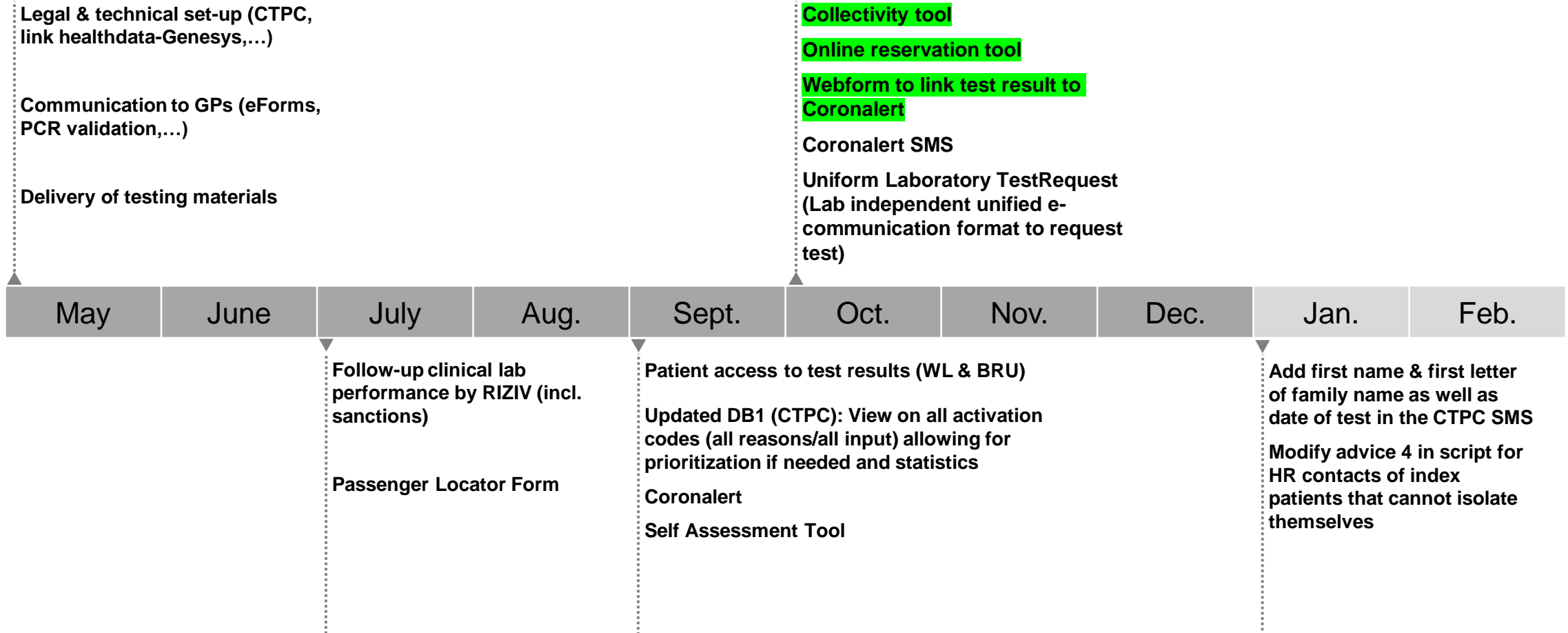
Starting from 13/02/2020
Test symptomatic patients with a travel history from an area of recognized local transmission or symptomatic patients who were in physical contact with a laboratory confirmed case.

01/01/2020-13/02/2020
Test symptomatic travelers returning from Wuhan.

Testing
Timeline Testing: Milestones & continuous improvements

Legal & technical set-up (CTPC, link healthdata-Genesys,…)

Communication to GPs (eForms, PCR validation,…)

Delivery of testing materials

<mark>**Collectivity tool**</mark>

<mark>**Online reservation tool**</mark>

<mark>**Webform to link test result to Coronalert**</mark>

Coronalert SMS

Uniform Laboratory TestRequest (Lab independent unified e-communication format to request test)

May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.

Follow-up clinical lab performance by RIZIV (incl. sanctions)

Passenger Locator Form

Patient access to test results (WL & BRU)

Updated DB1 (CTPC): View on all activation codes (all reasons/all input) allowing for prioritization if needed and statistics

Coronalert

Self Assessment Tool

Add first name & first letter of family name as well as date of test in the CTPC SMS

Modify advice 4 in script for HR contacts of index patients that cannot isolate themselves

Testing
Testing improvements

What?	*Why?*	*Impact*

November – Collectivity tool

Tool allowing company and collectivity doctors to prescribe tests (assign a CTPC), consult test results, and manage their users and access.	► Allowing company and collectivity doctors to prescribe and consult test results ► Releasing stress on GPs ► Increase speed of testing	► 855 different GPs prescribed tests using the tool for companies and collectivities ► 153.800 CTPC have been prescribed by company and collectivity GPs (27/12 – 25/2)

November - Online reservation tool

Online reservation tool for testing. Includes the creation of a CTPC database and sampling post database	► Clear and user-friendly platform to reserve the moment of sample collection in a triage center or lab ► Manage the influx of test requests ► Improve data quality	► Over 450.000 reservations since go-live

