

Study Visit to Croatian Food Safety Authorities

Osijek-Zagreb, 28/29 June 2011

REPORT

Background information:

This study visit was organised as a part of EFSA Pre-Accession Programme 2009-2010 for the Candidate and the Potential Candidate Countries*. The overall objective of the Programme is to promote the understanding of EFSA's work as risk assessor, share expertise and create information exchange mechanisms in order to ensure that the national authorities of the beneficiary countries can participate effectively in the activities of EFSA both prior to accession and following accession to the EU. The participation in this Programme may contribute to the beneficiaries in familiarising themselves with the EU policies and working methods particularly focusing on "from field to plate" integrated approach to food safety.

The aim of this visit was to introduce the Croatian competent institutions dealing with food safety issues to the delegation of experts from Republic of Turkey. Apart from the Croatian Food Agency, during the first day experts paid visit to the Faculty of Food Technology in Osijek. During the second day of the study visit experts travelled to Zagreb where they met representatives from the Croatian Veterinary Institute, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

In particular, this study visit provided the participants with good knowledge on how the food safety authorities in Croatia are functioning and working together. The study visit resulted in further developing the on-going networks and partnerships and identified opportunities for collaborative future projects.

Draft agenda enclosed as Annex I

Relevance of the Study Visit to objectives of the Programme:

- The study visit aimed at providing the participants with an overall knowledge on the food safety system in Croatia and division of responsibilities in the area of risk management, risk assessment and risk communication.
- In particular following topics of interest for the visiting beneficiary country were addressed: General organisation of food safety system in Croatia, Scientific Committee and Panels of the Croatian Food Agency, procedural aspect of appointment of the Panel Members, data collection and national food consumption survey, risk communication practices, structure of the Ministry of Agriculture, introduction to the Ministry of Health and social Welfare, operational procedures and scientific research of the Veterinary Institute.
- This study visit provided a starting point for networking and creation of systems for exchange of information and know-how as the first step in preparation of the beneficiaries for their future participation in the EU networks.

Participants:

5 participants attended the study tour representing Turkish competent authorities at national and regional level.

Detailed list of participants enclosed as an Annex II.

* **Candidate countries:** Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey

Potential Candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia&Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR1244), Montenegro, Serbia

Conclusions:

This study visit brought together food experts responsible for food safety policies for two days intensive exchange of experience and expertise. It was an excellent opportunity for the experts from the 2 Candidate countries to meet, to learn about and discuss issues of common interest. This study visit resulted in establishing contacts for further cooperation and possible exchange of technical staff and researchers particularly in the area of food technology and veterinary science.

The study tour provided a comprehensive overview of the regulatory and administrative aspects of the Croatian food safety system. In addition, the participants were informed on the recent developments in the scientific research when food safety topics are in question. The accent was put on integral approach to the food safety with division of tasks between risk assessors and risk managers. Experts from Turkey have recognized the food safety system in Croatia as a good model of successful harmonization with the EU legislation.

Study Visit of Turkish experts to Croatian food safety authorities proved to be a good tool for networking, discussion, exchange of ideas and learning on themes of common interest between the two Candidate countries. It provided a platform for transfer of good practical experiences, case studies and know-how focusing on the technical aspect of pre-accession negotiation process. This visit also gave the AFSCO Unit a good opportunity for gathering of information on needs and expectations of the two beneficiary countries and might help in structuring the future EFSA Pre-Accession initiatives.

Results of the evaluation questionnaire:

All representatives answered to the survey. Hotel and meeting venue were found being excellent by 50% and very good by 50% of the participants. Presentation skills of the speakers were found to be very good by 80% of participants. All the participants valued the content of the speeches and the responsiveness to questions as excellent while presentations being on the right level. Majority of participants felt they had enough opportunity to express their opinion and ask questions. Participants considered that this study tour was an excellent opportunity for improving their knowledge on this topic and all found that the study visit was very good in general.

