



COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT AND COOPERATION DEPARTMENT

**Minutes**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Communications Expert Network (CEN)**  
**Parma (Italy), 14-15 March 2019**

**Chair:** Barbara Gallani

**Participants**

Country	Name
Belgium	<i>Jean-Sébastien Wahlin</i>
Bulgaria	<i>Mariela Pchelinska</i>
Croatia	<i>Sara Mikrut Vunjak</i>
Cyprus	<i>Charitini Frenaritou</i>
Czech Republic	<i>Vladimir Brychta</i>
Denmark	<i>Heidi Kornholt</i>
Finland	<i>Perttu Saralampi</i>
France	<i>Elena Seite</i>
Germany	<i>Suzan Fiack</i>
Hungary	<i>Erika Országh</i>
Ireland	<i>Jane Ryder</i>
Italy	<i>Carlotta Ferroni</i>
Netherlands	<i>Annette Lijdsman-Schijvenaars</i>
Poland	<i>Katarzyna Floryanowicz-Czekalska</i>
Portugal	<i>Ana Oliveira</i>
Romania	<i>Rares Mihai Habenau</i>
Spain	<i>Milagros Nieto Martinez</i>
Sweden	<i>Sara Johansson</i>

**Observers**

North Macedonia (online)	<i>Nikola Savovski</i>
Switzerland	<i>Eva Van Beek</i>



## EFSA Staff

*Barbara Gallani*

*James Ramsay*

*Anthony Smith*

*Piera Pozzatti*

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*Edward Bray – Corsini Elisa – Fergnani Flavio – Gizzi Gisèle – Harrington Rory – Kass Georges –  
Mosca Fabrizio – Schomberth Luca – Vrbos Domagoj – Zamariola Giorgia*

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### **1. Welcome from EFSA**

Barbara Gallani, Head of the Communication, Engagement and Cooperation Department, opened the first day of the 5<sup>th</sup> CEN meeting, welcomed members, including Nicola Savoski attending online from North Macedonia, and mentioned apologies. She introduced EFSA staff members and gave the floor to the first speaker of the day.

### **2. Update on Advisory Forum and Focal Points**

Gisèle Gizzi, Team Leader of European Cooperation, gave a presentation on the main activities of the Advisory Forum in 2018 and the main topics discussed, including scientific divergences, review of the EU-Risk Assessment Agenda and EFSA joint cooperation projects with Austria, Slovenia and Bulgaria. She also talked about the last Focal Point meeting held in Parma, its main 2018 achievements, and mentioned the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the network. Barbara stressed the importance of fostering cooperation between MS and EFSA, with a look to past scientific divergences.

The Netherlands thanked Gisèle reminding that divergences is part itself of the way science works, implying that the presence of divergence does not prevent from producing results for citizens. Gisèle highlighted the importance of explaining the origins of divergences and at the same time of anticipating divergences sharing plans between MS and EFSA.

### **3. Update on 2019 CEN Work Plan - Follow up on previous meeting**

Anthony Smith, CEN Coordinator and Team Leader of Content and Social Science, gave an update on the 2019 work plan and presented the main objectives: 1) enhance cooperation and preparedness, 2) share best practice and strengthening capacity of risk communication 3) implement social science in risk communications.

Belgium asked if it was possible to have a strategy document to explain how to reach objectives and how MS can interact. Anthony replied that there is no such document for the CEN beyond the strategic direction given by the Advisory Forum.



#### **4. Joint EFSA/MS Campaign and the “EUAndMyFood” European election campaign – content and dissemination**

Rory Harrington, Team Leader of Social Media, Multimedia and Campaigns, gave an update on the Joint EFSA/MS campaign “EUAndMyFood” in the run up to the European elections, explaining how to combine efforts between MS and EFSA. Rory presented the main EFSA/MS campaign objectives 1) demonstrate that working together can produce tangible results for both EFSA and MS, using 178 General Food Law reform to provide a template for further collaboration, 2) raise awareness of the value of the EU food safety system, encouraging trust in the EU. Rory presented the campaign timeline and its target of 33% of total EU population. Anthony presented a three-level content plan: 1) emotional video, 2) value of the EU food safety system, 3) focus on regional issues and national priorities. Entering into the detail the concept for the Level 1 video was presented, together with the level 2's three pillars 1) safe and nutritious food for families and communities, 2) improved quality of life of our animals, 3) sustainable environment for wildlife and farming for our needs. The proposed content and landing page for level 2 content for the campaign were then presented. Attention then moved to level 3's content where the focus will be on specific issues.

