EVENT REPORT

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DRAFT

Risk Assessment Research Assembly

7 February 2018, Utrecht, The Netherlands

European Food Safety Authority

Abstract

A Risk Assessment Research Assembly (RARA) was convened by EFSA, with the following objectives: build and support the case for future public funding of research in food safety; coordinate research agenda setting to ensure impact of food safety research; and provide a platform for networking, facilitating new partnerships. The Assembly attracted 200 participants from 39 countries many of whom participated for the first time in an EFSA event. The programme included an "ideas forum" where researchers "pitched", directly and/or via posters, nearly 50 ideas for future research, as well as keynote presentations and expert panel discussions. Some key points which emerged from the various sessions included: food safety is not a problem that has "gone away" – there are still many gaps in knowledge on current issues and many new challenges emerging; food safety is an integral part of the food security agenda; the need to make science more inclusive, building trust between research and society; the importance of cooperation at all levels – regional, national, international; coordination, collaboration and communication are key to building effective research agendas; the need for researchers (and those commissioning research) to communicate more effectively on the added value for society (impact); the need for more opportunities like RARA to facilitate networking and building collaborations. EFSA was acknowledged as a knowledge broker and was called upon to coordinate future efforts with support from its national Focal Points, building on its already established and large network of research organisations spanning the entire food chain.

Key words: research needs, public funding, partnering, networking, project ideas, food safety, risk assessment, RARA.

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Summary

In an environment of limited resources, EFSA convened the first Risk Assessment Research Assembly (RARA) to:

- build and support the case for future public funding of research in food safety;
- inform research agenda setting to ensure impact of food safety research;
- provide a platform for networking, facilitating new partnerships.

This event fits wider strategic discussions on future research, including the FOOD2030 initiative, the Lamy report, the Tallinn call for Action 2017 and the Strategic Approach to EU agricultural research and innovation. These highlight the need for alignment of EU/National R&I investments and call for future research to be mission-oriented and impact-focussed to address global challenges. They call on the responsibility of policy makers, researchers, businesses and others, in ensuring that research is a real priority in EU policy making and in increasing trust in research.

As part of EFSA's strategy on cooperation, a major Delphi exercise had been undertaken to identify common food safety priorities. This led to the development of the EU Risk Assessment Agenda (EURAA) as a tool to address these priorities through joint projects, resourced through EFSA's programmes, and EU, regional and/or national funding programmes. This instrument showed great potential to foster impact of research efforts, allow consortium formation and promote synergies.

The Event

The Assembly was a dynamic and interactive event that attracted 200 participants from 39 countries (including funders and policy makers at the EU, national and regional level, members of EFSA Advisory Forum, Focal Points and Scientific Committee, and research organisations and networks), many of whom participated for the first time in an EFSA event. The programme consisted of:

- "scene setting" keynote presentations from EFSA, European Commission and national food authority representatives;
- expert panel discussions on both strategic and operational elements of future programming; and
- an "ideas forum" where researchers "pitched", directly and/or via posters, nearly 50 ideas for future research.

Detailed material relating to the RARA event, including an e-inventory of research ideas, presentations, posters, speaker and panellist biographies and abstracts is shared on EFSA's website.

ConnexMe App

During the event participants could submit comments through the ConnexMe App and vote on each other's comments. The comment that received the most 'likes' was: *How about a Joint Programming Initiative in the area of food safety? JPIs have led to alignment of national research agendas in other areas and the MS work together to co-fund the research priorities*.

Key Outcomes

The event provided a rich landscape of comment and "food for thought" for EFSA and its partners to consider, which is summarised as follows:

- **Food safety is not a problem that has "gone away"** – there are still many gaps in knowledge on current issues and many new challenges emerging (e.g. from climate change, bioeconomy initiatives and sustainability). Recurrent topics suggested for further research include risk-benefit (cost-benefit), mixtures/combined exposure, botanicals, food security, waste reduction (novel foods), food fortification, crowd-science and artificial intelligence.
- **Food safety is an integral part of the food security agenda**, but from a future programming perspective, would still benefit from having its visibility raised in relevant texts to ensure it is included as part of a holistic consideration.
- **The need to make science more inclusive** – building trust between research and society by improving communication, engaging people in the co-creation of future research, making data and knowledge more accessible - the concept of "open science".
- **Coordination, collaboration and communication** are key to building effective research agendas.

- **The importance of cooperation at all levels** –, national, regional and international.
- The need for researchers (and those commissioning research) **to communicate more effectively on the added value for society (impact).**
- The need for **more (and improved) future alignment of research programming at national and EU levels** and the mechanisms to facilitate this e.g. through development of a Joint Programme Initiative and/or European Joint Programme in the area of food safety.
- Additionally, other modalities for funding need to be explored to facilitate the delivery of outcomes on shorter timescales.
- **EFSA and its Advisory Forum declared their shared commitment to supporting the European Research Area (ERA),** e.g. through
  - Stimulating new partnerships in food safety risk assessment
  - Formation of research consortia, also through the network of EFSA Focal Points
  - Being active partners in international cooperation
  - Training and enabling the mobility of researchers
  - Contributing to Open Data portals.
- **Future programming, particularly at EU level, needs to demonstrate impact**, and is likely to be framed within the context of the 'Sustainable Development Goals' with a clear view that food safety research will continue to be a vital element within this, requiring that priorities and impacts need to be articulated in this context.
- EFSA and partners already work together through **many active EU-wide platforms that can make a difference** – large potential for synergies and enhanced impact.
- **Policy decisions need to be underpinned by robust science**. EU agencies add value in the research knowledge cycle, through identification of research needs, advocacy, assessment of proposals and engagement with on-going projects, as outlined in recently published paper of the EU–ANSA agencies.
- There is good mutual **benefit for structured dialogue between funders, EU agencies and the research community**: enabling best use of expertise; keeping research agendas informed about knowledge gaps; ensuring wide geographical balance; and sustaining impactful research that feeds policy decision-making.
- A strong message of the **need for increased public funding of food safety research to underpin risk assessments and identify emerging risks**. Food safety is a public good that needs public investment.
- The need to **stimulate the shift from re-activeness to pro-activeness through investment** in food safety research and innovation.
- **EFSA was acknowledged as a knowledge broker and was called upon to coordinate future efforts with support from its national Focal Points**, building on its already established and large network of research organisations spanning the entire food chain. EFSA, as regulatory science body, is well placed to be a 'knowledge broker': *transfer policy needs and priorities to the science community, and transferring an understanding of the evidence, and its limits or uncertainties, to the policy community*[1].
- The need for a **knowledge and collaboration hub** which could bring researchers and proposals together. This would help also to reduce potential for duplication, with researchers working on similar ideas being able to explore the possibilities to collaborate, with more efficient and effective use of resources. Also to provide **an overview of research needs** and research activity in food safety (particularly to help develop a holistic, multi-disciplinary perspective that brings added value to citizens/impact).
- A strong call that **effective exploitation of funded work needs wider access to findings of on-going, and outcomes of concluded, food safety research projects**.
- The ideas forum break-out sessions of RARA proved to fill a need for researchers to network and to meet policy makers to develop emerging ideas towards impactful proposals – **a call for future similar and regular "brokerage" type events** was made to continue the dialogue amongst funders, regulatory agencies and scientists. A next occasion will be the EFSA conference 2018 – Science, Food, Society on 18-21 September in Parma (IT).

[1] Taken from draft INGSA Manifesto for 2030 (International Network for Government Science Advice) – Scientific Advice for the Global Goals (SDGs)

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1. Introduction

1.1. The Strategic Background

The overarching strategic case for a continued programme of food related research and innovation (R&I) in the EU has been set out in the DGRTD publication - FOOD2030 High Level Conference background document (ISBN 978-92-79-61778-2, published in 2016). The contribution that R&I makes to strengthening the EC science policy interface is highlighted, including the EU risk-based food safety regulatory framework in which EFSA is a key player. In order to provide support to tackle existing and emerging food safety risks, EFSA relies on the availability of research and innovation outcomes to deliver robust scientific opinions for risk management considerations and policy support. EFSA plays a central role in collecting and analysing data to ensure that European risk assessment is supported by the most comprehensive scientific information available. It also has an important role both in funding identified research gaps and in informing wider research agendas in areas which will support its ability to fulfil its over-arching aim of protecting EU consumers.

The FOOD 2030 document also acknowledged the need for strengthening R&I policy coherence and coordination. At EU and at Member States and regional level, there is potential for improving coherence and pooling data. This and other strategic objectives have also been highlighted in a number of recent discussions and statements: including the Lamy report, EU Competitiveness Council conclusions (COMPET 851) and the Tallinn call for Action 2017. Together they call for actively driving the development of research and innovation in the EU, improving alignment of EU/national R&I investments and facilitating collaborative proposals. They acknowledge a shared responsibility between policy makers, researchers, businesses and others in ensuring research is a real priority in EU policy making and in increasing trust in science. This issue of trust in science underpinning food safety measures is also picked up in the recent Fitness Check on the General Food Law Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, published in January 2018. In addition, numerous recent issues around food authenticity have led to calls to invest more in the public control, assessment and preparedness functions to ensure safety of the food system and to safeguard consumer confidence in the food supply.

Alongside all of this, there are elements of a range of other research strategies which are of direct or indirect relevance to the overall safety of the food system and the challenges it faces. For example, the recent DG AGRI "A strategic approach to EU agricultural research and innovation" has a priority 2 – healthier plants and animals – which has potential to lead to provision of data to support EFSA in its role.

1.2. The Risk Assessment Research Assembly – why?

EFSA's strategy is based on the need for cooperation and collaboration with its strategic partners. In this context, EFSA undertook a major Delphi exercise which led to the development of the EU risk assessment agenda (EU RAA). The aim of this is to set out common priorities with the Member States that can be addressed through specific joint projects; planned and resourced through EFSA's working programmes, national programmes and/or through other means in a **transparent, coordinated and collaborative way**. There are also strong drivers to operating in this way in terms of efficient use of the research base, maximising the impact of research efforts at times of shrinking resources and the ever increasing competing demands on research funds. This has also been recognised in the H2020 WP18-20 wording, which highlights the importance to the Work Programme of Public-Public Partnerships - emphasising the contribution that cooperation and coordination will make in exploiting synergies, reducing overlaps, pooling resources and leveraging funds to increase impact of research investments.