November – Webform to link test result to Coronalert

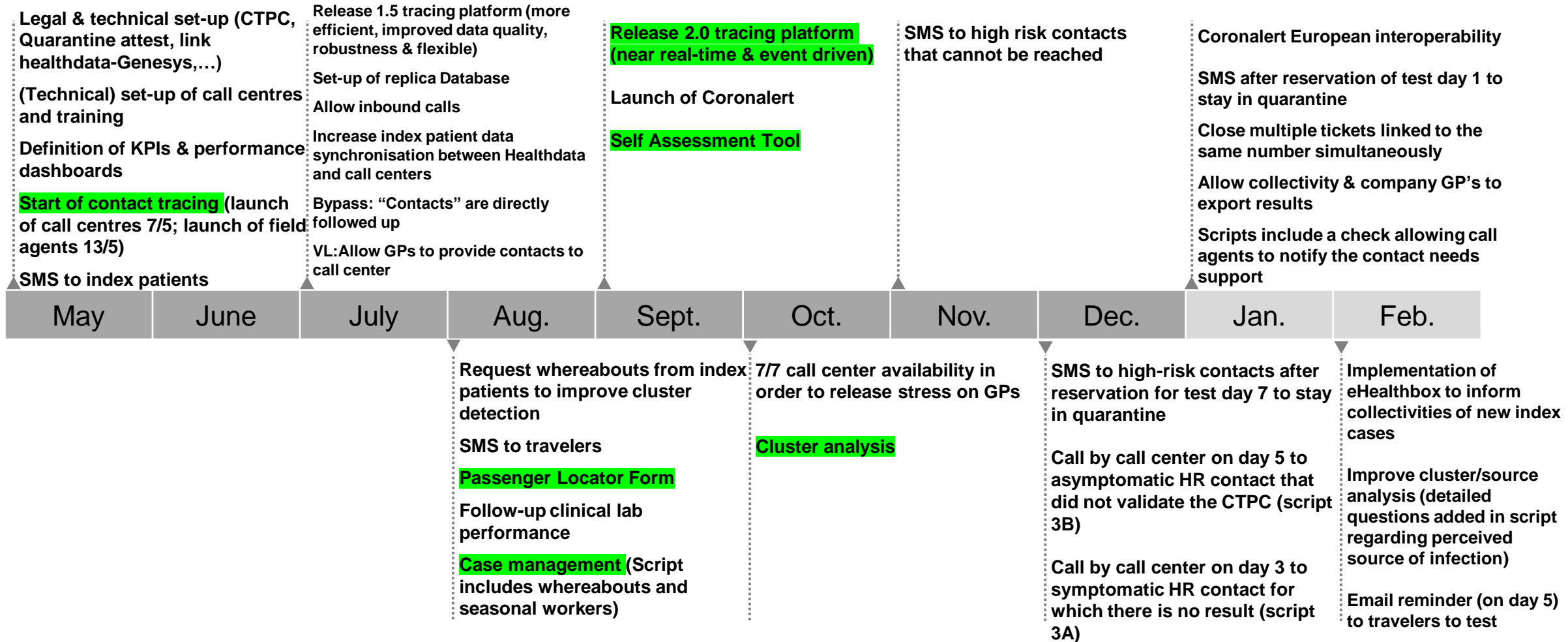|		
The person to be tested, can register together with the test code received on the app. This way, this person will also receive the test result in the app when it becomes available.	► Quick access to the test result ► Relieves the medical personal to communicate the test results	► Over 489.000 test results received on Coronalert (since-go-live until 28/2/21)

12

Tracing
Timeline Tracing: Milestones & continuous improvements

Legal & technical set-up (CTPC, Quarantine attest, link healthdata-Genesys,…)

(Technical) set-up of call centres and training

Definition of KPIs & performance dashboards

Start of contact tracing (launch of call centres 7/5; launch of field agents 13/5)

SMS to index patients

Release 1.5 tracing platform (more efficient, improved data quality, robustness & flexible)

Set-up of replica Database

Allow inbound calls

Increase index patient data synchronisation between Healthdata and call centers

Bypass: "Contacts" are directly followed up

VL:Allow GPs to provide contacts to call center

Release 2.0 tracing platform (near real-time & event driven)

Launch of Coronalert

Self Assessment Tool

SMS to high risk contacts that cannot be reached

Coronalert European interoperability

SMS after reservation of test day 1 to stay in quarantine

Close multiple tickets linked to the same number simultaneously

Allow collectivity & company GP's to export results

Scripts include a check allowing call agents to notify the contact needs support

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May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.

Request whereabouts from index patients to improve cluster detection

SMS to travelers

Passenger Locator Form

Follow-up clinical lab performance

Case management (Script includes whereabouts and seasonal workers)

7/7 call center availability in order to release stress on GPs

Cluster analysis

SMS to high-risk contacts after reservation for test day 7 to stay in quarantine

Call by call center on day 5 to asymptomatic HR contact that did not validate the CTPC (script 3B)

Call by call center on day 3 to symptomatic HR contact for which there is no result (script 3A)

Implementation of eHealthbox to inform collectivities of new index cases

Improve cluster/source analysis (detailed questions added in script regarding perceived source of infection)

Email reminder (on day 5) to travelers to test

Tracing
Tracing improvements

What?	*Why?*	*Impact*

May – Set up of call centers and field agents

Tracing/informing
- Index patients
- Companies
- High- and low-risk contacts

► Trace contacts & possible clusters

► Follow up if LR contact develops symptoms

► Remind to isolate, quarantine, and test

► Provide guidance and clarity

► 487.124 index cases successfully reached

► 407.323 HR contact contacts successfully reached

(from May 15 2020 to February 22 2021)

August – Passenger Locator Form

Form that needs to be filled in by all persons returning to Belgium (who stayed abroad longer than 48 hours) and all persons travelling through Belgium and who are staying at least 48 hours.

► Simple form to communicate travel information

► Identify travelers

► Strengthen data/information quality

► Assess travel-related risk

► 2.725.664 PLF have been collected (August 1 2020 to February 14 2021)
  ► 87% were travelers from red zones
  ► 3.3% were travelers from orange zones

September – Self Assessment Tool

Self-assessment questionnaire allowing to automatically assess the risk related to the travelers' behavior during trip/abroad.

► Assess risk related to traveler's behavior

► Raise awareness of importance of hygiene measures

► Allow finetuning the testing approach (differentiating travelers based on risk of behavior)

► Several scores were implemented to avoid 'import' of virus from abroad: 450 -> 300 -> 200 (red zone)
► 25/01/21:
  ► Test and quarantine when SAT>0 (non professional travel)
  ► SAT threshold set to 0 for UK, South Africa and the countries of South America (professional travel), other countries when SAT>250

14

Tracing
Tracing improvements

What?	*Why?*	*Impact*

August – Case Management

Question added in the index patient script in order to identify the possible source of infection. Whereabouts data/information are exported on daily basis to regions to support local tracing initiatives.

- ► Enable 'local' follow up/contact tracing
- ► Leverage existing tools and information

- ► A probable source of infection could be identified in 52,9% of the cases
- ► In most cases, the source of the infection comes from an infected family member in the household (20,3%), another infected family member or friend (7,2%) or an infected colleague (7,1%)

September – 2.0

Introduction of a new contact tracing platform (version 2.0) for call centers

- ► Allow near real-time processing
- ► Increase flexibility in work orders
- ► Increase quality of handling of work orders

- ► 85 % of all index cases are reached within 24h
- ► 88% of all high-risk contacts are reached within 24h

(1/01/2021 – 21/02/2021)

October – Cluster analysis

Studying clusters (at least 2 COVID-19 cases with an epidemiological link) as well as common environments where COVID-19 moves easily from person to person.