Croatia asked for EFSA's advice on specific health issues linked to healthy diets. Switzerland added difficulties to communicate the difference between Health and Healthy. Romania asked whether the campaign's material will be available on MS or EFSA websites and on the possibility to have level 2 content provided in all EU languages. Cyprus and Romania asked also if the content material will be aired on TV.

Anthony assured EFSA will try to finalize in the upcoming weeks the scope of the multilingual version of content, he then explained that the material will be available just on social media platforms as LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram highlighting the importance of MS cooperation in the dissemination of the campaigns.

Cyprus and Romania offered their National TV provider to broadcast campaign content on TV. Belgium commended EFSA for the 3 levels campaign project and offered to help in disseminating campaign content. Belgium then asked about EFSA's expectation from MS and technical issues about the material, notably subtitles.

Anthony added that EFSA plans to work closely with a compact group of MS which wish to support in the dissemination.

Bulgaria stressed time constraints and highlighted the importance of collaboration with MS and the positive effect cooperation has on fostering citizen's trust in the food safety system.

Rory added on dissemination, the crucial importance of the amplifying and multiplying effects of social media use, the dissemination will be of small-scale amount of information. Through the use of social media every citizen will become ambassadors of the campaign, cascading the content. The amplifying effects of social media will extend through the use of MS networks and social media accounts, national organizations, consumer groups, institutional partners (EC, MEPs) and other EU agencies.

Bulgaria stressed the importance of making all campaign material everyday material that can be used even after the campaign thinking in a long-term communication strategy. Germany thanked EFSA for the presentation and supported Bulgaria's proposal to make the campaign material available for possible future issues or crises, because of the importance in knowing how to communicate at sensitive moments.



Barbara added that due to time constraints it will be difficult to work with all MS but highlighted the General Food Law reform will define EFSA and MS future activities and further collaboration. The campaign will be an important learning moment for both EFSA and MS for any future scenarios.

Switzerland added the important value of using EU influencers (TV, bloggers, chefs), when targeting also youngsters. Belgium asked about the amount of people EFSA hopes to reach. He added that the Belgian Government has a website for sharing its own campaign materials, all MS would benefit by having a website for this purpose. He then added if the EC would share EFSA campaign's material on its website. Belgium then asked how rationalise and systematise for MS the way to share campaign materials.

Barbara replied that EFSA is in contact with EC and that this campaign will teach all more on how to share material between MS and EFSA. She added that EFSA will provide two kits with guidelines and material content to MS.

The Netherlands added that translation is crucial for better cooperation and sharing materials, stressing the importance for people to share their personal stories. Cyprus congratulated EFSA for the joint initiative, assuring support in disseminating content, adding that an alternative way to cooperate is with the national EP offices, which in Cyprus has produced good results. James Ramsay, Head of the Communication Unit, informed the participants of the good past examples of cooperation with national EP office in Italy, promising that this cooperation will be included in the dissemination plan.

Croatia added how seriously it takes its role of EU ambassadors. Bulgaria stated that when it comes to a campaign there are technical problems for translation given the needs in time and resources to go through. France asked if EFSA is going to cooperate with stakeholders.

Rory said that all networks, also stakeholders, will be of great support in disseminating campaign's material.

Spain supported EFSA campaign and highlighted that due to difficulties in disseminating content it will be better to focus on a small-scale of content to disseminate.

Barbara thanked all for the discussion and then asked all MS to vote if they wish to support EFSA in disseminating campaign's content, almost all members agreed.