In that context, the importance for funders/ research agenda setters to have dialogue with EU agencies, including EFSA and its partners, has strong potential to lead to WIN-WIN outcomes. There are many mutual benefits for structured interaction between funders and agencies:

- Access to and efficient use of the expertise pool: through more coordinated support for research areas by agencies. Better use of expertise and scientific networks will bring greater return of investment and reduce "call fatigue" and fragmented approaches.
- More joined up thinking on research needs/ knowledge gaps to inform more "impactful" calls: drawing on wide range of sources of ideas, including scientific opinions which identify research needs/knowledge gaps.
- Synergies: aligning, wherever possible, EU research activities with EFSA and MS work programmes will improve overall consistency and allow for a clearer pathway to impact, building on the outputs of research projects. Encouraging synergies between MS and EU Research programmes will also reinforce synergies with non-EU programmes and improve linkages with regionally-funded activities (e.g. Mediterranean region).
- Building broader/deeper capacity and capability, expansion of networks and geographical balance: outreach to all MS, including ones with less research activity; draw in large network of Agency competent partners with particular expertise, as impact delivery partners.
- Enhanced networking with research clusters with other agencies (EU-ANSA), and international partners.

With all of this in mind, EFSA convened the Risk Assessment Research Assembly (RARA) to promote a dialogue and sharing of ideas, knowledge and approaches, which aimed to build and support the case to be made by EFSA and its partners for future public funding of research in food safety and which makes best use of resources and meets strategic needs by:

1. raising **awareness** of the importance/impact of public funding for food safety research and **informing research agenda setting;**
2. providing a **platform** for networking (facilitate partnering and funding; ideas to influence opportunities in future food safety research programming; sharing experiences on challenges and opportunities in accessing funding and collaborative working).

2. The Risk Assessment Research Assembly – content and objectives

This was intended to be a dynamic and interactive event, bringing together strategic policy and delivery partners (including the research community) of EFSA to discuss the key contribution that public funding of food safety related research makes, and should continue to make, to consumer protection. It aimed to support EFSA, its partners and research providers in making a compelling case to ensure that there is a significant and effective element of publically funded food safety research in future programming decisions, both at national and EU level. Building on the content within the EURAA, but also recognising that new ideas are emerging all the time, it included opportunities to:

- further develop ideas within the EURAA
- communicate on developing/new key research ideas, that may form part of future public calls; and
- identify potential collaborators where these would be needed to deliver the outcomes.

The event consisted of:

- keynote talks from high profile speakers to highlight both Commission and MS perspectives on the strategic drivers, opportunities, challenges and efficiencies for public funding
- an expert panel discussion exploring in more depth both the generic factors/arguments which will need consideration in building future funding cases, as well as the specific factors which would support a compelling case for food safety related programmes
- a second expert panel drawing on experiences in "making it happen" on a practical level – the challenges and (hopefully) ideas to overcome these in accessing funding and delivering collaborative projects.
- an "ideas forum" including an opportunity for many of the ideas to be "pitched" to an audience of peers and funder/policy representatives, as well as ample opportunity to network.

The programme (available in Annex A) was designed to attract various participants as an occasion:

- for funders/policy makers:
  - providing informed input/critical thinking on current/future needs for food safety research and proposed priorities;
  - gathering inputs on cutting-edge research topics and needs for future developments of research agenda and funding opportunities in the field of food safety;
  - improving/updating knowledge of key actors in risk assessment research in Europe;
  - promoting their funding opportunities with top-level research organisations;
  - learning from peer institutions about best practices and new approaches in the field of public funding for food safety risk assessment research;
  - broadening access to wider research community (non-usual stakeholders/lobbyists).

- for research organisations/networks:
  - advocating the importance of their field of work in food safety and public health and the need for public funding;
  - finding potential partners for future funded-projects;
  - learning about new funding opportunities at EU and national level;
  - improving knowledge on public funding tools and actors in Europe;
  - exchanging tips/best practices and improving know-how on fundraising for risk assessment research in the field of food safety;
  - gathering feedback from peers, funders and decision-makers on the viability of their research ideas;
  - presenting their research ideas to funders and decision-makers in charge of shaping future research agenda and funding opportunities in the field of food safety.

3. Audience

The invitation to participate in the event was an open one, but priority was given to those interested in sharing and presenting funding opportunities and/or research ideas in the areas of the EU Risk Assessment Agenda in the form of posters/"pitches".

The target audience for the meeting aimed to include participants from the following areas:

- funders and policy/decision makers at the EU and national level;
- members of the EFSA Advisory Forum and Focal Point networks and EFSA Scientific Committee;
- Research organisations/network representatives.

There were 200 participants at the event coming from a total of 39 countries:

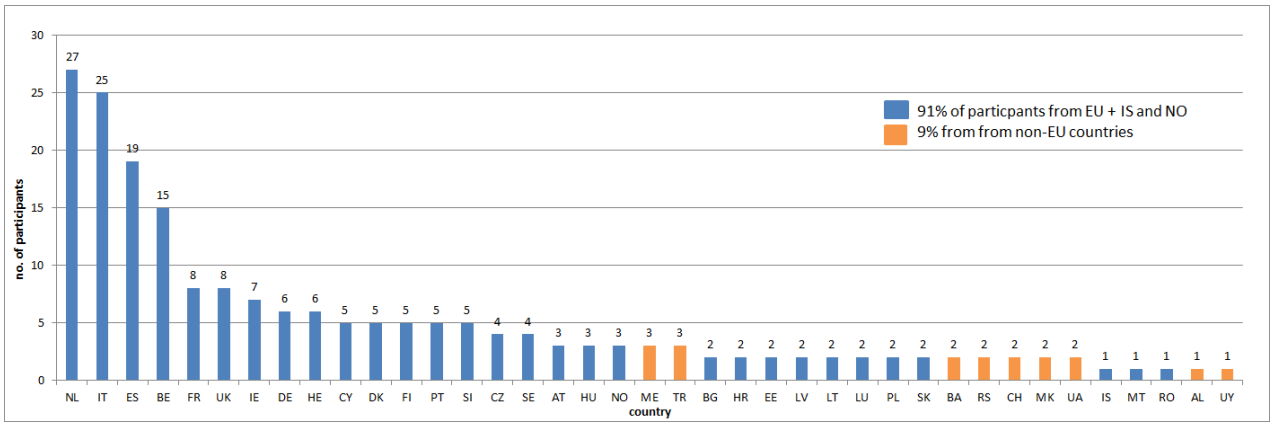

Figure 1: Participants by country

The vast majority of these (88%) registered through the open registration system and one-in-four (26%) were first time attendees at an EFSA event. Participants came from the following categories of organisation:

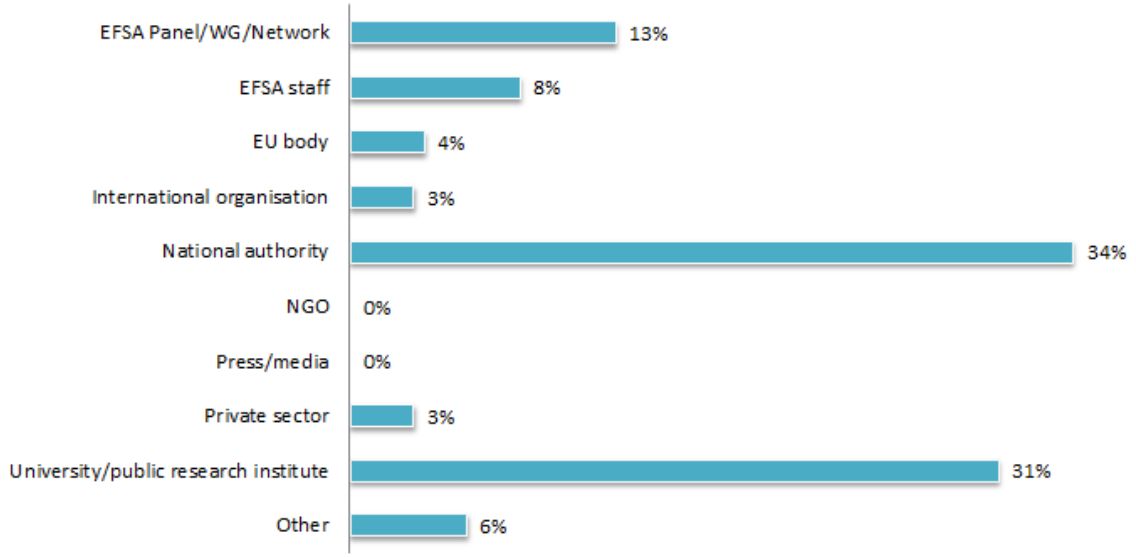

Figure 2: Registered participants by category

4. Summary of RARA sessions

Detailed material relating to the RARA event, including an e-inventory of research ideas, presentations, posters, speaker and panellist biographies and abstracts is shared on EFSA's website[2].

To facilitate the interactive objective of the event, participants were encouraged to use the provided ConnexMe app which would allow them to:

- Contribute by sharing opinions and asking questions during the plenary sessions;
- Network and schedule meetings with other participants;
- Access event documentation and logistical information.

4.1. Keynote presentations

4.1.1. Bernhard Url – Executive Director, EFSA

Importance and means of working together in shaping further the ERA

A central theme of EFSA's strategy is collaboration with its strategic partners, including on research needs. This can only happen effectively when there is an environment of trust. Today's event, is about activating collaboration – and while it may not always happen, working together is likely to be more impactful than working alone. EFSA has been developing its EU Risk Assessment Agenda, identifying shared interests between the MS with a view to helping alignment and collaboration on the most important topics. Practically, it is not easy however - due to differences in processes, timetables, budgeting and the other minutiae of day to day working. Nevertheless, consortia are gradually being built bringing projects into reality.

Reference was made to recent papers reflecting on developing the future of research and innovation in the EU, such as the Lamy report", the Tallinn call for Action 2017, which highlight the need for

[2] Available online at: https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/180207.

future research to be more mission oriented and impact-focussed to address global challenges. They call on the responsibility of policy makers, researchers, businesses and others in ensuring that research is a real priority in EU policy making and in increasing trust in research. Concern was expressed that there is still more fragmentation than unity, but that EFSA, and its partners in the Member States, stood ready to be an active player in the European Research Area, as reinforced in a Joint Statement with the Advisory Forum formalising this commitment.

A challenge for EFSA is how its advice is perceived and how society interacts with science based advice. Can science be made more inclusive eg through co-evolution of ideas, so it is not seen as an "elitist" pursuit but as a mutual activity for societal benefit? The development of open/citizen science is a key driver for EFSA – but openness should be "smart" – not just a mechanical process of making data available, but making it useful to others to help create new knowledge.