- ► Improve reporting & follow-up of clusters
- ► Possibility for government services to do data mining and cluster analysis themselves (e.g. seasonal work)
- ► provides a glimpse of how to avoid the U-turns

- ► There are currently >1.750 active clusters
- ► More than 350 new active clusters have been confirmed (in week 7)
- ► Most active confirmed clusters are reported in schools (36%), companies (32%) and residential care centers (12%)

15

3. Speed & effectiveness

Speed & effectiveness
Overall TAT
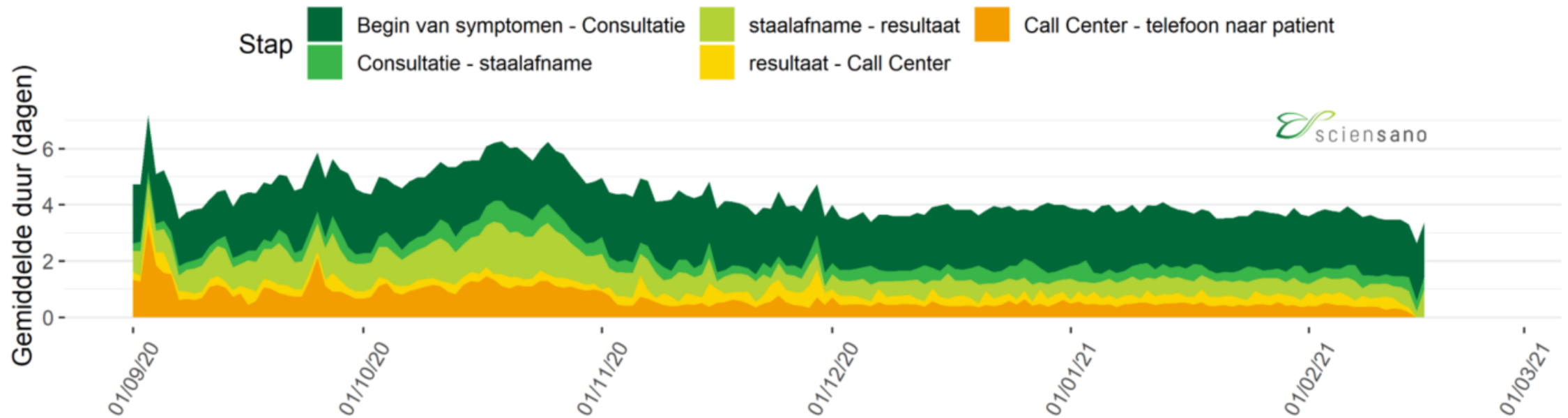
Speed & effectiveness
Travelers (PLF)
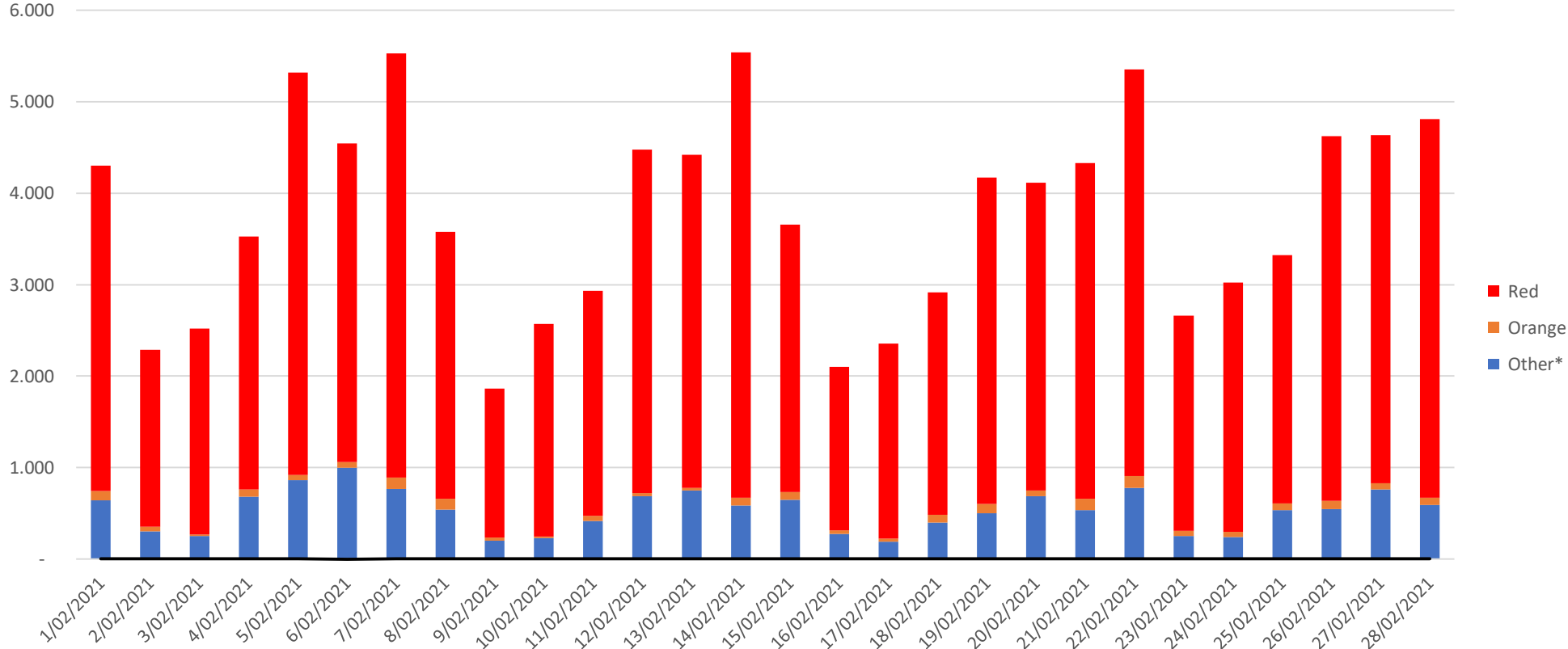
Speed & effectiveness
Tracing effectiveness : Index patient