The majority of participants found this study visit a good opportunity for networking and information exchange.

AGENDA

Day I, 28 Jun 2011

09, 00 – 11, 30	MEETINGS AND DISCUSSIONS IN CROATIAN FOOD AGENCY - PART I
09,00 – 09,15	Welcome by the Director of the Agency – <i>Director Dr. Zorica Jurković</i>
09,15 – 09,45	Structure of the Agency – <i>Director Dr. Zorica Jurković</i>
09,45 – 10,15	Organisation of Food Safety System in Croatia - <i>Deputy Director, Jarmila Turkalj</i>
10,15 – 10,45	Scientific Committee and Panels – <i>Andrea Gross-Bošković, Head of Risk Assessment Department</i>
10,45 – 11,00	Selection procedure for the Scientific Panel Members – <i>Višnja Brekalo, Head of Department for Legal and Financial Services</i>
11,00 – 11,30	Data collection and national food consumption surveys - <i>Darja Sokolić-Mihalak, Head of Department for Scientific Support and Databases</i>
12, 00 – 13, 00	VISIT TO THE FACULTY OF FOOD TECHNOLOGY IN OSIJEK
13, 15 – 14, 15	<i>Refreshment / LUNCH</i>
14, 30 – 16, 00	MEETINGS AND DISCUSSIONS IN CROATIAN FOOD AGENCY – PART II
14,30 – 15,00	Consequences of opinions - <i>Andrea Gross-Bošković, Head of Risk Assessment Department</i>
15,00 – 15,30	Urgency procedure – <i>Brigita Hengl, Expert Associate, Risk Assessment Department</i>
15,30 – 16,00	Risk Communication – <i>Sara Mikrut, Department for Communications and Public Relations</i>

Day II, 29 Jun 2011

09, 00 – 12, 00	OFFICIAL VISIT TO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT(MAFRD)
	Welcome and introduction by <i>Dr. Jelena Đugum, Director, Food Safety and Quality Directorate (MAFRD)</i>
	Risk Management activities of the Food Safety and Quality Directorate (MAFRD) by <i>Domagoj Bojko, Senior Adviser</i>
	General Introduction to Veterinary Inspection Directorate (MAFRD) , by <i>Gordan Jerbić, Director, Veterinary Inspection Directorate</i>
	Annual Plan of Official Inspection and Control by <i>Tatjana Karačić, Senior Adviser, Veterinary Inspection Directorate</i>
	General introduction to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare , <i>Kristina Blagojević, Senior State Sanitary Inspector, Sanitary Inspection Directorate</i>
12, 15 -13, 00	LUNCH in Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development
13, 30 – 15, 30	OFFICIAL VISIT TO CROATIAN VETERINARY INSTITUTE
	Welcome and Introduction by <i>Dr. Željko Cvetnić, Director</i>
	Scientific Activities of the Veterinary Institute by <i>Dr. Andrea Humski, Head of Laboratory for Food Microbiology</i>
	Visit to the premises and laboratories of the Veterinary Institute
	END OF THE PROGRAMME

List of Participants

ANNEX II

LIST OF THE PARTICIPANTS FROM TURKEY			
1.	ARSLAN	AHMET	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, General Directorate of Protection and Control, Deputy General Director
2.	ÖZBAĞ	NERGİZ	Ministry of Agriculture And Rural Affairs Head of Risk Assessment Unit
3.	BAS	SIBEL	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs General Directorate of Protection and Control Associate Expert, Animal Health Department
4.	OZKAN	FATMA NEVRA	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs General Directorate of Protection and Control Expert Associate, Risk Assessment Department
5.	ILBEGI	IBRAHİM	Ministry of Agriculture And Rural Affairs, General Directorate of Protection and Control, Head of Control Department
REPRESENTATIVE OF EFSA			
6.	GORAN	KUMRIĆ	Policy Officer, Advisory Forum & Scientific Cooperation Unit, EFSA