In the food/agriculture area, much of the discussion is framed in terms of food security/sustainability-but there cannot be food security without food safety. Food safety should not be an afterthought, but integrated by design into future developments on areas such as food security, sustainability, authenticity. The challenges to the integrity/safety of the food system has been highlighted in the background paper to the FOOD2030 High Level Conference and a range of other papers – all of which have potential to impact on consumer confidence in the food supply. Numerous recent issues around food authenticity have led to calls to invest more in the public control, assessment and preparedness functions to ensure the safety of the food system and safeguard consumer confidence in the food supply.

The on-going DG SANTE Roadmap consultation on transparency and sustainability of the EU Risk Assessment model in the food chain, and the General Food Law Fitness Check highlight further the need for food-law to be science-based and to find ways to improve trust in the science used for food safety.

This builds a compelling case for public funding of research in risk assessment, and underpins the objectives of the Research Assembly. Today marks a start of an important dialogue to help EFSA and the wider risk assessment community to identify how best to support future research programming.

4.1.2. Michael Scannell – Director for the Food Chain, European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food (DG SANTE)

Investing in food safety research and innovation: from re-activeness to pro-activeness

The relative proximity of decisions on the EU budget from 2020 onwards, made this an opportune time for this event, and to be working in research, with a clear view that future prosperity requires large scale investment in research. In the food area, there are a number of converging policy tracks which provide a platform to underpin food safety as a key area for future investment. Communications around reform of the CAP have highlighted the role of research in addressing the key challenges. Recent unrest over risk assessment decisions have highlighted the need for changes in the General Food Law, but also highlighting that we need to ensure that EFSA has the tools to do its job. There is also a key role for the science community to defend EFSA from unfounded criticism.

Food is a critically important area and the future of funding in food safety is positive. There are still evident gaps in knowledge (not least as highlighted within the EU Risk Assessment Agenda document) which have potential for major economic/societal impacts and which argue for public funding, not least because the private sector cannot be relied upon to fund in many/most of these areas.

Investing in research and innovation is fundamental to human and planetary wellbeing. It provides the opportunity to tackle the vulnerabilities that our society is constantly facing. Today's food systems are vulnerable: limited resources, impact from and on climate change, malnutrition, new and emerging food safety risks. There are perceptions in society that EU funding largely benefits commercial concerns, which is not the case, but these concerns do need to be tackled to reassure citizens.

Traditionally, efforts made via research and innovation to address critical risks faced by food systems have been reactive. The recent but almost already forgotten Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathies (BSE) crisis is an example of such reactiveness. The European Union via the Research and Innovation Framework Programmes (FP) and the Member States via their own programmes mobilised at the time significant resources and put this as a top priority in agri-food research and innovation agendas. Continuous R&I efforts along the years have been able to significantly reduce the scientific uncertainty behind BSE, but have also opened new questions. Those efforts have contributed to a dynamic risk-based review of the EU policies in place aimed at overcoming the BSE crisis.

Today's society and the food systems themselves are requesting that our efforts become proactive. Many of the issues are already known but a framework needs to be in place to reassure the public that food is safe – which is also a key factor for industry to prosper. This requires interdisciplinary efforts and multi-actor engagement in order to build a common understanding on the key needs, how to prioritise those, what type of results should be expected and ultimately their translation via policy into tangible and implementable outcomes and, of course, what resources are needed. While innovative R&I instruments like the 'mission-oriented' component of FP9 may be able to provide concrete impacts in many areas including food systems, realising these impacts would not be possible unless regulatory science and related policies are able to provide robust frameworks for assessing the safety and efficacy of innovation in the food chain. Maintaining the EU high level of scientific expertise in risk assessment should also be part of R&I policies both at EU and MS level. The close links between education and R&I funding programmes provides opportunities to build the next generation of experts to contribute to the future EU food safety risk assessment system.

The Commission is committed to working with EFSA to make this happen. DGSANTE will also be working with its colleagues in DGRTD and DGAGRI to continue to highlight the importance of food safety and to support the development of supportive programmes of research for the future.

4.1.3. Pamela Byrne – Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)

Importance of public funding for food safety research

The UN Strategic Development Goals, particularly goal number 3 which targets health, provide an important framework to take forward future investment in the food area. Partnerships will be necessary to achieve this and collaboration is a fundamental keyword. To support the development of a healthy society with access to safe, nutritious food requires more investment to understand current and new challenges, such as those posed by climate change, globalisation, new and more complex supply chains (which can bring traceability issues), new food materials, changing production methods. Consumers rely on public scientists to ensure their food is safe/trustworthy. This all requires investment in the development of robust risk assessment methods and capability to ensure proportionate actions, based on sound science – but also investment in development of effective means of risk communication.

Over recent years, funders' have been particularly interested in asking about the impact of their investments on areas such as products, growth, jobs – so how to influence their thinking to invest more in food safety science?

Investment in food safety can deliver a range of benefits in terms of eg new knowledge, increased capability, new infrastructure – with an expectation that consumers can be better protected.

For example, new knowledge has been created in relation to a range of food borne organisms of concern which have helped – but we still do not know all that we need to know. For example, there have been significant developments in capability and infrastructure in Ireland eg in terms of training and technical support, pilot scale facilities to help industry understand how to improve their processes etc – but the supply still does not meet the demand. Much of this activity has helped to generate huge amounts of data, but how to translate this ultimately into knowledge which can be applied to provide assurance to consumers? There are many users/beneficiaries of the outputs of research – such as

regulatory bodies to inform policy but also to provide technical support for management actions, input to expert committees who provide advice, both at national and international level. Industry also benefits in terms of support for ensuring the safety of its operations, developing products, understanding the challenges and mitigations it can apply to its supply chains. However, this does then pose a question whether it should only be public funds that are applied to food safety – or should there be more public private partnerships in certain areas – something which needs further debate.

Ultimately we all benefit from investment in food safety. While some may argue there is already enough investment, consumers of today have high expectations – they rightfully expect the food they purchase and consume will not cause them harm and that they can trust it. They expect national governments to play a significant role in protecting their health and their interests in accordance with the food regulatory framework. While the food industry is legally obliged to only put safe food on the market, the Authorities of Member States and the European Commission are ultimately responsible for removing food from the market where that food poses a risk to consumers' health. These organisations must base their decisions on science.

Access to the outputs of robust food safety science is therefore central to these organisations' ability to make fully informed decisions: science determines risk. These organisations cannot carry out robust risk assessment in the absence of rigorous research and high quality data. Therefore, it is crucial that research in food safety receives adequate and prioritised funding to:

a) ensure that robust risk assessments can be carried out; and,
b) that new and emerging harms are researched.

Investment in food safety science thus enables those involved in protecting consumers to be more proactive in managing, mitigating or removing risks to consumers of food produced in Europe. It is vital that scientific expertise in food safety is available to support the regulatory Authorities in their mission to protect public health and the early detection of emerging risks in the food chain.

4.2. Expert Panel 1 – Making the case for public funding

The members of the panel were:

1. **Razvan Anistoroaei** Agri-Food Chain Unit, European Commission Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD);
2. **Jean-Charles Cavitte** Research Policy Officer, European Commission Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI);
3. **Robert van Gorcom** Vice-Chair of the EFSA Management Board, Managing Director at RIKILT, Wageningen UR (NL);
4. **Marta Hugas** Chief Scientist, EFSA
5. **Eduardo Rosa** Member of Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), Science Europe, Professor at the University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro;
6. **Ioanna Stavridou** Science Officer, COST Association.

The overall **objective of this panel** was to provide views on/discuss the key factors which should be considered in putting a compelling case for the importance of public funding of research and informing wider research agendas – either generically or specifically (in relation to food safety/risk assessment) as panel participants' backgrounds/knowledge allowed. Each panel member had been asked to prepare a written statement in support of the objective (these can be found in the "Food for Thought" document on EFSA's website). They were initially asked to summarise the main messages from their statement followed by a Q&A session picking up on themes from this and key background documents such as the Lamy Report, FOOD2030, the Tallinn Call for Action etc.

Key points which emerged in the panel contributions:

- The groundwork on future programming is well advanced but the detail has yet to be worked out – the Commission is in listening mode, including through events such as RARA.
- There are already established networks of expertise to tap into to build future collaborations and deliver the science needed to underpin food safety – including those coordinated by EFSA and COST. These are already working in important areas and eg COST networks have built a critical mass and ability to have a good success rate in EU calls.
- Future programmes, at least at EU level, are likely to be framed in the context of "mission oriented" – complex issues requiring complex and holistic proposals to tackle effectively. There was a view this will need a significant increase in funding at EU level (striving to meet 3% of GDP level) - so that more of the best proposals submitted can be funded.
- "Missions" are also likely to be framed in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and broader issues, – while the mention of food safety may not be overt in these, it is seen as an integral part and proposers will need to interpret calls carefully (and not just in the "food" area, but also agriculture, health etc) and articulate their proposals in language so that the assessors of the proposals will clearly recognise the linkage to their broader aims.
- Clear articulation of likely impact is expected to be a key feature of future programming decision making on proposals. This is not easy as impact can occur at many levels and many timescales. There was also concern that over emphasis on impact would detract from the need to also include a significant element of fundamental research in future programmes, where describing impact was perhaps even more challenging.
- It was questioned, based on past experience, whether the funding system was broken and whether alignment of EU/national/regional funding streams (as proposed in recent reports) was a realistic proposition. It was pointed out that of the total R&D funds available, only 10% comes from EU with 90% in MS – this represented a huge opportunity for collaboration/leverage – but efforts so far to do this successfully had been patchy eg difficulties in persuading MS to engage in ERANETs in key areas. This may have something to do with conditions attached to the available instruments, but also about MS not seeing that these instruments are about building added value through collaboration, rather than trying to use as a framework to fit in their usual type of activities.
- On the plus side, the launch of the recent One Health European Joint Programme was cited as an example of a possible approach going forward – this was a €90m project with 50% coming from EU and 50% from the MS. This will have the ability to launch its own transnational calls which could be more sharply focussed and attractive to some proposers.
- There were also issues expressed concerning longevity/sustainability of funding for running projects – current projects are producing outputs but funding programmes often do not seem to have the ability/commitment to carry this through to a more sustainable outcome – this seems a missed opportunity. The issue of regulatory bottlenecks was also raised as a possible barrier to timely implementation of emerging science – with a need for policy makers and funders to come together to address this. In terms of past instruments with some success in sustainability, the Networks of Excellence type of instrument had achieved some success. A suggestion to create "Research Hubs of Excellence" as a future initiative was made.
- The levels of funding were also a concern – generally these did not meet the full cost of the research undertaken so large amounts of internal cross subsidy were needed, which was unsustainable. This was making some organisations question whether to apply to certain calls/funders.