Total index cases: **62 045 (28/01 – 26/02)**
- % Call answered: **92,7%**
- % Call not answered: **2,9%**
- % Reached no data: **3,7%**
- % No script: **0,7%**
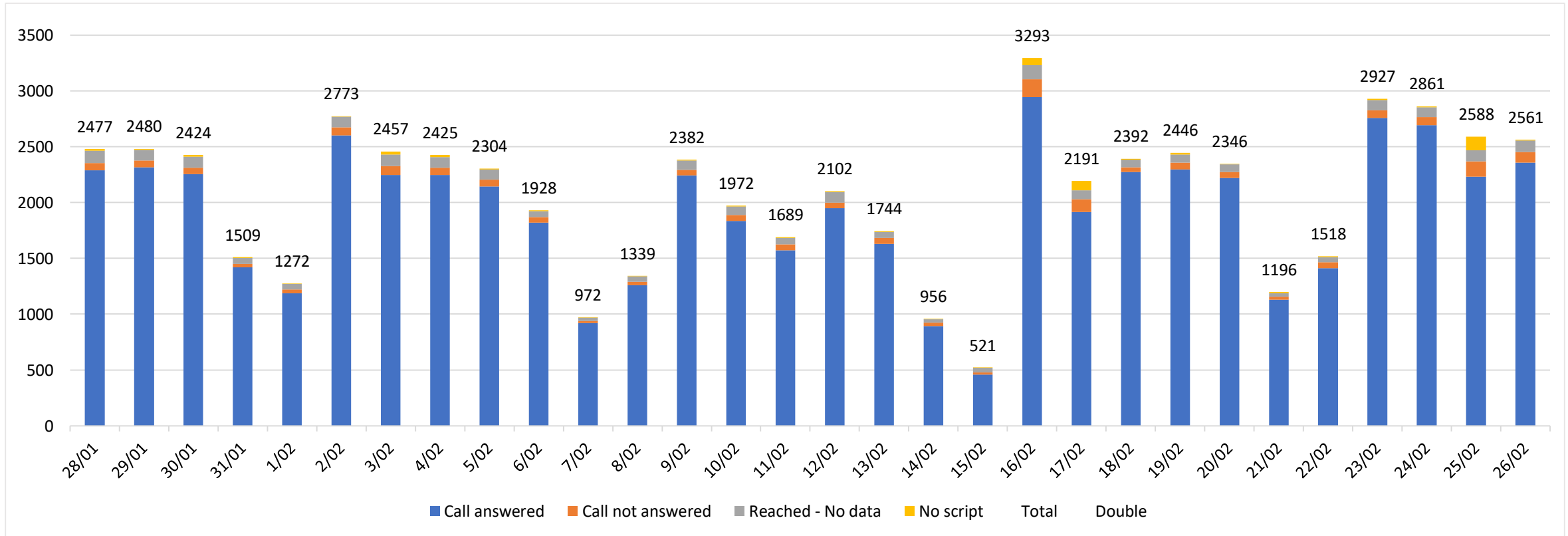
Legend: Call answered | Call not answered | Reached - No data | No script | Total | Double

Source: SMALS reporting
- Date = Request date
- Final effectiveness (excluding those reached by field agents)
- Reached no data: Already called, collaboration refused, has not been tested or received negative test results (without overrule), wrong person, difficulties to communicate, or other reasons (free text field)

19

Speed & effectiveness
Tracing effectiveness : High Risk Contacts

% of High Risk Contacts testing (1st and 2nd) after contact with the CC
- **80% of the HRC did the first test** (~21% positive)
- **53% of the HRC did the second test** (~17% positive)
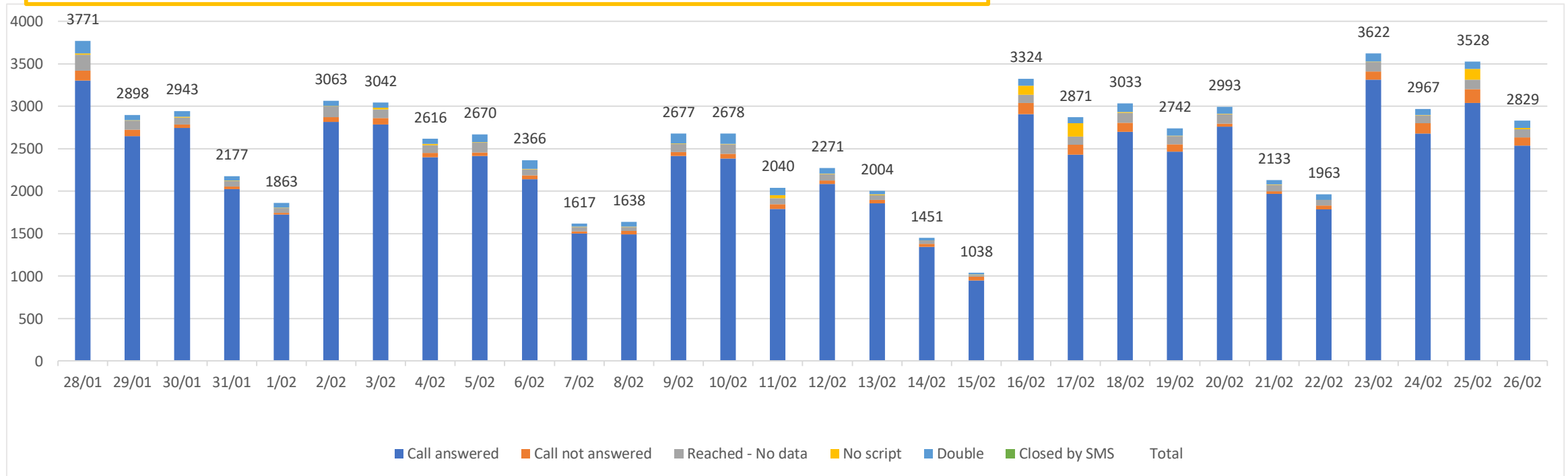
Chart values by date:
- 28/01: 3771
- 29/01: 2898
- 30/01: 2943
- 31/01: 2177
- 1/02: 1863
- 2/02: 3063
- 3/02: 3042
- 4/02: 2616
- 5/02: 2670
- 6/02: 2366
- 7/02: 1617
- 8/02: 1638
- 9/02: 2677
- 10/02: 2678
- 11/02: 2040
- 12/02: 2271
- 13/02: 2004
- 14/02: 1451
- 15/02: 1038
- 16/02: 3324
- 17/02: 2871
- 18/02: 3033
- 19/02: 2742
- 20/02: 2993
- 21/02: 2133
- 22/02: 1963
- 23/02: 3622
- 24/02: 2967
- 25/02: 3528
- 26/02: 2829

Legend: Call answered — Call not answered — Reached - No data — No script — Double — Closed by SMS — Total

Source: SMALS reporting
- Date = Request date
- Final effectiveness (excluding those reached by field agents)
- Reached no data: Already called, collaboration refused, contact not understanding, wrong person, or other reasons (free text field)

High risk contacts
Testing

Absolute number of 1e and 2e tests after contact with CC (data from 25/01/2021 to 2021-02-21)

