

EU Insights 2016- topic selection and next steps

Pan-European Risk Perception Survey and Communications Strategy

Summary

Risk perceptions of food safety vary across geographical regions. An overview of the variances of risk perception allows for an evidence-based approach and will improve the impact of communications efforts by EFSA and the AFCWG members, creating a more cohesive approach and better preparedness for common issues across Europe. An integral factor for high quality risk communications is to begin with insights into risk perception so that communications approaches can be adapted to address issues in the best way possible.

The AFCWG is procuring research to identify national differences and EU-wide commonalities in risk perceptions, heightening the use of the AFCWG platform as a valuable means of implementing communications strategies that add value to the Advisory Forum and the European health and food safety agenda.

The findings of the EU Insights survey will form the basis of strategic risk communications plans to improve coherency and preparation across the EU. An improved understanding of the differences in risk perception, on often controversial and sensitive topics, will help us better prepare our approach, and improve cooperation, coherence and preparedness for diverging views on these topics.

Next steps

EFSA will execute 1 survey per year. To ensure alignment with the AF's priorities we propose that the AF make the final selection of the topic.

At the November meeting in Parma the AFCWG members divided into 3 groups to brainstorm the topics of highest priority. They identified the top three topics of interest as:

1. Antimicrobial Resistance (all 3 groups identified this as a key topic)
2. Pesticides
3. Food Supplements

AMR is clearly a priority for DG Sante. The new DG, Prats Monne, recently stated at an ENVI Committee meeting welcoming the NL Presidency, that there is clear scope for EU added-value on AMR to complement national initiatives in Member States and the global action plan led by WHO. He suggests that the EU needs to do much more. As AMR is also a priority for the Netherlands during their EU Presidency, we would recommend focusing on this topic for the EU Insights in 2016.

For future EU Insights we can consider the other topics listed above as well as understanding consumers and their perceptions of food safety.

Proposed Timeline

- Topic agreement – AF meeting - December 2015
- Launch the EU-Insights Survey (EU-wide survey to be executed by an outsourced company specialised in target audience research) - January 2016
- Results of EU-wide survey available and shared with AF – June 2016
- EU-wide Communications Plan built on Risk Perception findings – September/October 2016
- Implement Communications Strategy 2016-2017
- Measure results Q2 2017