*Action: EFSA to share dissemination plan for campaign with CEN members.*

## **5. Update on 178 reform: risk communication coordination**

James updated CEN members on the latest developments on the 178 General Food Law reform. Based on the 178 Reform risk communication coordination will be established on 3 pillars: 1) governance, 2) sustainability, 3) risk communications.

Croatia asked EFSA on its stance regarding fake news issue and how to solve it.

James shared Croatia's concerns on fake news and look forward to finding a balance between engaging and debunking on fake news. He then added that EFSA and MS have the right framework to work on fake news in a consistent way.

Flavio Fergnani, Team leader of Media Relations, added that there is room for technological developments to tackle fake news.



Cyprus asked if EC will provide guidelines for risk communications with the public and between risk assessors and risk managers. Italy asked for the creation of *ad hoc* website for sharing applicant's studies. Poland asked for a written version of the conclusion presented. James agreed with Cyprus and suggests asking EC for risk communication's guidelines. He then agreed with Italy proposal and accord to share all conclusion presented. Barbara added asking for space in next October CEN meeting to discuss this topic with the EC.

*Action: EFSA to invite EC to contribute to the discussion on 178 General Plan for risk comms at next CEN meeting in Berlin.*

*Action: EFSA to share consolidated version of proposal to amend General Food Law.*

## 6. EFSA-MS Media Relations: Media highlights – EFSA

Flavio presented the Media Relations team members and then highlighted MR achievements in 2018. Interviews requests hit a record of, on average, 5 media request per day, he highlighted the central role of creating new narratives for interviews and the challenges between EFSA and MS media on certain national topics. He presented the 4 pillars on which EFSA MR work is based: 1) reputational management, 2) expand the readership basin (TV, radio, university journal), 3) instate a thorough rebuttal policy monitoring misinformation, 4) media training, organising sessions with selected staff.

Edward Bray, Media Relations Officer, then presented a case study of EFSA's media relations activities. The case study presented was the interview organised with Austrian outlet "Profil" with EFSA Executive Director Bernhard Url. Edward applauded the cooperation with the Austrian counterpart throughout the process.

Barbara thanked the Media Relations team for their work and highlighted future challenges. North Macedonia thanked the team for their work and then asked about the possibility of starting a radio or YouTube channel. Flavio mentioned the idea to explore the creation of podcasts.

Belgium asked with which media is used to work more, if EU or MS. He then asked about targets and about the possibility for EFSA to communicate with MS if national media contact EFSA on important issues. Belgium also asked if EFSA has ever done a survey on understanding public opinion on how EFSA communicates and how EFSA deals with TV interviews. Bulgaria added that organizing press conferences would be a useful tool to communicate because of the positive outcomes it can bring. On TV Bulgaria suggested, in order to get positive outcomes from interviews, the use of short messages to be repeated several times. Croatia celebrated the cooperation between EFSA and MS and reiterated the importance of TV interviews.

Flavio replied that EFSA plans to be more proactive in relations with media. On communicating with MS he agreed to foster the already existing cooperation between EFSA and MS on sharing possible upcoming issues. On understanding public opinion on EFSA's communication strategy Flavio mentioned that the next EU barometer will provide information on perceptions. Flavio agreed on the importance of TV interviews and its amplifying effects.

Edward added the importance for both EFSA and MS of sharing information on upcoming media requests and sensitive national issues.



Cyprus stated that through TV and radio Cypriot authorities often highlight the role of EFSA. Italy added the positive outcomes Italian authorities had engaging with bloggers. She then highlighted the need to stress connection between MS and EFSA during press conferences. Belgium suggested some alternatives to TV interviews. France congratulated EFSA for the work done, adding the importance of communication with EFSA's Media Relations Team to share information and to finetune both media strategies. On rebuttal policy, France added the importance of monitoring social media and highlighted the role of engaging in long-term human relations in effective media strategies.

Flavio echoed the importance of fostering collaboration between EFSA and MS and of building long-term human relations with national media, EFSA and MS media offices.

Barbara thanked all members for the discussion and wished all a good lunch.