Number of HRC with date.contact > 25-01-2021 untill 2021-02-21 : 43256 RRN-available: 39530
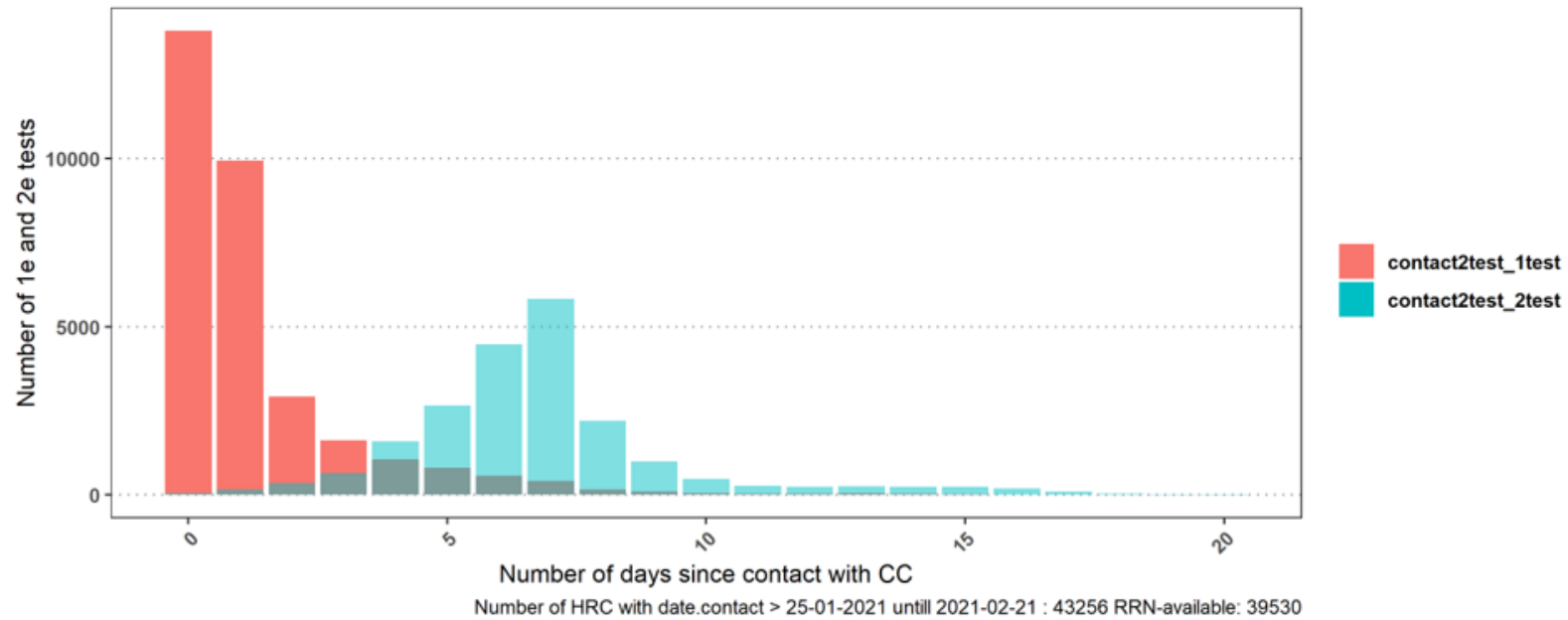
Region HRC	Index cases	HRC	HRC with RRN	Number of HRC per index	Number of HRC excluded
Walloon Region	9904	14967	14967	1.51	1433
Flemish Region	22609	34764	34764	1.54	1949
Brussels-Capital Region	4043	5796	5796	1.43	446
Belgium	41994	62132	56283	1.48	4430

Number of test	Total tested	Proportion HRC with test	Positivity rate
1	31633	0.80	0.21
2	21128	0.53	0.17

Belgium: From 2021-01-25 to 2021-02-21

Data source: Sciensano

Speed & effectiveness

Testing & lab results: # transmitted PCR test results

	W3 (18/01-24/01)	W4 (25/01-31/01)	W5 (01/02-07/02)	W6 (08/02-14/02)	W7 (15/02-21/02)	W8 (22/02-28/02)	
BXL	42.912	36.643	39.270	34.695	29.559	31.890 ↗	+ 7,86%
FLA	200.441	218.436	210.483	175.107	186.892	174.553 ↓	- 6,6%
WAL	71.599	85.525	85.245	85.516	64.768	69.683 ↗	+ 7,59%
TOTAL	314.952	340.604	334.998	295.318	281.219	276.126 ↓	- 1,81%

Speed & effectiveness

transmitted PCR test results (total = hospitals, private, policlinic, fed. platform) – long-term evolution over 19 weeks
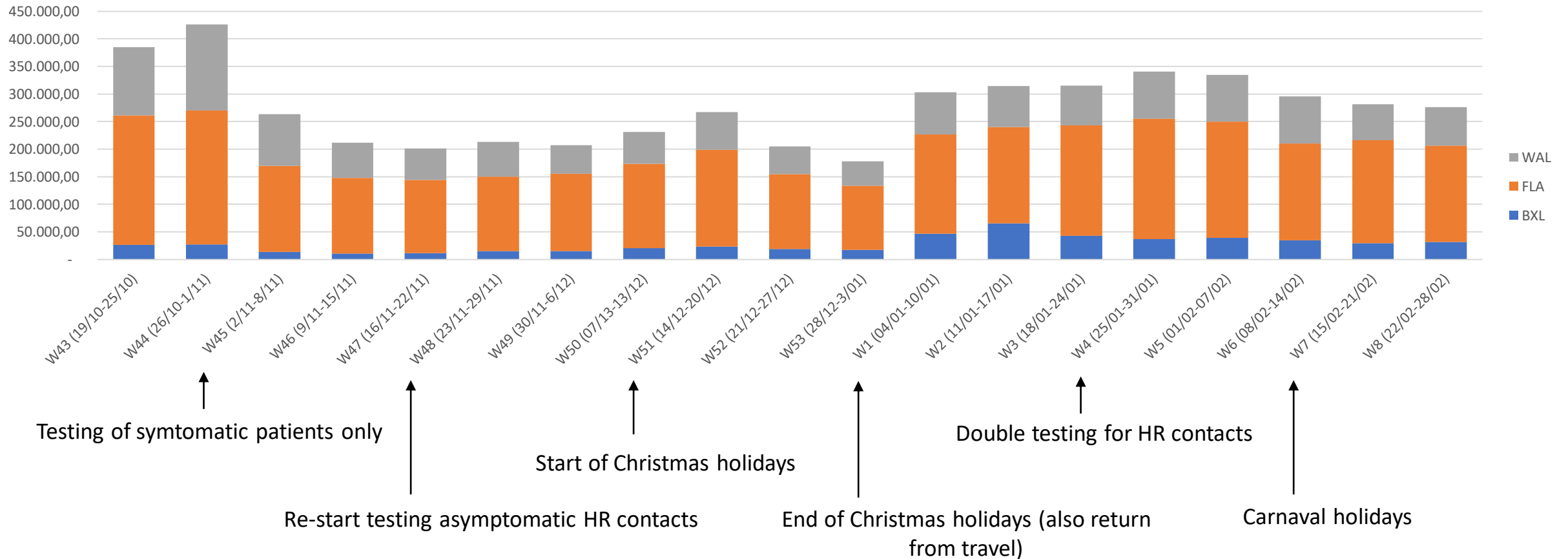
Speed & effectiveness
Evolution of TAT: from sample to communication of test result

