Reviewer’s report

Title: Habitual food consumption of the Belgian population in 2014-2015 and adherence to food-based dietary guidelines

Version: 0 Date: 11 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Carla Lopes

Reviewer's report:

This study describes the habitual consumption of the Belgian population. Despite of having essentially a descriptive nature, uses a robust methodology strategy following harmonized procedures for national dietary surveys at European level.

The paper is well written but some minor changes and clarifications need to be done.

Abstract: it would be useful in the abstract to introduce at least some estimates in the results section.

Methods section:

a) In line 112 the authors referred that "The data collection was distributed equally over the four seasons and all days of the week in order to incorporate seasonal effects and day-to-day variation in food intake". Please include the distribution of the days of the week and the proportion of interviews by season in the current study and improve the discussion of the possible implications in the results.

b) Please clarify the criteria for calculate food groups consumption: have you used the information on food items crude or edible (and) raw or cooked? What was the procedure with food recipes? They were considered aggregated or disaggregated?

Results Section:

a) Please revise all the text of results in order to correct the correspondent tables to the respective text. Example: Line 195 put table 5 instead of 3 (the same in lines 221, 253, 264, 272, 292,…). Line 223 is not table 3

b) It would be useful in the figures to introduce percentages in order to be easier to identify the deviation from the recommended guideline.
Discussion:

a) In line 361 the authors mentioned that the complying of recommendations in men is higher than in females. However, they also said that probably is because energy intake in men is higher than in women, as expected. Could the authors at least try to do sensitive analyses presenting the results in percentage of kcal to remove this effect?

b) The comparison with other studies is quite limited, since authors use only a few other national studies to compare results. Although, the comparisons are not always valid due to methodological constrains, since authors use the same methodology used by other countries involved in EU-menu, at least with some of them it could be possible this comparison.

c) Please discuss better the possible limitation by the fact of using two different methods of assessing food consumption in the same participant (telephone and face-to-face). Why the second by interview and not the first?

d) Lines 436-442. Please discuss better the prevalence of under reporters, namely compared with other national dietary surveys and discuss the possible consequences in the results.

e) Please discuss better the possible limitation of the low participation rate. The authors justify with weighting factors but no information about refusals' characteristics. Have you any information on refusals to add? Please discuss the possible consequences in results.

Minor suggestions:

- In the abstract, line 31, please insert "Globodiet software". Some people don't know what is "Globodiet"

- Please don't use abbreviations in scientific English: line 300, line 388

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Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

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**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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