  Future programming needs a diverse landscape of both top down and bottom up approaches, to be able to cover the range of research types and needs – there is no 'one size fits all'. But care needs to be taken in doing so not to have a confusing plethora of funding instruments which might lead to potential for overlap/fragmentation. An ability to bring together funding streams to make the most of leveraging and structuring effects (focus on added value) is important – which suggests that more co-creation/co-evolution of programming will be important – and perhaps involving citizens more in this. Coordination and collaboration will be the key to effective progress – not least to avoid a potentially unhelpful level of competition between the huge number of research organisations.

Comments received via the ConnexMe app on the morning session keynotes/panel:

A wide range of comments were provided through the app commenting on and/or supporting the key points from the key note speakers and the Panel discussion highlighted above, and other issues of concern. Issues which received particular support from a number of people (10 likes or more) in the audience included:

- A proposal to consider developing a large joint initiative in the food safety area to act as a focus for collaboration – along the lines of a European Joint Programme or a Joint Programming Initiative; (NB: This was the comment with most "likes" during the whole event);
- More funds for basic research in the food safety area as a foundation for subsequent applied work;
- Difficulties in accessing funding for applied research, leading to a waste of effort in writing proposals that do not get funded;
- The issue of current funding schemes not reflecting the true cost of delivering research – urgent need for future broader EU schemes and collaboration between funders;
- To improve food security (which includes food safety as a pre-requisite) food safety risk assessment and environmental risk assessment need to be combined to see the whole picture;
- Research and Innovation needing more public funding as it often is addressing issues which are not product specific;
- Transparency in risk assessment – also need transparency in risk management decisions so that citizens are fully aware of basis for decisions
- On the issue of public v private funding – "My mother never understood the big difference between public and private funding cause at the end she was paying for it anyway she said".

All of the various comments (and any sub-comments made as follow up by other audience members), together with the number of "likes" for each, are at Annex B.

4.3. Ideas Forum

The RARA event announcement had invited researchers to submit research ideas to be presented as posters and short "pitches" (presentations) intended to "sell" the importance of their ideas to their peers in the meeting – as well as briefly outlining the proposed problem and research needed, in particular, they were asked to focus on explaining the expected impact of the proposed work and the need for public funding. The idea proposers were also asked to indicate which of the 28 areas in the EU Risk Assessment Agenda their idea aligned with.

A total of 48 posters were accepted for the event aligning with 21 of the 28 EURAA areas. Of these, 43 were also delivered as research "pitches". Where permission has been given by the authors, details of the posters and presentations can be found on EFSA's website.

The pitches were presented in 4 parallel sessions as outlined in Annex C (which also lists those posters not delivered as pitches). Each "pitcher" was allowed 5 minutes to present their idea with time allowed for a couple of questions for audience members to clarify points and/or provide constructive remarks to help speakers develop their ideas. Audience members were encouraged to also follow up later if appropriate e.g. using the ConnexMe app. At the end of each session there was a general Q&A to allow for general reflections, comments and observations. These are reported below for each session.

4.3.1. Session A

The research ideas presented were acknowledged to be at different stages of progress (from "just an idea being promoted and seeking support" to "consolidated project ideas seeking funding/partners").

Many presenters/participants agreed that the challenge in making the case for public funding is linked to an optimal formulation of the request. There were a number of suggestions for obtaining an optimal formulation. It would be important to provide information on return of investment, especially for the public (i.e. health benefits, public savings), together with holistic reference to all potential benefits, in addition to the public health ones (i.e. environmental, technological, economical, etc.). Building in consideration of the sustainability of activities & benefits after end of project activities would be helpful. Other "selling" points of a more strategic nature to make the case for public funding would include e.g. contextualizing project ideas from a One Health perspective and/or from a European scale/dimension; innovation, capacity building and open-source deliverables.

4.3.2. Session B

The main issue noted was that through the session there were some of the proposals being made which were similar to each other. It was considered that in combining proposals which were similar, there was likely to be an increased chance of gaining funding. What was lacking was a means by which the project proponents could identify similar project ideas being put forward by other organisations. A structured means by which collaborators could identify each other was identified as a need.

The area of regulated products was raised in more than one proposal (for example food packaging materials, novel foods, botanicals and food supplements). While there was concern raised on the lack of knowledge in particular areas, discussion also centred on the support and role of the food industry sectors in adding to the knowledge base for the areas of concern and whether such proposals should really be publicly funded.

In considering emerging problems not only is time an important factor along with the lack of data, but also the need for developing capacity and methodologies. The need for working collaboratively and linking related activities in such cases was highlighted as a major issue.

Combined exposure of multiple chemicals (mixtox) and impact on the environment were also raised and it was acknowledged that data in such areas needed to be developed. A one-health approach was advocated. The inclusion of risk-benefit analysis also needed to be taken into consideration when identifying data needs.

It was also identified that in risk analysis there was scope for better information sharing from a risk management perspective and regional collaboration between regulatory authorities on testing programmes in some areas (e.g. shellfish testing).

4.3.3. Session C

Overall the topic was the development of tools/methods to support, especially risk managers, in decision-making, the identification of emerging risks and risk communication, related to human health. Main challenges indicated include availability of data, as well as reproducibility and public availability of results. Most participants were in search of funding, some were interested in finding additional partners for ongoing projects or projects to be launched.

To develop the envisaged project outputs, public funding was seen as essential. It was pointed out that in a number of instances independence of risk assessment does not allow funding from all sources. In other instances, it was indicated that little private funding was available in a certain field, so public funding was needed to develop the area further, e.g. basic research or funding open-source information, due to lack of interest of private entities to fund the research.

Following the pitches, ways of finding cooperation partners were discussed. Consensus was that consortia are mainly generated via personal contacts. Existing platforms with contact details were seen as being of limited use. While the EFSA Focal Points are a helpful means of supporting

cooperation, it was suggested that a platform, where interest in building or joining consortia could be advertised, could also be beneficial to involve new/unknown persons.

It was also pointed out that there is nobody who looks into all research and generated data in a certain area, to coordinate and share these activities, linking people, identifying gaps and avoiding duplication of work. Such a 'point-of-focus' would be beneficial.

4.3.4. Session D

The research ideas were broad, cut across different scientific disciplines, and were at different stages of development. Nevertheless, some common themes emerged.

Several of the pitches started from the point of view of building on or improving existing approaches to risk assessment and where their practical application to current challenges faced by risk assessors was evident. There were several pitches, particularly in the area of chemical and cumulative risk assessment, which prompted reflections on linking research ideas, sharing information, or joining forces. In this sense, the purpose of the session was effective. A couple of the pitchers stressed the fact that they were seeking public funding for their research, linking to the benefits this brings in terms of transparency and independence. Similarly, references were made to the benefits to 'consumers', linking to discussions in the plenary session earlier in the day about the need to root research in a societal context.

Discussions after the research pitches were dominated by EFSA's role in bringing together, even providing funding for, researchers and research ideas. There was an expectation from some that EFSA should be "doing more". EFSA's role and the purpose of the RARA event were explained, and the need for researchers to make links with each other to improve their prospects for funding applications, given that a small percentage of total research ideas will achieve funding. There was a general consensus that it would be useful to have more co-ordination at an EU/MS level on food safety research although no concrete ideas on how to make this happen. Another comment was that the H2020 framework placed too much emphasis on attracting research ideas that spoke to innovation at the expense of research that pursued public health or harm prevention priorities and that this should be addressed in FP9.

4.3.5. Outcome of Ideas Forum sessions

While the topics considered within the Ideas Forum sessions were very diverse, there were some consistent messages across the sessions which came out of the discussions. Recurrent topics for further research included risk-benefit (cost-benefit), mixtures/combined exposure, botanicals, food security, waste reduction (novel foods), food fortification, crowd-science and artificial intelligence. In particular, there was considered to be a need for more coordination, where EFSA/Focal Points play could play a crucial role, in bringing researchers and proposals together. This would help also to reduce potential for duplication with researchers working on similar ideas being able to explore the possibilities to collaborate, with more efficient and effective use of resources. The importance of a place which could provide an overview of research needs and research activity in food safety was highlighted (particularly to help develop a holistic, multi-disciplinary perspective that brings added value to citizens/impact). Due to time constraints inherent to a 1-day conference, it was not possible to include feedback from the ideas forum sessions to the plenary – however, summary contributions are captured in this event report and abstracts of the research ideas have been made available on EFSA's website, together with copies of the presentations/posters where permission has been given.

4.4. Expert Panel 2 – Making it happen: challenges and opportunities

The members of the panel were:

1. **Stef Bronzwaer -** Research Coordinator, (EFSA)
2. **Jack de Bruijn -** Director of Risk Management, European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)
3. **Jos Cornelese -** Research Strategy Senior Advisor, Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA)
4. **Gorgias Garofalakis -** Nutritional Policy and Research Officer, Hellenic Food Authority (EFET)
5. **Oddur Gunnarsson -** Chief Intellectual Property Officer, Matís-Icelandic Food and Biotech R&D.

The overall **objectives of this panel** were to provide views on/discuss the rationale for, and the practicalities of accessing funding for, developing and delivering collaborative calls/projects - highlighting, using examples wherever possible, the drivers, challenges, opportunities and solutions. As with Expert Panel 1, each panel member had been asked to prepare a written statement in support of the objective (these can be found in the "Food for Thought" document on EFSA's website). They were initially asked to summarise the main messages from their statement followed by a Q&A session picking up on themes from this and key background documents such as the Lamy Report, FOOD2030, the Tallinn Call for Action, etc.