	< 24 hour	24 to 36 hour	36 to 48 hour	> 48 hour
W2 (11/01-17/01)	247005 (78.6%)	31567 (10%)	12528 (4%)	23028 (7.3%)
W3 (18/01-24/01)	253953 (80.6%)	34286 (10.9%)	8714 (2.8%)	17860 (5.7%)
W4 (25/01-31/01)	281555 (82.7%)	42286 (12.4%)	10058 (3%)	6457 (1.9%)
W5 (01/02-07/02)	282967 (84.5%)	35042 (10.5%)	11321 (3.4%)	5533 (1.7%)
W6 (08/02-14/02)	253340 (85.8%)	23224 (7.9%)	8396 (2.8%)	10197 (3.5%)
W7 (15/02-21/02)	233919 (83.2%)	18709 (6.7%)	7725 (2.7%)	20763 (7.4%)
W7 (22/02-28/02)	246743 (89.4%)	19212 (7%)	5431 (2%)	4581 (1.7%)

Speed & effectiveness
Clusters

Actieve clusters gerapporteerd (n=1926) door de regio's per type cluster, België, week 7 (15/02 tot 21/02)

Type clusters

Percentage actieve clusters (%)

Type Clusters

- Scholen
- Bedrijven
- Woonzorgcentra
- Andere clusters
- Instellingen voor personen met een handicap (residentieel en niet-residentieel)
- Clusters in de gemeenschap
- Medische collectiviteiten (residentieel en niet-residentieel)
- Opvangcentra en onthaaltehuizen

sciensano
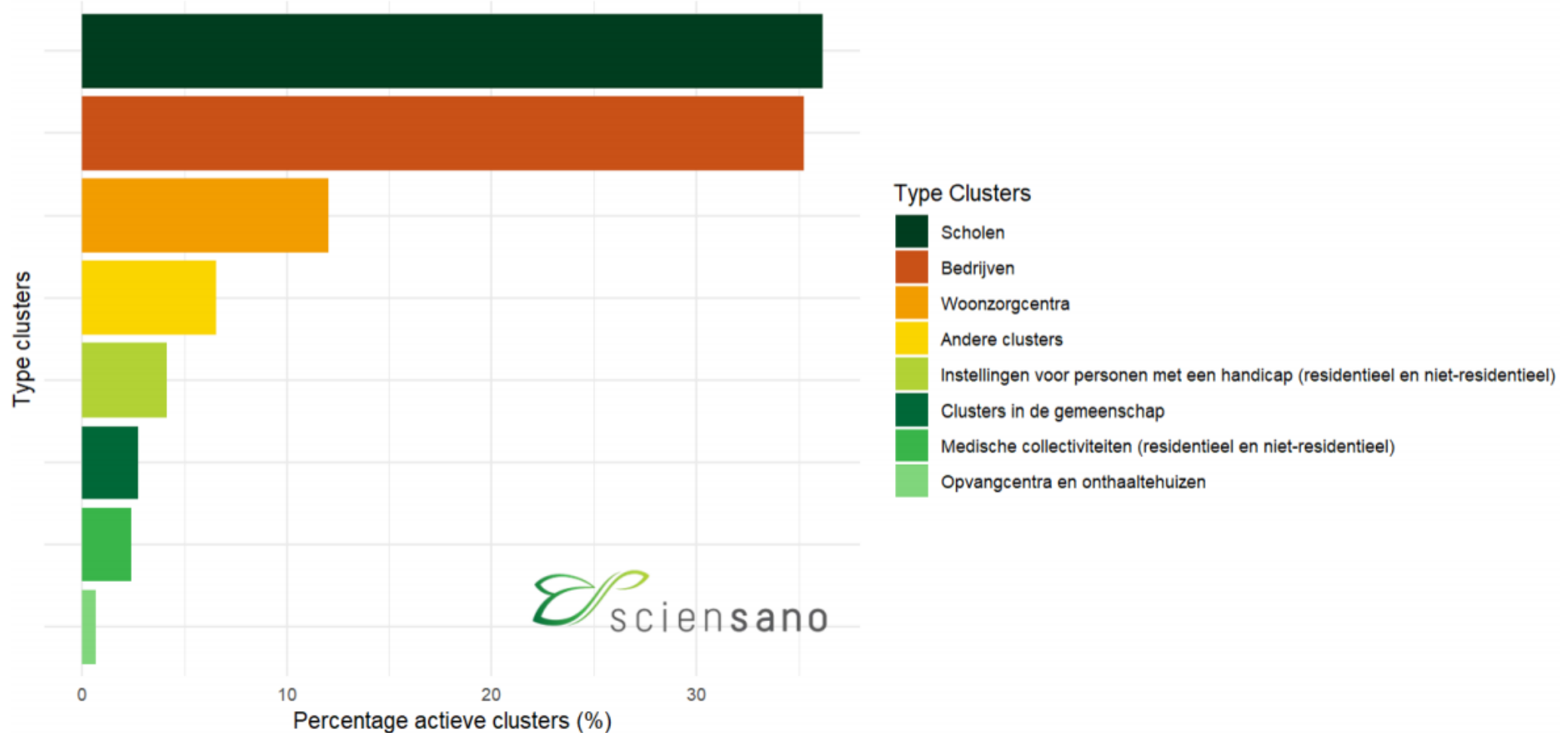
Speed & effectiveness

Clusters: Active clusters per region (split)