*Action: EFSA and MS to enhance sharing of information related to media activities and enquiries.*

## 7. Key Country Issues

Sara Mikrut (Croatia) opened the afternoon session by giving a presentation on "*To eat or not to eat*": *campaign for better understanding data marking on food*. Sara highlighted that the Croatian Food Agency and Croatian Agriculture Agency (HAPIH) merged to combine the two functions of food safety and agriculture. The aim of the campaign is to improve the understanding of date labelling on food packages (e.g. expiration date) and to prevent food waste. The problems Croatia faces are: 1) only 10% of the population reads food labels and 2) there is linguistic misunderstanding of the terms "use by" and "best before". A considerable share of Croatians do not know the difference between the terms. Concrete actions are in place to address this problem, one of these is to change the wording on food packages. An important initiative of HAPIH was a television advertisement with a celebrity endorser to raise awareness on the above mentioned topics.

Belgium showed interest in the cost of the advertisement and for how long it was broadcast on television.

James asked about the cost of launching on television.

Erika Orszagh (Hungary) presented "*Good practices in risk communication in Hungary*". Erika said that the national food safety agency (NEBIH), established in 2012, is the sole body responsible for food safety in the country and explained its food chain strategy, whose ultimate goal is to protect people and society by improving the food chain safety. The focus of the presentation moved then to the communication activities and its objectives. Erika stressed that controlling the food chain is becoming more and more challenging, especially in the context of a modern food economy. To meet expectations the responsible authority should be well-known, credible and present. It is for this reason that many programmes have been launched since 2014 to inform consumers about NEBIH's activities. The efficiency of these activities is measured through consumer surveys that are carried out twice per year. The survey covers, among other things, topics related to the importance of food chain safety, trust in food chain actors and public awareness of NEBIH, which registered a significant increase in terms of recognition from 2013 to 2018. Finally, there was a discussion on the RASFF (Rapid Alert



System for Food and Feed) notification system, communication outputs and its role with the media.

Barbara appraised the way NEBIH put forward issues that are close to consumers and mentioned the matter of the automatic topic selection by the media. She added that it is a tool based more on the interest of the topic rather than a "push" from the authority. She then asked if there are any divergences in this field in other countries.

Ireland commented that they have the same strategy as Hungary. They upload many communication outputs on social media (Facebook, Twitter) and automatically expect great media coverage without any further action.

Switzerland commented that their media, however, do not always pick up topics related to the national authority's remit and asked about other countries strategies.

Belgium was impressed by the great reach of Hungary's communication activities and asked how it was measured. A question was then asked to Ireland about its strategy, as in Belgium media does not show as great an interest as in Ireland. More precisely, how do they present the results so they are attractive to media?

Ireland replied that media coverage depends on the actors involved in the communication output. If the actor (e.g. food operator) is well-known it is easier to get more media coverage. Belgium underlined the country differences in risk alert system. In their case food alerts are co-written with media. Croatia agreed with Belgium that media are more driven by their own popularity than the actual interest in citizens' health.

Suzan Fiack (Germany) presented recent activities from the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR). In particular, she recounted the highlights of the successful uncertainty conference held in Berlin, at BfR in late February and jointly moderated with EFSA. She then provided information on communication on the benefits and health risks of food supplements at the international green week. The aim of the event was to sensitise consumers for a careful use of food supplements and explained possible related risks. Moreover, the BfR has special surveys, called "consumer monitor", that are held twice a year to know more about citizens' risk perceptions. Through this tool it was discovered, for example, how microplastics and antimicrobial resistance have become important topics in Germany at the moment. As a consequence, the BfR is currently conducting a survey on the risk perception of microplastics. Barbara endorsed the BfR's "consumer monitor" and said it was of great help in the design of EFSA's 2019 Eurobarometer. Moreover, she agreed that microplastics are presently a serious topic and that more research is needed about it. She asked whether this is a topic on which all the participants would like to work and proposed some ways forward: Q&A on risk assessment, develop factsheets, scientific colloquium in October to try to answer the question. Regarding the factsheet, Barbara proposed to put one together (not intended for publication) to see everybody's knowledge on the topic. Participants agreed.