Key points which emerged from the panel contributions are:

- From EFSA's perspective, funds available for research are limited and expected to diminish in the future. EFSA is looking to build on what already exists (eg infrastructure, networks) to help lever resources for joint projects and avoid fragmented approaches – acting as a bridge builder between basic science and policy makers. The commitment from the EFSA Advisory Forum was also seen as an important factor in moving things forward, with a role foreseen for the EFSA Focal Points in facilitating.
- The prospect of attracting more public funding for risk assessment science was felt to be positive but challenging eg in terms of defining food safety needs in the context of future programme descriptions and broader aims. It was felt important to ensure that food safety was integrated more explicitly into such programmes where it was relevant (and it probably was relevant in most cases) – which could also include programmes focused on competitiveness. It would be important to be more precise in articulating how food safety issues meet the project/programme objectives ie the foreseen impact.
- The types of modalities used in delivering programmes will also be a factor, which could make engagement more or less difficult for the various actors. Events such as this were seen as important to encourage risk assessment organisations into the debate leading to the definition of new programmes and resultant calls. It will also be important to have mechanisms to provide clarity/access to emerging results from projects (not just at the end) as the emerging datasets could be very useful to risk assessors.
- Something felt to be missing from programming, particularly at EU level, is problem oriented research – designed to tackle more immediate issues and able to be commissioned and provide results in a shorter timescale. A suggestion was made to develop a "dating model", where a group of funders come together around issues and, building on past experience, develop tools/procedures they can activate relatively quickly. This may be used to initiate new research, but perhaps more likely would be used to "mine" current knowledge to extract added value.
- There was concern of a perception in some quarters that food safety was a "problem already solved" as there are now food authorities in place (including EFSA) and because of the General Food Law. However, many problems still exist and new challenges are emerging eg from the developing bioeconomy where sustainability issues such as re-use of waste in the food chain were being explored. There is however probably too much to consider (or for which funding might be available) so prioritisation would be key.
- There are risks of much duplication between organisations – a "market" on research to stimulate coordination was seen as important. This should aim to draw in all interested

parties, including industry, who are organising their own fora where useful information is emerging, but which currently often lack public authority participation. The aim would also be to engender trust between all actors in sharing information, developing coordinated approaches etc. A role for EFSA and its Focal Points in catalysing this was proposed.

- In terms of influencing research agendas at EU level, a network between EU Agencies has been developed (EU ANSA) to help provide a more coherent voice in approaches. This aims to facilitate identification of needs (either specific to agencies or common ones), to provide clarity in transmitting to EU funders, to seek to be involved more in expert assessment of proposals and to engage in ongoing work to be better informed of progress/results – with an overall objective of seeking more effective targeting of public money on policy relevant work. So both better coordination and communication (about the current landscape of research eg to avoid duplication and assess progress/gaps, and about future directions) were important and needed to go hand in hand.
- As well as influencing EU programmes, the issue of leveraging the even larger amounts of national funds was returned to and how to do this effectively. There was experience of involvement in ERANETS within the panel and while these had all achieved something, they had all generally hit the same barriers to progress around eg aligning procedures, financial planning and timetable, geographical restrictions on funding – there was a reluctance to adapt procedures at national level to make collaborative working a smoother, easier process. Larger instruments such as JPI, EJP were seen as powerful tools once they were in place, but take much time and effort to set up and need a strong focus to help drive them forward to initiation/delivery.
- There was not considered to be one "silver bullet" for the future way forward – but a possible coordination (broker) role for EFSA to bring interested parties together to explore (and perhaps activate) the options – building on RARA as a start of a dialogue? There may be thinks to learn from some successful networks which had emerged from previous projects eg EUPHRESCO, which stemmed from an ERANET and which had continued, hosted by EPPO (the European Plant Protection Organisation).
- Ideas for ways forward were also invited from the audience, with suggestions that tapping into and building on current networks for more specific existing issues, such as Euromix, should also be explored.

Comments received via the ConnexMe app on the afternoon panel session:

As with the morning session, a wide range of comments were provided through the app commenting on and/or supporting issues raised or highlighting other concerns. Issues which received support from a number of people in the audience included:

- EFSA needs to have a strong role in future coordination – but does it have the resources?
- A suggestion to create a portal for EU food safety research together with the various funding mechanisms (and web-links) would be a useful resource – help to identify gaps and possible data sources;
- Research needs, potential funders, priorities and tools are all out there – but need communication and coordination; "Sometimes we have a net and can catch the fishes, but a fish market is missing."
- Share the event output and the Advisory Forum commitment with all MS funding agencies to raise awareness of issues;
- Regulatory bodies are slow to react to marketplace innovations which means research needs are constantly increasing;
- The gender imbalance of the panel [This comment is noted – unfortunately, following apologies received during the setup of the panels, the afternoon panel did have this imbalance.]

All of the various comments (and any sub-comments made as follow up by other audience members), together with the number of "likes" for each, are at Annex D.

5. Conclusions / Key outcomes

At the beginning of the event, as an indication of their expectations for the day, the audience was invited to indicate, via the ConnexMe app, one keyword which they expected to feature significantly during the event – these were then displayed as the following word cloud:

Figure 3: Word cloud generated from audience feedback at start of RARA

Having experienced the event, participants were given a further opportunity to highlight their "keyword of the day" which was then displayed again as a word cloud:

Figure 4: Word cloud generated from audience feedback at conclusion of RARA

It is interesting to note that having experienced the event, there was a change in emphasis of the keywords - with coordination featuring as the most prevalent word (as opposed to collaboration) and with communication appearing as a major keyword where it was absent at the beginning.

The event provided a rich landscape of comment and "food for thought" for EFSA and its partners to consider, which is summarised as follows:

- **Food safety is not a problem that has "gone away"** – there are still many gaps in knowledge on current issues and many new challenges emerging (e.g. from climate change, bioeconomy initiatives and sustainability). Recurrent topics suggested for further research include risk-benefit (cost-benefit), mixtures/combined exposure, botanicals, food security, waste reduction (novel foods), food fortification, crowd-science and artificial intelligence;

- **Food safety is an integral part of the food security agenda**, but from a future programming perspective, would still benefit from having its visibility raised in relevant texts to ensure it is included as part of a holistic consideration;
- **The need to make science more inclusive** – building trust between research and society by improving communication, engaging people in the co-creation of future research, making data and knowledge more accessible - the concept of "open science";
- **Coordination, collaboration and communication** are key to building effective research agendas;
- **The importance of cooperation at all levels** –, national, regional, international;
- The need for researchers (and those commissioning research) **to communicate more effectively on the added value for society (impact);**
- The need for **more (and improved) future alignment of research programming at national and EU levels** and the mechanisms to facilitate this e.g. through development of a Joint Programme Initiative and/or European Joint Programme in the area of food safety;
- Additionally, other modalities for funding need to be explored to facilitate the delivery of outcomes on shorter timescales;
- **EFSA and its Advisory Forum declared their shared commitment to supporting the European Research Area (ERA),** e.g. through
  - Stimulating new partnerships in food safety risk assessment
  - Formation of research consortia, also through the network of EFSA Focal Points
  - Being active partners in international cooperation
  - Training and enabling the mobility of researchers
  - Contributing to Open Data portals.
- **Future programming, particularly at EU level, needs to demonstrate impact**, and is likely to be framed within the context of the 'Sustainable Development Goals' with a clear view that food safety research will continue to be a vital element within this, requiring that priorities and impacts need to be articulated in this context.
- EFSA and partners already work together through **many active EU-wide platforms that can make a difference** – large potential for synergies and enhanced impact.
- **Policy decisions need to be underpinned by robust science**. EU agencies add value in the research knowledge cycle, through identification of research needs, advocacy, assessment of proposals and engagement with on-going projects, as outlined in recently published paper of the EU–ANSA agencies.
- There is good mutual **benefit for structured dialogue between funders, EU Agencies and the research community**: enabling best use of expertise; keeping research agendas informed about knowledge gaps; ensuring wide geographical balance; and sustaining impactful research that feeds policy decision-making.
- A strong message of the **need for increased public funding of food safety research to underpin risk assessments and identify emerging risks**. Food safety is a public good that needs public investment.
- The need to **stimulate the shift from re-activeness to pro-activeness through investment** in food safety research and innovation.
- **EFSA was acknowledged as a knowledge broker and was called upon to coordinate future efforts with support from its national Focal Points**, building on its already established and large network of research organisations spanning the entire food chain. EFSA, as regulatory science body, is well placed to be a 'knowledge broker': *transfer policy needs and priorities to the science community, and transferring an understanding of the evidence, and its limits or uncertainties, to the policy community*[3].
- The need for a **knowledge and collaboration hub** which could bring researchers and proposals together. This would help also to reduce potential for duplication, with researchers

[3] Taken from draft INGSA Manifesto for 2030 (International Network for Government Science Advice) – Scientific Advice for the Global Goals (SDGs)

working on similar ideas being able to explore the possibilities to collaborate, with more efficient and effective use of resources. Also to provide **an overview of research needs** and research activity in food safety (particularly to help develop a holistic, multi-disciplinary perspective that brings added value to citizens/impact).

- A strong call that **effective exploitation of funded work needs wider access to findings of on-going, and outcomes of concluded, food safety research projects**.
- The ideas forum break-out sessions of RARA proved to fill a need for researchers to network and to meet policy makers to develop emerging ideas towards impactful proposals – **a call for future similar and regular "brokerage" type events** was made to continue the dialogue amongst funders, regulatory agencies and scientists. A next occasion will be the EFSA conference 2018 – Science, Food, Society on 18-21 September in Parma (IT).

6. Post event feedback

Approximately half of the participants took the opportunity to provide feedback on the event in the satisfaction survey. A wide range of constructive comments emerged with both likes and areas which could be improved.