Aantal actieve clusters gerapporteerd door de regio's, week 46 2020 tot week 7 2021
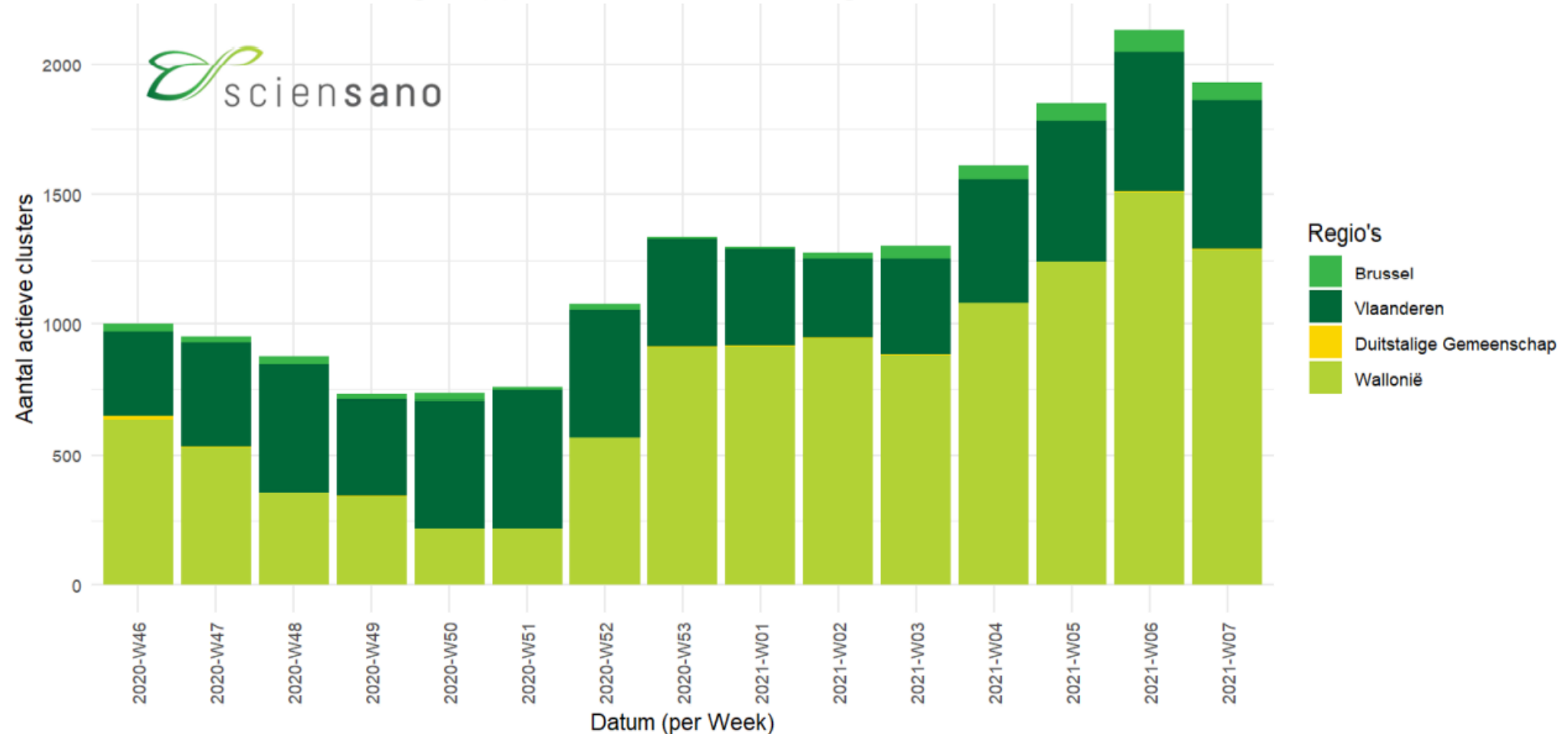
Active cluster: A confirmed cluster for which at least one new case has been reported in the last 14 days. The active clusters therefore also include the new clusters.

Speed & effectiveness

Sources

Where

Waarschijnlijke plaats van infectie voor de gevallen gecontacteerd van 15 tot 21 februari 2021.
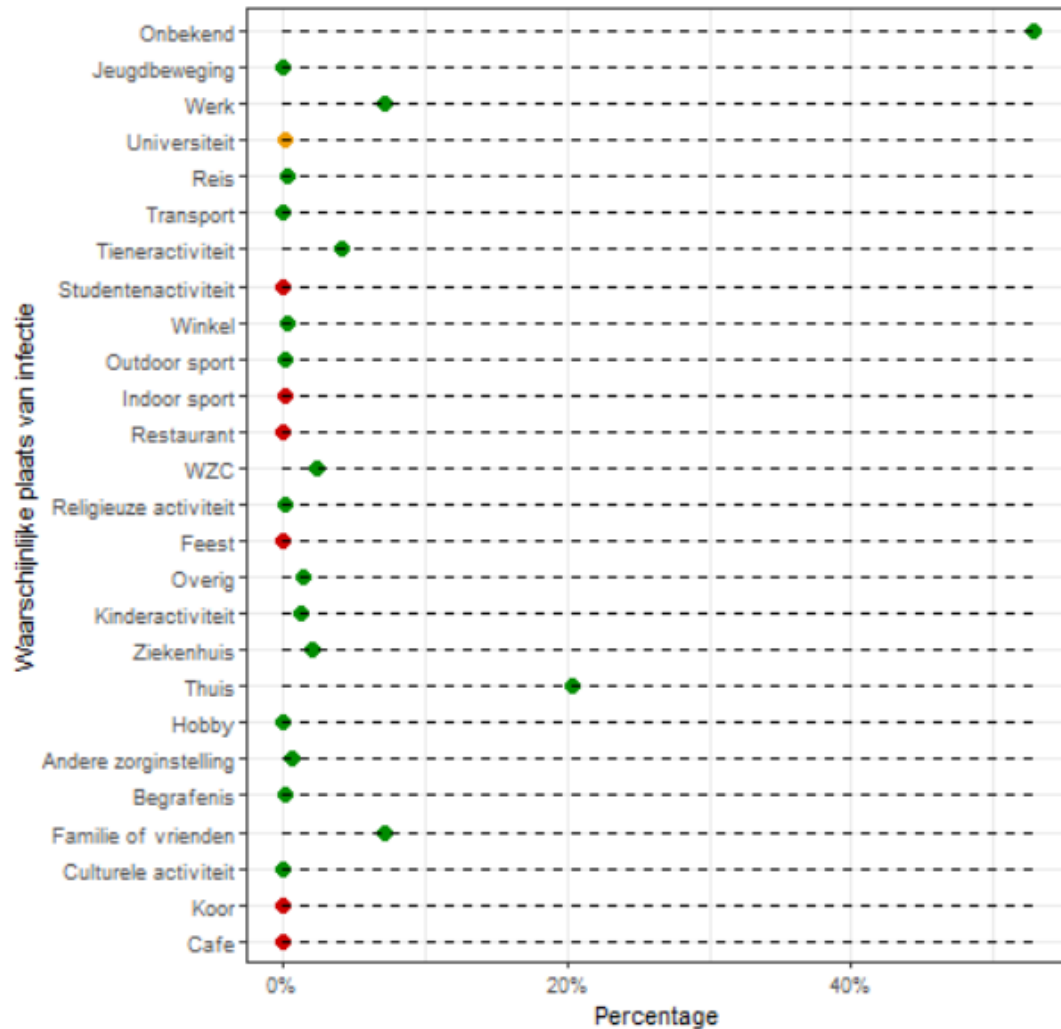
Whom
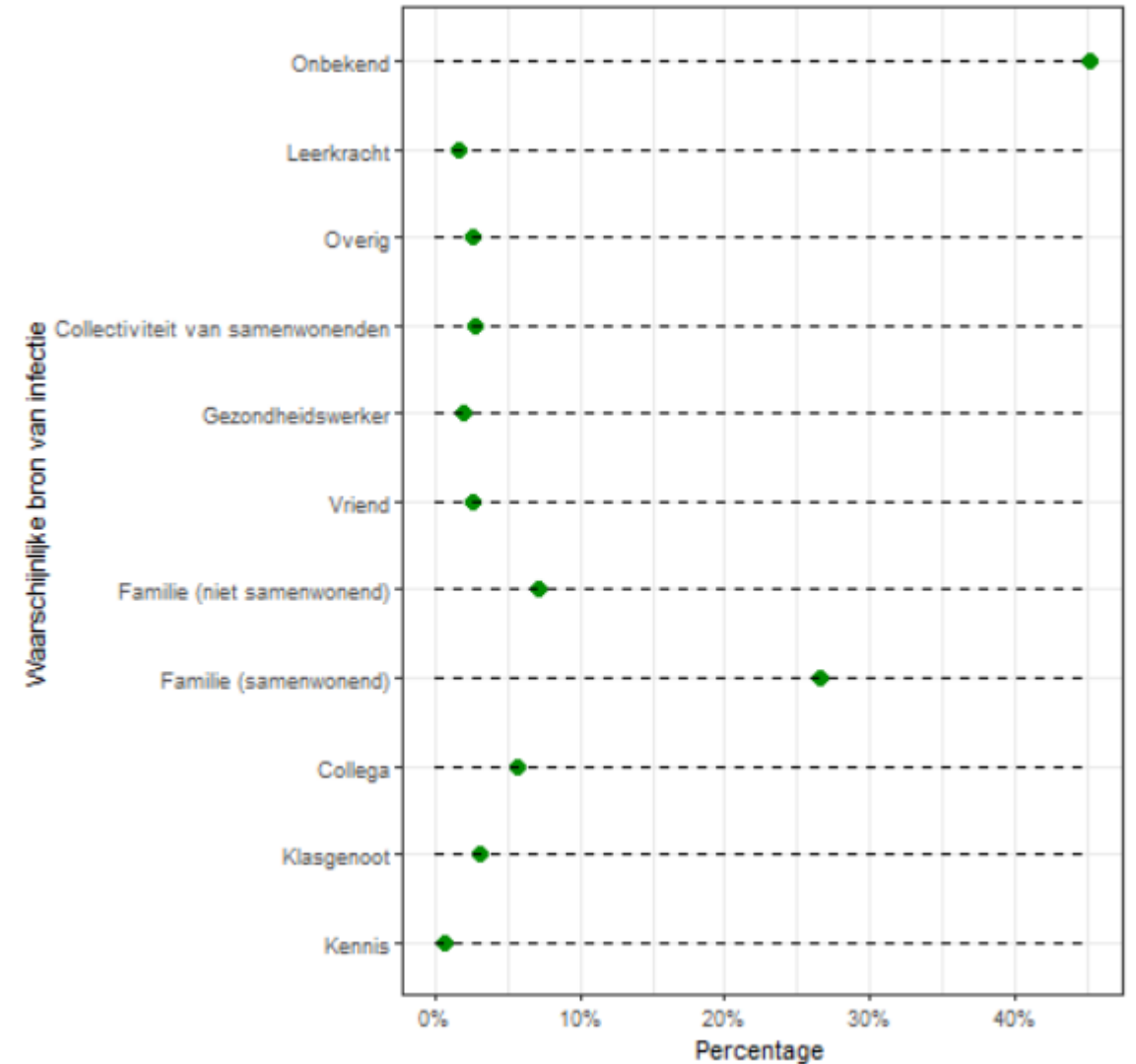
Speed & effectiveness
Coronalert application