Belgium commented on the "consumer monitor". More precisely he asked about the timing of the survey, the identification of the topics, if there was a change in the topic trends and how the BfR can assess a potential loss of confidence within the public if the agency does not have a clear idea of what is happening.

Bulgaria asked about the demographics of the German survey. Suzan replied that the representativeness of the survey is done according to standards in cooperation with an external agency. The topics are selected by the citizens themselves. A big change in trends was the increase in risk perception of microplastics. The survey started in 2014.



Danny Liu, EFSA Multimedia Trainee, presented the “DRV finder” (Dietary Reference Value), an interactive tool that gives quick and easy access to EFSA’s DRVs for nutrients and is available in several languages. EFSA produced a dissemination package through emails, videos and tweets to raise awareness about the tool. Overall, the product proved to be very successful. The traffic registered was up to 10,000 users in the first 6 months following publication in 2018. The DRV had good resonance also in terms of media coverage as it was picked up by various outlets.

Barbara said that the DRV tool was an important lesson learnt. It can show how EFSA can inform future products. Moreover, the DRV strength is that it is focused on a well-defined target audience (nutritionists).

Switzerland showed great interest in the dissemination of the DRV at national level.

*Action: EFSA and MS to create space to share information about ongoing work on microplastics, including development of backgrounders, Q+A.*

## **8. ComRisk Project (SVA, BfR, Evira, RIILT/WU)**

Gunnar Andersson (connected by phone) provided an update on the COMRISK project. The COMRISK project is an international collaboration project deemed to strengthen communication between risk assessors and decision makers. Gunnar explained that it is carried out in cooperation with the Finnish authority “EVIRA”, the Swedish institute “SVA”, the German BfR and the Dutch Wageningen University. Goal of the project is the improvement of communication outputs in the area of food risk assessment allowing more efficient decision-making. Later, Gunnar illustrated the benefits of the project: firstly, a great partnering activity is fostered through a stimulating inter-agency collaboration and a consequent exchange of knowledge; secondly, as the project is a pilot study, the aim is to trigger new future activities (e.g. more extensive surveys); finally, a better understanding between risk assessors and risk managers can improve the operational functioning of risk analysis.

Barbara praised the fact that Gunnar’s presentation highlighted the “grey areas” of risk analysis and contributed to give a better understanding of it.

Bulgaria continued by praising the good results achieved by the group and sees them as a big step ahead. The fact of having a presentation about communication between risk assessment and risk management was commended.

## **9. Presentation of EFSA’s communication activities**

James presented EFSA’s communications calendar and gave an update on future communications planned by EFSA. Overall, in agreement with the CEN members, James identified following hot topic calls worth communicating on: ethoxyquin, bisphenol A report, new risk assessment of *Xylella fastidiosa*, annual report on pesticides residues in food, second PFAS opinion and possibly phosphates. Regarding the Lumpy Skin Disease report, he said it would be published very soon, inviting Eastern European countries to keep it monitored. Concerning the opinion on “appropriate age of introduction of complementary feeding for infants”, there is no definitive age for when to introduce the formula, but rather a



recommendation for nutritional elements that are needed for different stages in life. On this topic a news story will be provided. Bisphenol A is also a sensitive issue in several countries (France, Switzerland) but the latest output (a technical report on application of the protocol to key studies of previous assessments) has been postponed to summer 2019. James underlined the importance of the annual report for pesticides in food as it always generates attention in the media (e.g. France). It was identified as a candidate for a hot topic call.

Germany and France stressed the importance of communicating on ethoxyquin.

Germany stated it would be very helpful to have guidance on communication on TTC in food and feed. Moreover, she stated that titanium dioxide was in the news in Germany as well as in France.

James replied that titanium dioxide has been an important issue but there is not much information available on EFSA's follow up activities to its last opinion. EFSA can share information with CEN members as it is still on the radar. CEN members will keep in touch to exchange information but no new risk assessment will be done on this topic.

CEN members agreed that the world food safety day (7<sup>th</sup> June) is missing from the calendar and it was proposed to make the most out of that day.