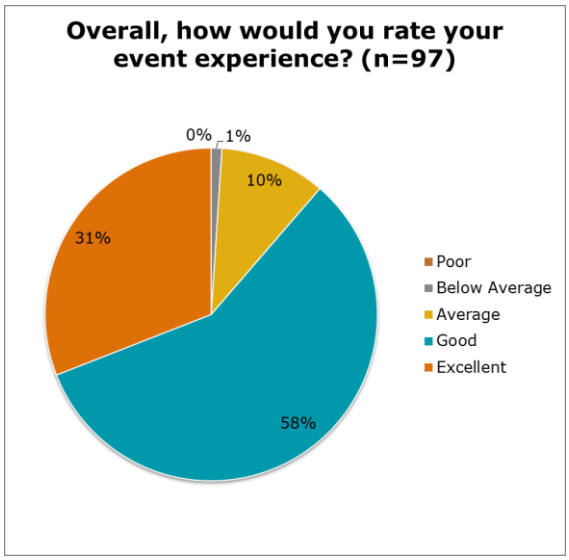

Figure 5: Participant rating of overall experience

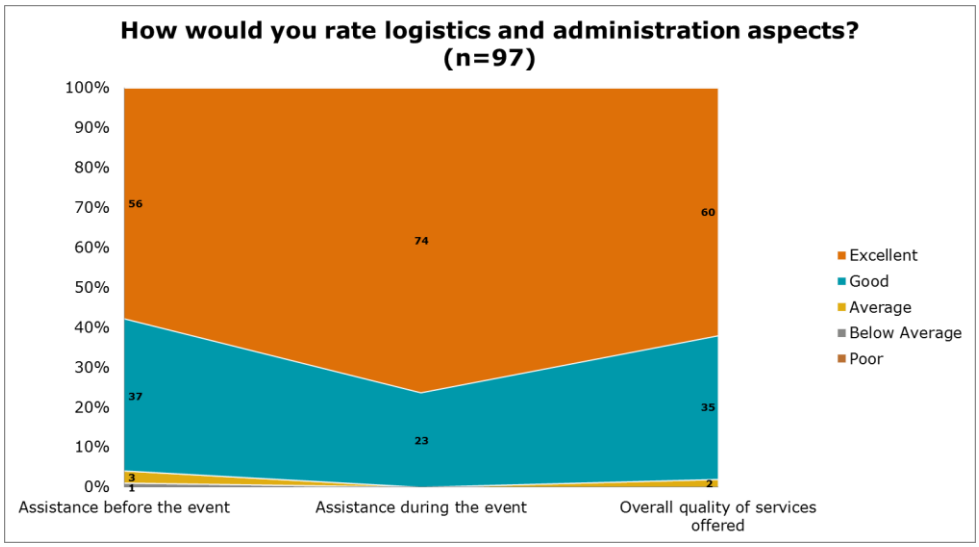

Figure 6: Participant rating of logistics and administration for event

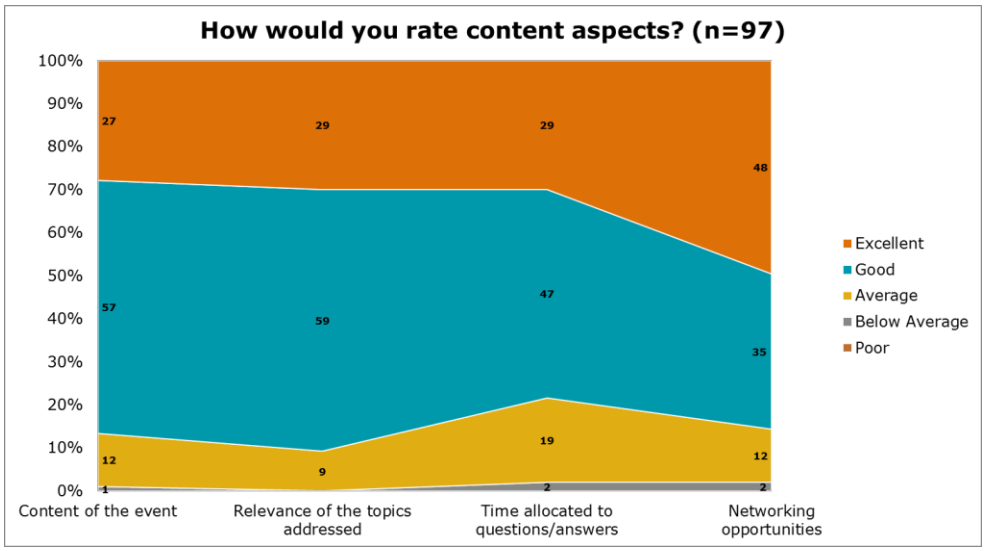

Figure 7: Participant rating of content of event

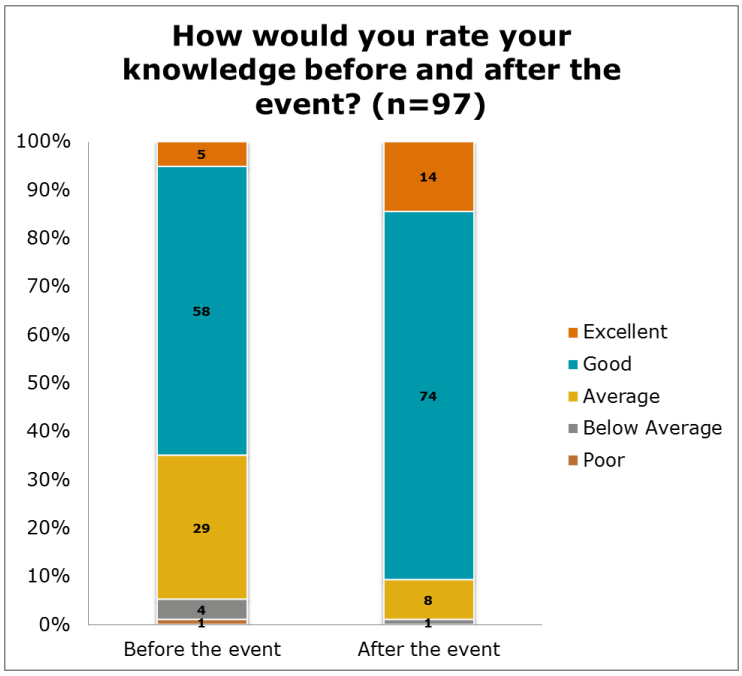

Figure 8: Participant rating of their knowledge before and after event

Aspects which participants liked the most included:

- The concept of the event and breadth of topics covered;
- The pitches sessions and the interactivity;
- Networking opportunities;
- The functionality of the App.

Aspects which were liked less included:

- Lack of focus in some panel discussions;
- Balance of timing on the different sessions – more time for pitches (and ideally not in parallel sessions) would have been welcomed;
- Lack of clarity on concrete next steps.

In terms of follow up activities that participants would like to see – these included:

- Further networking opportunities;
- Support for partnering (consortium formation);
- Overview of funding opportunities (including from EFSA);
- Similar events with more focus on actively promoting collaboration, identifying funding opportunities, exchanging tips/best practices;
- Access to food safety related research project outcomes;
- Access to EFSA and EU food safety priorities;
- More interaction between funders to explore collaborative programming.

Abbreviations

BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
COST	Cooperation in Science and Technology
DG AGRI	Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development
DG RTD	Directorate General for Research and Innovation
DG SANTE	Directorate General for Health and Food Safety
EC	European Community
ECHA	European Chemicals Agency
EFET	Hellenic Food Authority
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EJP	European Joint Programme
EPPO	European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation
EU	European Union
EU-ANSA	Network of EU Agencies for Scientific Advice
EURAA	EU Risk Assessment Agenda
FP	Framework Programme
FSAI	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
H2020	Horizon 2020
INGSA	International Network for Government Scientific Advice
JPI	Joint Programming Initiative
MS	Member State
NL	The Netherlands
NVWA	Nederlandse Voedsel- en Warenautoriteit (Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority)
RARA	Risk Assessment Research Assembly
R&I	Research and Innovation
R&D	Research and Innovation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
WP	Work Programme

Annex A - **RARA Programme**

Time	Item	Format / location	Speakers
09:30 - 11:00	Registration & Coffee		
11:00 - 13:00	Setting the Scene	Welcome	Bernhard Url Executive Director, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
		Keynote speeches	Michael Scannell Director for the Food Chain, European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE)
			Pamela Byrne Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)
	Making the Case for Public Funding	Panel discussion with audience engagement	Razvan Anistoroaei Research Policy Officer, Agri-Food Chain Unit, European Commission Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)
			Jean-Charles Cavitte Research Policy Officer, European Commission Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI)
			Robert van Gorcom Vice-Chair of the EFSA Management Board, Managing Director at RIKILT, Wageningen UR (NL)
			Marta Hugas Chief Scientist, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
			Eduardo Rosa Member of Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), Science Europe, Professor at the University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro
			Ioanna Stavridou Science Officer, COST Association
13:00 - 14:30	Networking lunch & Ideas Showcase		

Time	Item	Format / location	Speakers
14:30 - 16:30	Pitches on key research ideas	Break-out sessions	All participants
16:30 - 17:00	Networking coffee		
17:00 - 18:30	Making it happen: Challenges and Opportunities	Break-out feedback and Panel discussion with audience engagement	Stef Bronzwaer Research Coordinator, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Jack de Bruijn Director of Risk Management, European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) Jos Cornelese Research Strategy Senior Advisor, Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) Gorgias Garofalakis Nutritional Policy and Research Officer, Hellenic Food Authority (EFET) Oddur Gunnarsson Chief Intellectual Property Officer, Matís - Icelandic Food and Biotech R&D
	Wrap-up and concluding discussions	Closing remarks	
18:30 – 21.00	Networking buffet		

Annex B – Comments from Morning Session via the ConnexMe App

Type	Comment text	Number of likes
COMMENT	Good idea, Pamela, an EJP in the area of food safety to tackle modern risks, newly available data an data science approaches would be great!	1
COMMENT	What role for EFSA in coordinating research activities and its funding?	0
COMMENT	Besides asking for more funds let us make sure we use the existing in an efficient way	0
COMMENT	Cost actions are very valuable, but needs follow up funding to get the work done, otherwise the money spend is not completely worth-wile.	3
COMMENT	Are universities playing the role they should and is EFSA recognizing their value? What about their founding?	2
COMMENT	Yes, continuing the funding is very important but not just that also ensuring and supporting the real use and integration of the results on the long term for policy making.	2
SUBCOMMENT	Yes we should all advocate a strong role for science in policy making.	
COMMENT	A COST action would be a good first step SAFE Consortium is preparing one	1
COMMENT	Climate change will help the developing countries for their safety hazards because we will have the same. We will shift from risks) calculation,) to hazards	0
COMMENT	Eranet cofund less interesting than eranets, because of size and fixed procedures	0
COMMENT	As well as asking who will use the results do we need to do more to make sure results are made available to those who need to use them?	5
COMMENT	Efficient communication between risk assessors and funders is needed in order to make known the risk assessment priorities	7
COMMENT	Food safety global/European issue, funds need to be global, pooled, targeted	2
COMMENT	How about a Joint Programming Initiative in the area of food safety? JPIs have led to alignment of national research agendas in other areas and the MS work together to co-fund the research priorities.	28
SUBCOMMENT	Might help in finding and allocating the best competencies regardless of the origin.	

