

Management Board

26 March 2026

OVERVIEW OF EFSA'S SOCIAL SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

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OVERVIEW | SOCIAL SCIENCES AT EFSA

1. Social sciences at EFSA

- In-house team within the Strategic Communications Team, Communication Unit (COM)
- EFSA WG on Social Research Methods and Advice (WG SRMA)
- Framework Contract for Social Research

2. Social Science Roadmap 2027

- Mid-term progress review
- Main objectives in 2025-2027

Social sciences developments at EFSA: Mid-term review of the implementation of the roadmap in support of Strategy 2027

SOCIAL SCIENCES: DEVELOPMENTS AT EFSA

Mid-term review of the implementation of the roadmap in support of Strategy 2027

1. OVERVIEW

The use of evidence and expertise from social sciences (EFSA) was first formalised in 2018. Since then, EFSA has been providing advice to processes across social research and advice.¹ In 2021 EFSA published its [2021 Social Science Roadmap](#) which identified priorities for the period 2022-2027 (Figure 1).²

2. WAY FORWARD

EFSA's commitment to further evolve its social science function was described in the [2021 social science roadmap](#), designed to cover the EFSA 2027 strategy period. Substantial progress was achieved across all priority areas as summarised in the previous section and as further detailed in the Annex. The 2025-27 period will comprise work centred on completing the roadmap's implementation, and supporting the priority areas. This will be achieved through current stable, in combination with selected engaged external experts on a project-basis, and ecosystem). Future developments of social science next for each of the three priority areas.

ANNEX

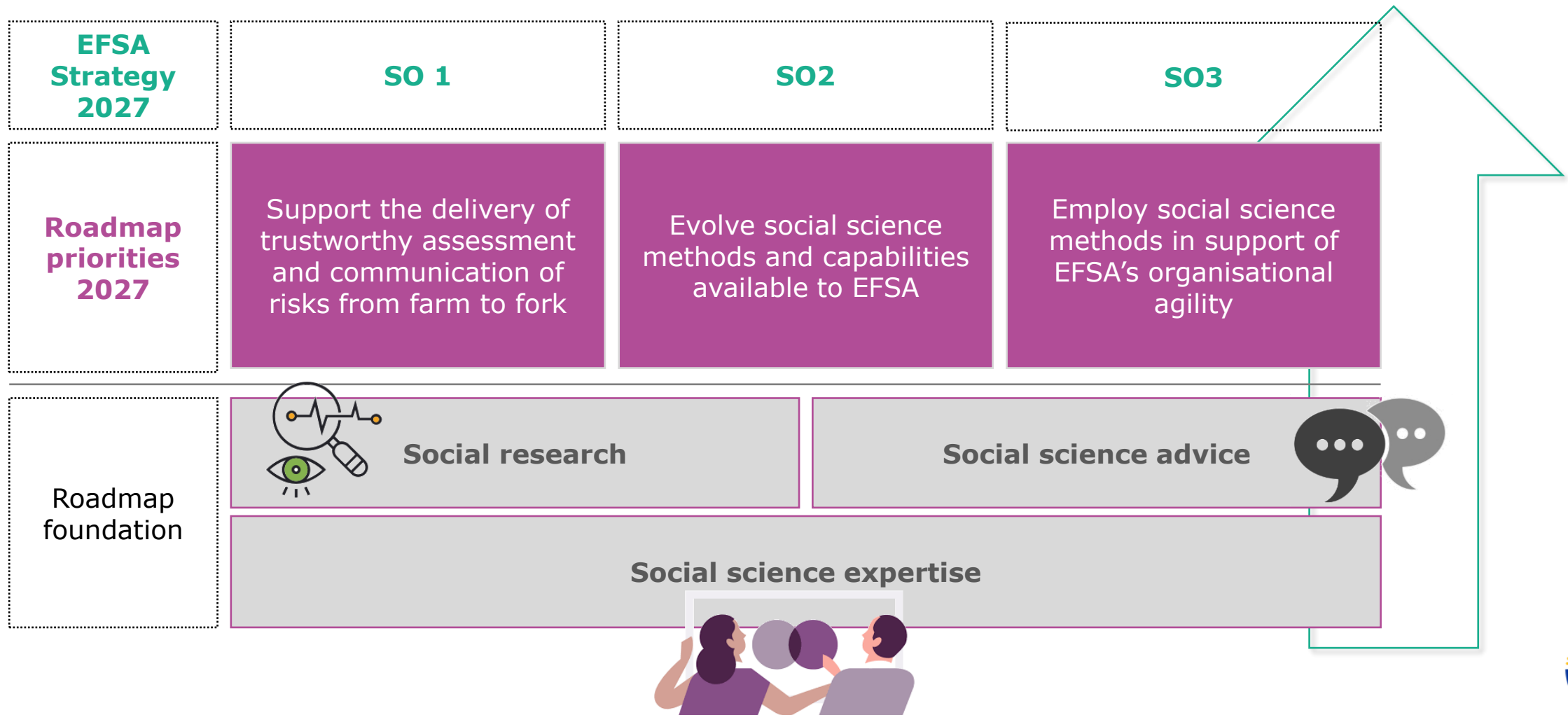
UPDATE ON PROGRESS TOWARDS THE THREE SOCIAL SCIENCE PRIORITIES FOR 2022-2027