James suggested that if the results of the Eurobarometer are available by then, there could be promotion activities from EFSA's side (e.g. sharing of country specific reports).

Barbara proposed to better coordinate CEN members' plans for the day for possible joint actions.

Anthony presented the draft framework for interaction between EFSA and CEN members regarding hot topic teleconferences and how it works. Moreover, he added that since last year there were eight hot topic calls, the same amount or more can be managed for this one.

Germany thanked EFSA for organising teleconferences and asked whether it is possible for scientists to attend them.

Barbara said that communications are not intended to influence the scientific output. The scope of the hot topic call is to clarify the questions that can arise, to discuss media reactions, to share Q&A and to help in managing scientific outputs. Scientists' participation is welcomed as long as it does not change the outcome of EFSA's scientific opinion.

Germany stressed the importance of teleconferences as a useful tool for an early detection of scientific divergences.

Barbara replied that the use of the six-month calendar is intended to foster discussion that happened months before the hot topic call. The hot topic calls are a milestone that helps to keep the group in touch and discuss issues that are important.

*Action: EFSA and MS to share plans ahead of World Food Safety Day on 7 June 2019.*

*Action: EFSA to share updated calendar of hot-topic calls for 2019.*

*Action: EFSA to share Framework for Interaction for hot topic calls for CEN comments.*

## **10. Opening of second day**

Barbara welcomed members and opened the 2nd day. She presented the agenda of the day and she made some reflections on the outcome of the day before.



## 11. Social Science update

Anthony presented EFSA's Social Science Roadmap 2019-2021, highlighting the two pillars of research and advice. Social science research will be used to inform risk communication, the final aim is to better understand society. External experts will join the developing in-house team. Activities in research: Eurobarometer survey on food related risks. EFSA reputation barometer with innovative methods like discourse analysis with EP. Activities in advice: checklist to assess sensitivity of new mandates. These pillars are founded in social science expertise which will come with experts from academia and international Social Science liaison group. There will also be contact with sister agencies like ECDC and ECHA. There will be a possibility to build a student network for literature reviews.

Anthony mentioned the possibility of a social science mandate on beekeepers to contribute to an EFSA scientific opinion on bee health.

Belgium asked for more information on beekeepers project, however this is not available yet. Luca Schombert presented the 2019 Eurobarometer on "Food related risks", indicating timing, objectives and interaction with MS in developing the survey. The focus is citizen's awareness on food safety, how they inform themselves, perception on EU process. It was designed with MS as a first step to create a hub to share data and methodologies. The contract is signed, the research will start in April; preliminary results should be available for World Food Safety day (June 7<sup>th</sup>), the final results will be ready at the end of the summer. Luca showed an example of question on the trust people have in different actors. While the data collection will start in April for MS countries, the start will be in June for Iceland, Switzerland and candidate countries. Ireland asked for the reason why the word "actor" was used, suggesting that it refers to someone that pretends. She suggested using "agent" instead.

MS input: Erika (Hungary) presented overlap between Eurobarometer and Hungarian national surveys which have been conducted since 2012, twice per year. 80% of the survey remains the same every time, whereas 20% changes. Quantitative and qualitative research has been used. Some of the questions of the survey were used to develop the Eurobarometer.

Croatia stated that it is a good initiative that should be carried out also by Croatia.

Giorgia Zamariola presented the mandate assessment checklist, highlighting how EFSA is using this on new mandates, indicating where MS input was used to develop the tool (e.g. Anses checklist).

Barbara added that the initiative aims at tracking the mandate and that it is an additional scientific assessment of the work. This approach is new and there are instances in which this is not used, for example for the mandate on added sugar.

Germany praised the initiative and asked if all mandates are available on the website. James informed that EFSA mandates are available on the publicly available EFSA Register of Questions. Germany asked what happens in case of risk communication recommended, does EFSA already communicate on those topics? James declared that it depends on the urgency. This process helps to understand the need for stakeholder engagement. It is a work in progress.