Type	Comment text	Number of likes
COMMENT	In fp9 less focus on industry collaboration- it impacts on perceived independence of research	4
SUBCOMMENT	That can be an issue with PPP as well.	
COMMENT	Cavitte: good point on coordination	3
COMMENT	Food safety risk analysis and health technology assessment could make more connections. There can be cases where public money is better spent on food safety than on medicines.	3
COMMENT	We should have an European system for rewarding those projects that have truly had exceptional results, as is the case of prolonging their financing so that they can continue to produce excellency!	3
COMMENT	Without basic research no applied science can be developed. We need more accessible funds for basic research in the food safety area!	12
COMMENT	In order to stimulate the food safety research funding, could be a EFSA strategy to communicate more with EU citizens and make them more "aware"? As a consequence politicians would be more "sensitive".	4
COMMENT	Need for public funding seems - hopefully - obvious. How about involvement of industry for funding? What impact for them?	2
COMMENT	The EU would greatly help scientists by creating a project submission process that is tiered to prevent spending a lot of time on proposals that are not funded.	3
COMMENT	A broadly view and coordination of all ongoing/funded projects is needed to avoid duplication in research causing loss of funds that could be used for neglected topics. This why communication is needed	6
COMMENT	food safety is applied science. Not easy nowadays to get funding. A pity that we use so much time and efforts writing research proposals that are not funded	21
SUBCOMMENT	Agree	
SUBCOMMENT	If the project is truly applied, and successful it will have sustainable outputs. This must be a Criteria in selecting promising proposals. Too much research ends at the end of the funded period.	
SUBCOMMENT	Yes indeed. The same applies to basic research.	
COMMENT	Science is mostly focussed on new innovative research and the impact of that research. The combining of Running research and use of results By society also had big impact, but only f	2

Type	Comment text	Number of likes
COMMENT	Impact and innovation are important. The question is what we will reach!!!	1
COMMENT	Indeed basic research is important in some areas. However most if not all food science can be applied rather than fundamental.	5
COMMENT	Jean-Charles: diversity of strategic initiatives. Does the EC have a clear idea on how to link with all of them?	1
COMMENT	My mother never understood the big difference between public and private funding cause at the end she was paying for it anyway she said.	11
SUBCOMMENT	She made a good point.	
COMMENT	Is RARA solution to issue raised by van Gorcom, financing through EFSA or EC cannot cover costs, and even consumes national sponsor money. Broader EU finance system or collaboration is urgently needed!	19
COMMENT	I think one of the best messages is the “Open Science” idea, science needs to evolve together with the society to achieve common goals. #RARA18	4
COMMENT	In future, also focus on benefits to provide a more balanced approach to risks	8
COMMENT	Hugas: good point on formulating and “selling” impact	1
COMMENT	To improve food security (which includes food safety as a prerequisite) and make sure we see the whole picture we need to combine food safety RA with environmental RA.	15
SUBCOMMENT	And with economic sustainability for primary producers such as farmers, and food processers.	
COMMENT	Jean-Charles: good to hear how you connect the dots on food security & safety, sustainability, PPP and the diversity of strategic initiatives around it. Maybe more communication on this is needed?	3
COMMENT	Healthy environments are vital to producing safe food. Contaminants from natural / anthropogenic sources in terrestrial, aquatic and marine ecosystems are a primary a risk requiring ongoing research.	5
COMMENT	What is the cost of not doing (enough) research in food safety?	2
COMMENT	Cavitte: One Health approach extends to "healthy" food production systems approach. Very welcome.	7
COMMENT	“No food security without food safety” Both relate to the most basic needs of humans.	5

Type	Comment text	Number of likes
COMMENT	“Food security” is about access to safe and nutritious food, which also has to be affordable and socially acceptable.	5
COMMENT	Good TO highlight the relation food Safety TO animal health/welfare or plant health	3
COMMENT	Of course DG Agri should be here - farmers produce the food.	1
SUBCOMMENT	We can't properly assess risk without the primary production and at the same time primary production can benefit from the results of the RA enabling them to improve food safety in early stages.	
COMMENT	Cost Action is a great tool to network, start new collaborations, discuss international problems and find solutions, but also train young scientists, our future scientific leaders. worthwhile to join!	8
COMMENT	How TO use results coming out of cost actions as a stakeholder in perspective of limited time and Manu cost or other projects?	2
COMMENT	What other science - besides medicine - has the impact on people’s life equalling that of food safety?	3
COMMENT	Eduardo Rosa: We face now a paradigm change in food production. Are we prepared? Research fits well into this disruption. Impact of science depends on our ability to convey results to the society.	3
COMMENT	It really does not matter what type of funds are used, just as long as start-up food science (and not only) projects are supported to materialize in a finite product. Sadly, they perish young...	0
COMMENT	In NL we have experience with PPP in food safety research and unfortunately although the topic is highly rated by industry they don’t want to be individually involved.	5
SUBCOMMENT	One reason might be criticism of PPP by some activists.	
COMMENT	Byrne: excellent talk, clear examples of how important public funding is for RA community and independent RA. Not forgetting spin-offs in technical support and training.	7
COMMENT	Byrne: the global goals for sustainable development important to RA community. Climate change, globalization, traceability, consumer trends mentioned. How about FBOs and consumers own responsibility?	4
COMMENT	On Scannell opening speech, I noted, among other, one key point: research & innovation require PUBLIC funding as often these are not product specific oriented...	13
COMMENT	when tweeting please tag #RARA18	1
COMMENT	Indeed we need to support science.	2

Type	Comment text	Number of likes
COMMENT	Scannell: 178/2002 fitness check, changes to come in RA due to pressures steamed in the glyphosate case. Transparency is needed in RM, too. European citizens deserve to know grounds of decisions.	15
COMMENT	Bernhard: do not forget future, target to improve EFSA 0.9 to EFSA 2.0	8
COMMENT	EU risk ass agenda; how dynamic, flexible is this or is it on broad themes and on results expected over a few years ?	1
COMMENT	The EFSA - EUFORA Risk Assessment fellowship program representatives also warmly greet everyone!	3
COMMENT	It is about #givesciencemoreweight in policy making.	3
COMMENT	Good start to have the posters on display at welcome coffee, and to have this electronic interaction option.	2
COMMENT	It would be nice to share the posters on this online tool	14

Annex C - Research ideas - parallel sessions/posters

Pitches on research ideas: break-out session A

Meeting room **QUEST**, 14.30-16.30

Facilitator: **Marta Hugas** (EFSA) | Rapporteur: **Sergio Potier Rodeia** (EFSA)

Research idea	Idea proponents participating in RARA
A01 | A rapid risk assessment tool for introduction of zoonotic and food-borne diseases	Ed van Klink, Wageningen Bioveterinary Research, The Netherlands
A02 | Internalization of foodborne pathogens. Does it difficult their control?	Marta Lopez, CSIC, Spain
A03 | The use of next generation sequencing data in microbial risk assessment	Francis Butler, Centre for Food Safety University College Dublin, Ireland
A04 | Strengthen microbial Next Generation Sequencing in Europe	Burkhard Malorny , German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, Germany
A05 | TRACKING: Transdisciplinary Risk Assessment Combining Kinetics aNd Genotyping (consortium)	Luca Cocolin, University of Torino, Italy; Marios Mataragas, Dairy Research Institute - ELGO, Greece; Panagiotis Skandamis, Agricultural University of Athens, Greece; Marcel Zwietering, Wageningen University The Netherlands; Heidy Den Besten, Wageningen University, The Netherlands; Marjon Wells-Bennik, NIZO The Netherlands; Annemarie Pielaat, Unilever, The Netherlands; Fernando Perez-Rodriguez, University of Cordoba, Spain
A06 | A new method for identification of antimicrobial resistance genes based on whole plasmid sequencing.	Fajardo Esperón, Animal Health Research Centre-National Institute for Agricultural and Food Research and Technology, Spain
A07 | Measurement of prevalence and concentration of ESBL-producing E. coli in meat and non-meat food	Eric Evers, RIVM, The Netherlands
A08 | Virus in fish - a clear view of the dangers associated with production and consumption	Maria Teresa Crespo, Instituto de Biologia Experimental e Tecnológica, Portugal
A09 | Consumer perception of food-borne disease by Campylobacter jejuni.	Julieta Moreira Abeijon, University of Reading, United Kingdom
A10 | Model for the survival of Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) in aged cheese	Elisa Spinelli, Department of the Science of Agriculture, Food and Environment (SAFE), University of Foggia, Italy
A11 | Role of the wildlife-livestock interface in zoonosis spreading	Ana de la Torre, National Institute for Agronomic Research (INIA) - Center for Animal Health Research (CISA), Spain

Pitches on research ideas: break-out session B

Meeting room **EXPEDITION**, 14.30-16.30

Facilitator: **Hans Verhagen** (EFSA) | Rapporteur: **Jeffrey Moon** (EFSA)

Research idea	Idea proponents participating in RARA
B01 | EU Inter-regional approach to Marine Shellfish Toxin regulations	Joe Silke, Marine Institute, Ireland
B02 | Creation of a HRMS-based platform for risk assessment of food supplements containing botanicals	Aikaterini Termentzi and Parthena Konstantinidou, Benaki Phytopathological Institute, Greece
B03 | Integrative approaches for developing safety assessment methodologies of botanicals	Liliana Vargas-Murga, BIOTHANI, Spain
B04 | Detection of Ciguatoxins in fish meat: an integrated approach for screening and confirmatory methods	Angelika Preiß-Weigert, German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR), Germany
B05 | Food packaging contaminants in baby and infant food: Analysis of packaging materials and food	Raquel Sendón and Ana Rodriguez Bernaldo de Quiros, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain
B06 | Biotest for toxicity evaluation of mixtures of contaminants from emerging food packaging materials	Margarita Aznar, University of Zaragoza, Spain
B07 | Environmental risks to groundwater ecosystems related to use of feed additives	Boris Kolar, National Laboratory for Health, Environment and Food, Slovenia
B08 | Soil Organic Amendments And Its Effect On The Pesticide Behaviour In The Environment	José-Luis Alonso-Prados, INIA - Spanish National Agronomic Research Institute, Spain
B09 | Biosensing devices as a tool to refine the routine analysis of organophosphate pesticides	Janis Rusko, IBP - Institute of Protein Biochemistry, CNR, Naples, Italy
B10 | Safety of Imported Foods and Non-Foods into Europe that are Consumed by Different Ethnic Groups	Parvez Haris, De Montfort University, United Kingdom