 Addition to manual contact tracing via call center & field agents
- Contact tracing in collectivities

✓ **Specific conception of app to increase user buy-in (privacy, accessibility,..)**

✓ **Efforts to promote the use of the app through several channels (press, advertising, social media)**

✓ **Efforts to increase user-friendliness along the way**

Succes rates

→ Over 2,5 million downloads since launch

→ +489.000 results were received in the app, of which about +47.000 were positive

→ +17.100 users alerted their contacts via the app

4. The public's role

The public's role

Overview of reach

+894.447

total number reached Index cases (487.124) and HR contact persons (407.323)

(from May 15 2020 to February 22 2021)

13:04

Average duration of a call with an index case

(from May 14 2020 to February 22 2021)

+2.488.000

Number of downloads Coronalert

(from September 30 2020 to February 22 2021)

85% of Index cases **& 88%** of HR contact persons

Reached within 24 hours by call center

(from January 1, 2021 to February 22 2021)

316.647

total number of quarantine attests send (HR contact & PLF)

(from January 1, 2021 to February 22 2021)

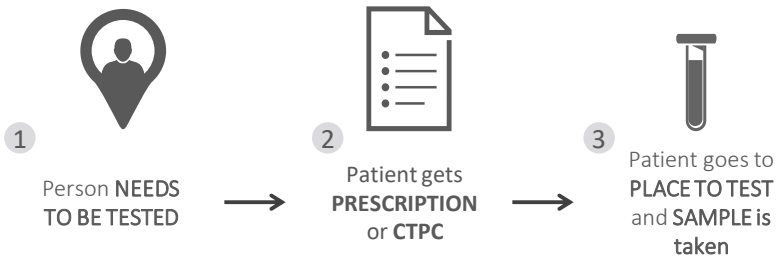**+2.725.664**

Total number of PLF collected

(from August 1, 2020 to February 14 2021)

Quid the public's role in the testing and tracing process ?

The public's role
Testing

The speed at which they get tested

① Person **NEEDS TO BE TESTED** → ② Patient gets **PRESCRIPTION** or **CTPC** → ③ Patient goes to **PLACE TO TEST** and **SAMPLE is** taken

It's crucial for the public to…

… Get tested as soon as symptoms develop
- ► On average, 2 days elapse between the development of symptoms and consultation with the GP

… Get tested on the day of the test requested

… Be informed and to familiarize with testing and tracing tools

The public's role
Tracing

Their role in supporting contact tracing

9

CONTACT TRACING

It's crucial for the public to…

… Download Coronalert
► 27% of the people with a smartphone have installed Coronalert

… Warn contacts using Coronalert
► Only 37% of the people who received a positive test result on Coronalert shared their keys

… Call the call center if Coronalert warns of HRC

… Answer when contacted by the call center
► 3,4% of index patients do not answer

… Collaborate when contacted by the call center
► 0,5% of index patients refuse collaboration

The public's role
Tracing

Their role in supporting contact tracing

9

CONTACT TRACING

It's crucial for the public to…

… Provide contacts to the call center

► 21% of successfully reached index patients does not provide useful contacts

► Successfully contacted index cases only provide an average of 2,3 contacts

… Respect regulations regarding travel abroad

► Respect travel ban for non-professional reasons (if any)

► Submit a PLF when returning to BE and use SAT correctly

► Take tests upon return from abroad

… Respect regulations on isolation & quarantine even when tracing process isn't started yet

5. Next steps

Next steps

Key challenges

Despite improvements & performance, critical challenges remain.

IFC Testing & Tracing is working on…

Continuous improvements

- ▸ Improve cluster/source analysis
- ▸ Handle 1A tickets on the field
- ▸ Permanent adaption of system following OCC decisions

… Promoting Coronalert to increase users & using the app as communication channel

… Supporting implementation of vaccination strategy

… Promoting the importance of testing & tracing regardless of vaccination schemes

… Rethinking testing & tracing model as a whole in a new era (after vaccination)