GENERATION AND USE OF INSIGHTS TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF TRUSTWORTHY ASSESSMENT AND COMMUNICATION OF RISKS FROM FARM TO FORK	LINK WITH STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 OF EFSA'S STRATEGY ¹⁸
	Social science playing a key role in the audience-first approach for risk communication and an advisory role in broadened engagement of partners and stakeholders.

Social research in support of Priority 1 has been conducted along three tracks as outlined next.



ROADMAP 2027: IMPLEMENTING THE EFSA STRATEGY



FOCUS ON THREE PILLARS: A FEW EXAMPLES OF ACHIEVEMENTS

SO 1

Support the delivery of trustworthy assessment and communication of risks from farm to fork



SO 2

Evolve social science methods and capabilities available to EFSA



SO 3

Employ social science methods in support of EFSA's organisational agility



Social research



Social science advice



Social science expertise





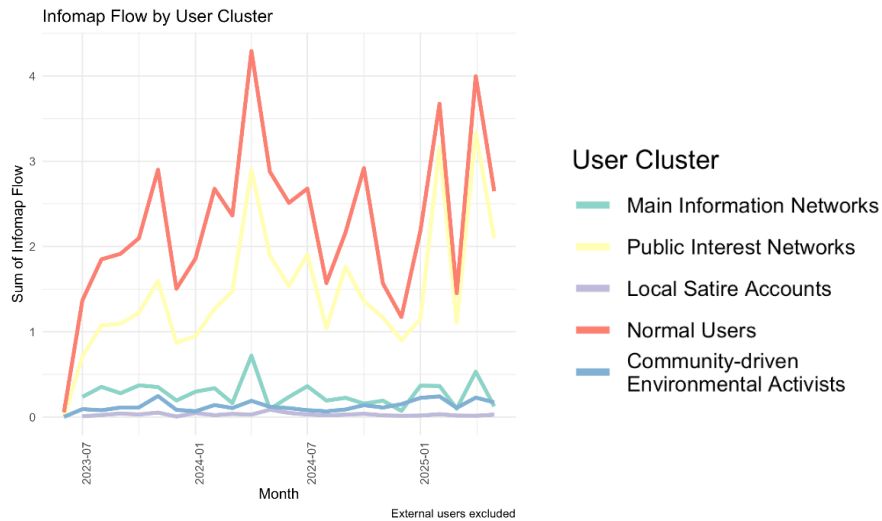
COMET Project

(Communication and Engagement Methods for Food Safety - New Evidence and Tools)



TWO EXAMPLES

Social research on risk perception-behaviour



PUBLICATION: [Risk Perception and Behaviour on Social Media Platforms](#)

DEC 2025

Social research on tackling false information

www.nature.com/scientificreports

scientific reports

Check for updates

OPEN Investigating the role of source and source trust in prebunks and debunks of misinformation in online experiments across four EU countries

Hendrik Bruns¹, François J. Dessart², Michał Krawczyk¹, Stephan Lewandowsky^{3,4}, Myrto Pantazi⁵, Gordon Pennycook⁶, Philipp Schmid⁷ & Laura Smillie¹