Pitches on research ideas: break-out session C

Meeting room **MISSION 1**, 14.30-16.30

Facilitator: **George Kass** (EFSA) | Rapporteur: **Kerstin Gross-Helmert** (EFSA)

Research idea	Idea proponents participating in RARA
C01 | Risk-ranking of chemical and microbiological hazards in foods	Salomon Sand, Swedish National Food Agency, Sweden
C02 | Using "Big Data" gathered in Food productione to be used for food safety/quality risk asssesment	Len Lipman, IRAS, Faculty Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht University, The Netherlands
C03 | Development of Risk-Benefit Assessment of foods in the EU: from methodology to application	Maarten Nauta, National Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark, Denmark Morten Poulsen, Technical University of Denmark, The National Food Institute, Denmark Géraldine Boué, INRA - Oniris Secalim, France
C04 | Implementation of health technology assessment methodology in food safety risk analysis case studies	János György Pitter, Syreon Research Institute Ltd., Hungary
C05 | Novel generic risk-benefit assessment approach	Jolanda van Bilsen, TNO, The Netherlands
C06 | Implementing Network science and Mathematical Modelling Tools into EU Food Safety Decision Making	Ákos Bernard Jozwiak, National Food Chain Safety Office (NÉBIH), Hungary
C07 | Microbiological and chemical risk assessment in bivalve mollucs. Envrionmental and sanitary linkage	Mario Latini, Istituto Zooprofialttico Sperimentale dell'Umbruia e delle Marche, Italy Francesca Barchiesi, Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale Umbria e Marche, Italy
C08 | Effects of (legal) criteria on exposure and health at national level	Johanna Suomi and Pirkko Tuominen, Finnish Food Safety Authority Evira, Finland
C09 | Harmonization and improvement of a decision-making tool for risk assessment	Arícia Possas, University of Córdoba, Spain
C10 | Implementation of standard operating procedures for research studies on livestock pathogens	Eva Veronesi, National Centre for Vector Entomology, University of Zürich, Parasitology department, Züric, Switzerland

Pitches on research ideas: break-out session D

Meeting room **MISSION 2**, 14.30-16.30

Facilitator: **Guilhem de Seze** (EFSA) | Rapporteur: **James Ramsay** (EFSA)

Research idea	Idea proponents participating in RARA
D01 | Developing methods for potency estimation for individual members of groups of toxins	Patrick Miller and Jesus Alvarez Pineiro, Food Standards Agency, United Kingdom
D02 | The relevance of 90-day toxicity studies in risk assessment of foods	Alie de Boer and Misha Vrolijk, Maastricht University, The Netherlands
D03 | Translational strategy to predict food allergenic potential	Raymond Pieters and Joost Smit, University of Applied Sciences Utrecht and IRAS-Utrecht University, The Netherlands
D04 | Improvement of allergenicity risk assessment strategy to support safe introduction of new proteins	Kitty Verhoeckx, TNO, The Netherlands
D05 | EuroMix follow-up on cumulative and aggregated risk assessment	Jacob van Klaveren, National Institute for Public Health and the Enviroment RIVM, The Netherlands Ad Peijnenburg, RIKILT Wageningen University and Research, The Netherlands
D06 | The influence of food components – an underestimated parameter in chemical risk assessment?	Tomaž Langerholc, University of Maribor, Slovenia
D07 | Advanced methods for integrating evidence for dose-response and antimicrobial resistance modelling	Sarah Vercruysse, Hasselt University, Centre for Statistics, Belgium Robin Bruyndonckx, Hasselt University - Centre of Statistics & Antwerp University - Lab of medical microbiology, Belgium
D08 | Development of a web-based intake model for chemical contaminants and nutrients	Georgios Stavroulakis, Demetris Kafouris Maro Christodoulidou and Stelios Yiannopoulos - State General Laboratory (SGL), Cyprus Lefkios Paikousis, Improvast Ltd, Cyprus
D09 | Cocktail effect calculator	Julie Boberg, Technical University of Denmark, Denmark
D10 | Health Risk Assessment of Combined Exposure to Pesticides and Plant Growth Regulators	Mykola Prodanchuk and Serhii Kolesnyk - L.I. Medved's Research Center of Preventive Toxicology, Food and Chemical Safety, Ministry of Health, Ukraine
D11 | Physiologically-based pharmacokinetic models to predict chemical residues in foods of animal origin	Ronette Gehring, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

D12 | Human biomonitoring for assessment of dietary exposure to contaminants and micronutrient intake	Francesco Cubadda, Istituto Superiore di Sanità - Italian National Institute of Health, Italy

Poster presentations without pitches

Ideas showcase

Research idea	Idea proponents participating in RARA
01 | Harmonization of the environmental risk assessment and risk management of pesticide use	Ana Patricia Fernández-Getino García, Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Tecnología Agraria y Alimentaria (INIA), Spain
02 | Microbiological risk assessment of food handlers and food contact surface in the Czech catering facilities	Kateřina Bogdanovičová, University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences Brno, Czech Republic
03 | Risk assessment research in a European outermost region. Needs, challenges and results for locals	M-Carmen Rubio-Armendariz, Universidad de La Laguna, Spain
04 | The safety of hemp in food and food supplements	Urska Blaznik, National Institute of Public Health Slovenia (NIJZ), Slovenia
05 | Risk-Benefit Assessment: a tool for a better food and health policy in Europe (RBA4betterEU)	Paula Alvito, National Institute of Health Dr. Ricardo Jorge, Portugal

Annex D - Comments from Afternoon Panel Session via the ConnexMe App

Type	Comment text	Number of likes
COMMENT	A safer product, as well as produced by safer technologies, is more competitive on the global market. This is result of scientific research and is direct contribution to the economy of MS.	2
COMMENT	Is it time for EFSA to be funded appropriately so it can fund research to meet EU risk assessment needs?	4
SUBCOMMENT	This could work if we could address timeliness	
SUBCOMMENT	I would rather give EFSA a role in defining the funding call topics, and leave coordination with DG RTD.	
COMMENT	Coordination needs leadership	7
COMMENT	Innovation calls for fresh evidence to be used in food safety RA: take the case of nanomaterials as food ingredients (Novel food regulation). Very difficult to imagine such a Challenge Boeing funded	0
COMMENT	EFSA cannot avoid playing strong role in the coordination. Does it have resources?	15
SUBCOMMENT	RAR list is a good start, but not enough. Duplication of research activities to be avoided	
SUBCOMMENT	Maybe. Anyway, there is a strong case, shall be presented in a clever way, showing financial benefits (better use of resources)	
SUBCOMMENT	Coordination of a RAR wish list may not take that many resources.	
SUBCOMMENT	Will it be given them if it does not?	
COMMENT	Developing countries need more food safety advices than us. Is it important...	5
SUBCOMMENT	That is why we need risk benefit assessment. It is combining nutrition with food safety	
SUBCOMMENT	That is true. They need more	
SUBCOMMENT	Codex plays an important role in providing food safety guidance to developing countries.	
SUBCOMMENT	I am doing already	
SUBCOMMENT	Involve local researchers to solve it	
COMMENT	Here EFSA's AF Joint Statement http://evn.im/2K8AL	4

Type	Comment text	Number of likes
COMMENT	Would EFSA be prepared to draft a RAR wish list, open it for consultation (RARA2) and then send it to DG RTD who would include it in a call?	7
COMMENT	Sometimes we have a net and can catch the fishes, but a fish market is missing.	7
SUBCOMMENT	Try Scallop research then...Poster B01 !	
COMMENT	National Food Safety agencies and EFSA should work together prioritising research needs and find/share funding. COLLABORATION & COORDINATION are crucial	7
COMMENT	Focal points should meet with the National Contact Point for Horizon 2020 in their countries and share the insights from this conference	9
COMMENT	Why are there not women in this session?	3
COMMENT	Stef raised a good point. A single portal of EU food safety research with the funding mechanism and website listed would be a useful resource. Would help us to identify gaps and identify data sources.	18
COMMENT	We have research needs, potential funders, priorities and tools. Communication is important, but so is coordination.	16
COMMENT	Gunnarsson: Please integrate food safety research (and RA) into existing (funding) mechanisms to avoid unnecessary isolation. Yes, a broader frame brings larger audience and acceptability.	6
SUBCOMMENT	Indeed.	
SUBCOMMENT	Would be nice to integrate with funding of other health related public policies, to optimize allocation effectiveness across these large fields	
COMMENT	Why are there not women in this panel? Are there not relevant women in food safety?	5
COMMENT	At the beginning, one of the driving idea of RAA was also to get the initiatives from MS that do not traditionally get most of the research funding. No discussion on that so far.	5
COMMENT	JPI: potentially a good idea. If combined with public consultation a priori on the ToR's, methodology, outcomes to be achieved. It should provide answers to real questions. Not the other way around.	4
COMMENT	GOOD COMMUNICATION IS REQUIRED!	4

Type	Comment text	Number of likes
COMMENT	is the best return that guarantee Food safety and Food Security increasing the fighting against Food waste and promote an more strong green and circular economy?	6
COMMENT	Nowadays, with so many integrate information Systems supporting manage political decisions, Why is so difficult to understand that each € invest in good Food Science	3
COMMENT	As a starting point, the statement of EFSA and the MS published yesterday should be shared with all the MS funding agencies along with the report from this Conference to raise awareness of the issue	13
COMMENT	Pamela raised the solution of a JPI. Do the panel think that would work? If not why not?	5
COMMENT	European politicians think that there is no food safety problem in Europe. Is it true? It is why they do not put money on this topic. Our group today has to convince them	5
SUBCOMMENT	I agree	
SUBCOMMENT	By the way, poor/stupid nutrition creates perhaps the biggest food safety problems of today.	
SUBCOMMENT	That is nutrition	
SUBCOMMENT	European politicians are enthusiastic with domestic food, millions of coach potatoes watch tv cooking shows every evening. How come we think food safety is not important? A framing question, again.	
COMMENT	de Bruijn: ECHA needs the best scientific advice, that is why EU research agenda is of great interest. We (food safety RA included) need to be clear what is needed.	2
COMMENT	Regulatory bodies are very slow to react to changes in industry innovation in putting new products on the market constantly increasing the research needs.	10
COMMENT	Cornelese: Problem oriented research with throughput time of 2 years is (desperately) needed. Here we have to balance between RA as a scientific process and RA as reports producing machinery.	4
COMMENT	Arriving again and again to communication issues... No proper information in proper places in proper time. In all phases from programming of calls through forming consortia to communicating results.	10
COMMENT	All male panel...	16