Meltwater

COUNTRIES COVERAGE: EE, DE, EL, IE, PL, ES

TIMELINE: Nov 2025-Aug 2026

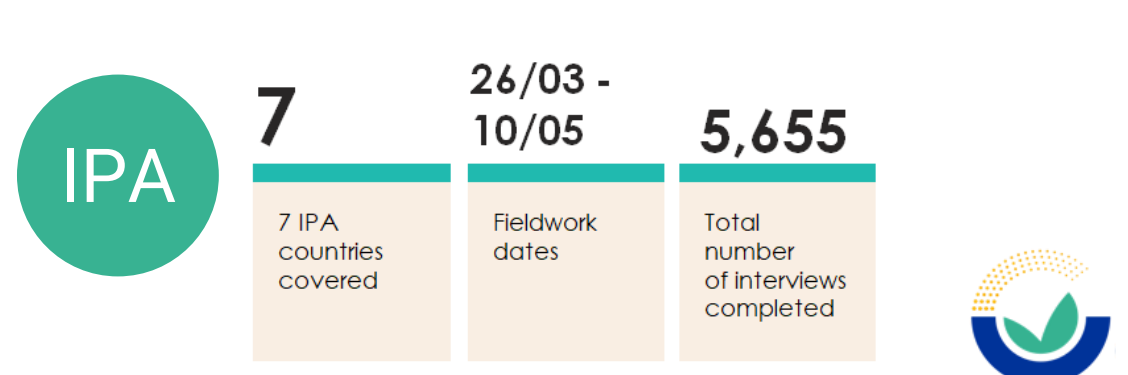
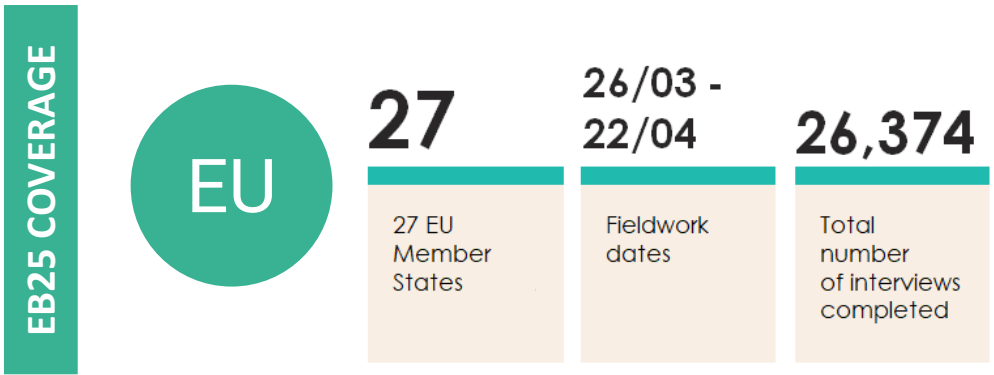
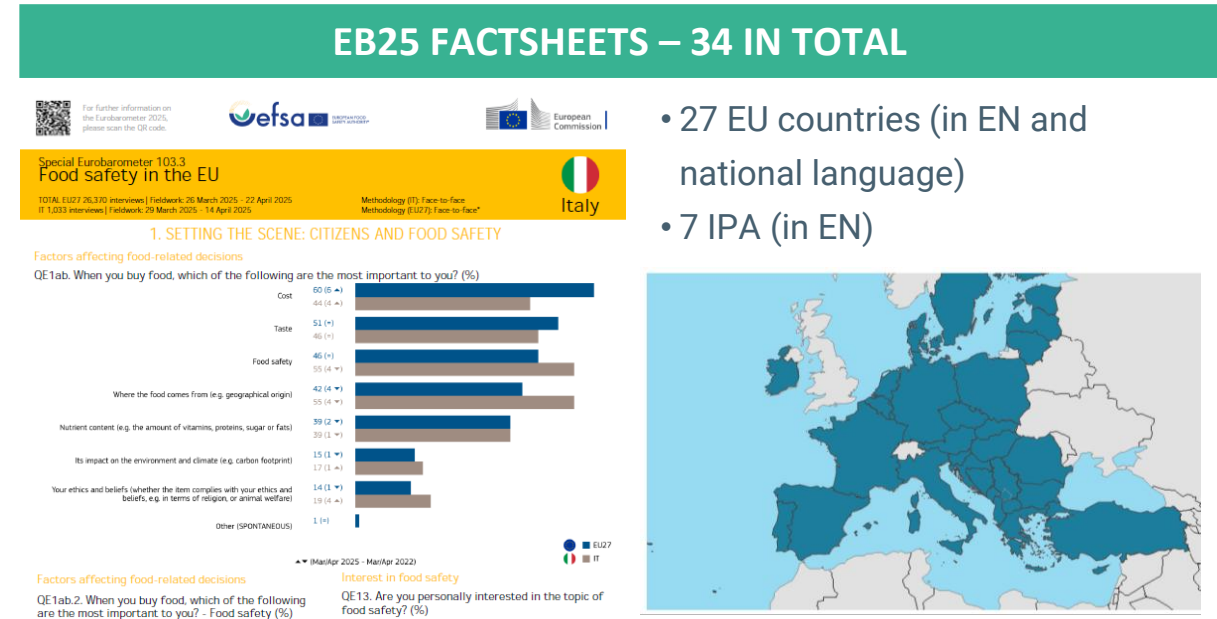




2025 Eurobarometer Survey on Food Safety in the EU (and IPA!)



2025 EUROBAROMETER (EB25)



FIND OUT MORE: <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/corporate/pub/eurobarometer25>

EB25: TWO EXAMPLES OF WHY IT MATTERS

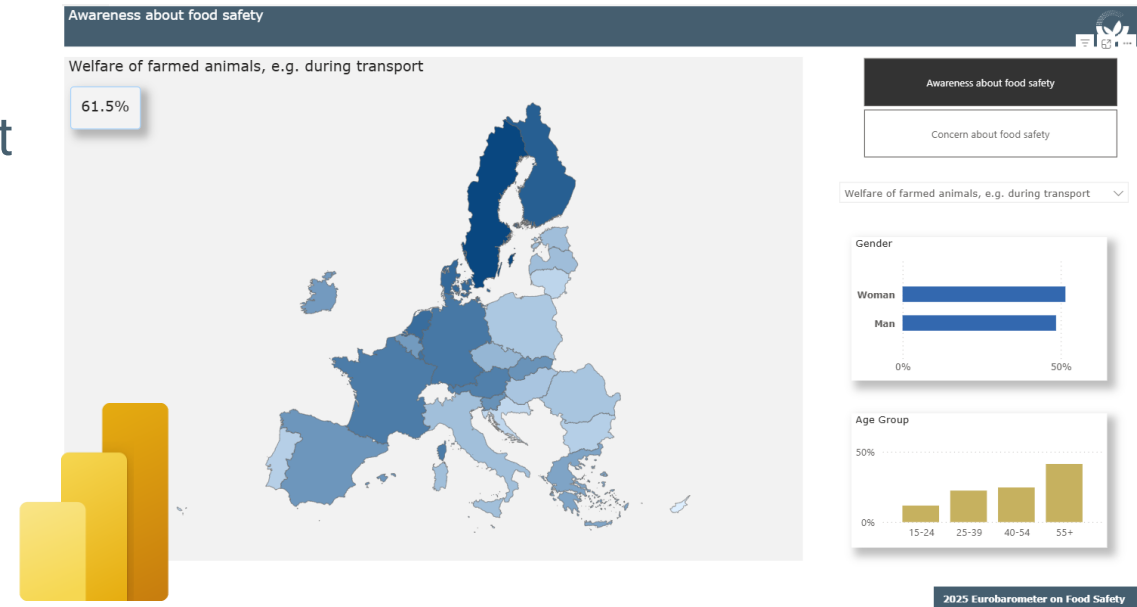
1 Supports **prioritisation of communication** efforts at **MS** level using country data > PBI Dashboards

2 Evidence base for **EFSA RC/campaigns**

- **Comm strategy** (e.g. selection of comms channels; selection of topics)
- Target audience **segmentation**



How do socio/demographic/contextual factors influence choice of **most concerning food risk topic**?



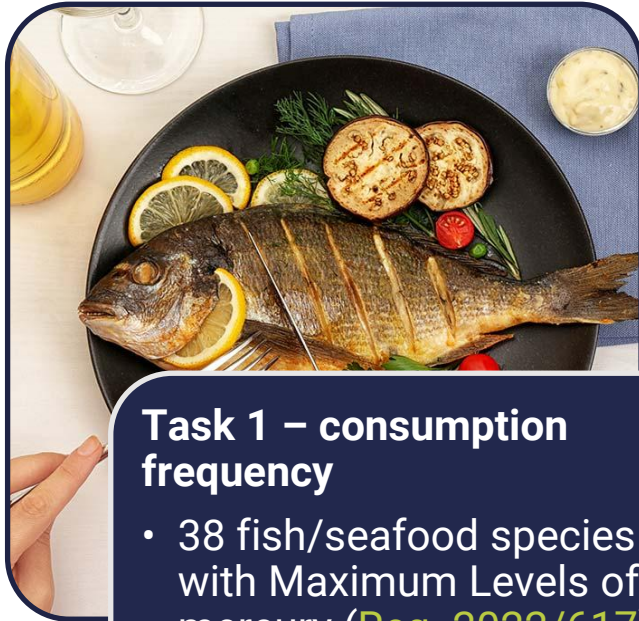


EC
Mandate

Two-phase survey of consumption & awareness of Fish and seafood with methylmercury

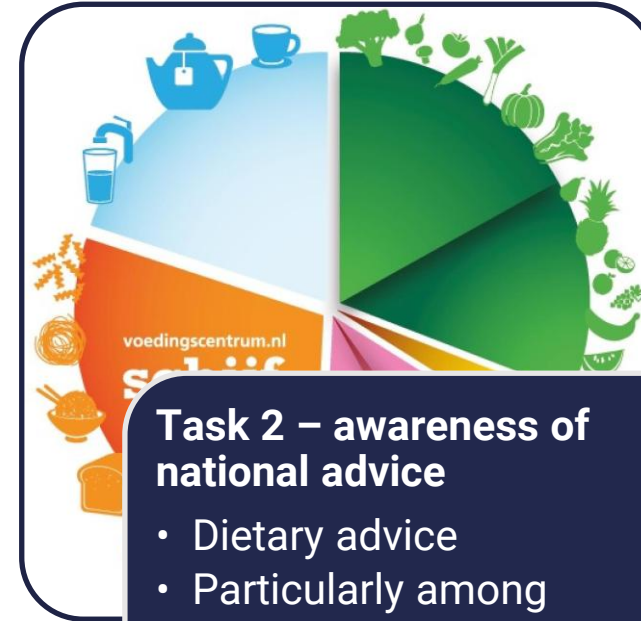


FISH & SEAFOOD REPORT – BACKGROUND TO EC MANDATE



Task 1 – consumption frequency

- 38 fish/seafood species with Maximum Levels of mercury ([Reg. 2022/617](#))
- Two phases before and after updating of national advice

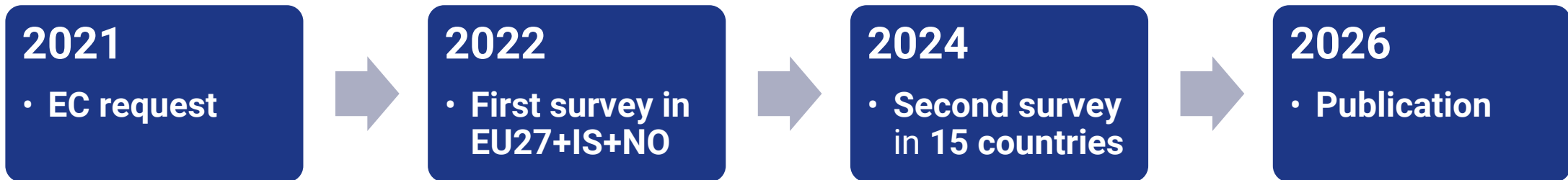


Task 2 – awareness of national advice

- Dietary advice
- Particularly among pregnant women
- Awareness of contaminants
- Information sources used



FISH & SEAFOOD SURVEY – PROJECT TIMELINE



Countries with updated consumer advice		Control countries (high fish consuming without updated advice)
Austria	Finland	France
Belgium	Lithuania	Greece
Cyprus	Norway	Germany
Czechia	Portugal	Iceland
Denmark	Spain	Sweden



FISH & SEAFOOD SURVEY – MAIN CONCLUSIONS

2023 to 2024 trend

- High-frequency consumption (3 or more times per week) nearly doubled, from 26% to about 50%

Consumption frequency

- **Some 60%** eat fish/seafood.
- One-third of them consume fish with highest mercury MLs three or more times per week.

Awareness of contaminants

- **Low** among EU consumers
- But **mercury** most recognised among contaminants

Awareness of national advice

- Moderate with 37%-38% having heard of advice
- 6 in 10 who decreased consumption said advice led to change

Risks and benefits

- Consumer knowledge of health benefits is 4-5 times higher than of risks

Conclusions

- If known advice influences consumption **to some extent**
- Other factors are main drivers, e.g. taste, cost, diet

Uncertainties: survey samples, weightings, frequency not intake, different seasons



Thank you!

Questions?