North Macedonia asked for a concrete example of social science contribution. Anthony made the example of the Guidance on communication of uncertainty which was also a good illustration of multidisciplinary work.

Barbara affirmed that there will be also a training on social science at EFSA to share the knowledge with the staff.



Answering a question from Bulgaria requesting further information on the checklist process, James stated that the result of the checklist will not affect the actual science process and that EFSA will not reject sensitive mandates.

*Action: EFSA to share information on Must-B project (ongoing activities in bee health).*

*Action: EFSA to share link to its Register of Questions (place where all mandates are published)*  
- <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu>.

## **12. Revamping the Risk Communication Handbook**

Anthony gave an overview and introduction on the risk communication handbook. Objective: publication to help communicators in food safety area. Structure of the book: principles of good risk communication, nature of the hazard, level of communication required, tools and channels and case studies of practical examples. History: first published in 2012, 2015 light update and second update in 2017 with new case studies on acrylamide, caffeine and communication of uncertainty. There is a need to revamp the handbook as the format and content is out of date. The aim is to create a “Best practice in science communication’s series” with reference tools for communicators on “risk communication”, “crisis communication”, “uncertainty communication”. Matilde Garcia Gomez gave an overview from the design point of view. Positive: colour code. Negative: too wordy (add some keywords), not many images, pictures are outdated, no space for reference, not handy for the format (stronger cover or change of format), add a checklist or templates for own cases.

CEN members were invited to discuss in 4 groups and give feedback on the two main sections of the handbook – the instruction manual (10 minutes) and the case studies (10 minutes).

Group feedback. Group 1: A5 format; separate section for case studies like glyphosate. Group 2: combination of hard copy and online. Use of another frame like risk communication assessment framework from the Netherlands. Group 3: good to have the guide. Look at other guidelines from FAO and BfR, checklist for communicators to talk to scientists. Maybe few examples are enough. Group 4: type of language needs to be more concise, adding visuals. Creating template for a clear structure for case studies. Section on “learning from mistakes”. Repository of case studies online.

*Action: CEN members that want to take part in the revamp of the Risk Communications handbook to confirm interest.*

*Action: EFSA to write up and circulate the notes from the mini-workshop held on the Risk Communications handbook that took place during the meeting.*

## **13. Science issue: Chemical mixtures**

EFSA Senior Scientist Dr Georges Kass explained the significance of the new guidance document on combined exposure to multiple chemicals, e.g., links to cumulative assessments. The safety of chemicals in food and feed is traditionally assessed based on the exposure to single chemicals, but now, when needed, we can assess the risk posed by exposure to mixtures of



chemicals. The guidance will be published at the end of March. We need to consider the type of mixture: simple or complex. It is also important to understand what happens when there is more than one chemical. Generally, a common mode of action is applicable and the safety assessment can be a dose addition model. There can also be synergism or antagonism. In the first case, adding the chemicals together results in higher level than the sum, whereas in the second case adding them results in lower level than the sum.

Germany asked what to do in case of contact with media. Kass answered that food contact materials are assessed for their safety. The combined exposure of the consumer with other chemicals in food (e.g. additives) is not expected to be of health concern. It is more a sedentary life style with its associated eating habits that has been associated with detrimental effects on health.

Luca gave an overview of EU Insights survey on chemical mixtures, how it was carried out and the results. The publication is scheduled for March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Anthony underlined that the EU Insights survey provides results country by country.

Elisa Corsini showed the new EFSA multimedia scroller, the features, and the target audience. This is based on the results of EU Insights survey. Simple product and simple language. It's for citizens, NGO... Engaging tool, examples from daily life and different chemicals that might be harmful. The translation is available in French, Italian, and German. The CEN members will receive a dissemination package with the link to download video, GIF, twitter cards...

Congratulations and compliments were made by Switzerland, Croatia and Cyprus. Cyprus asked if the tool will also be available in Greek and offered their support.

Barbara underlined that the collaboration between COM and EU Insights was really useful and there might be also an engage with journalists in the future. Cyprus highlighted that EU Insights shows that trust in journalists is very low and wonders if we should "educate" them. Barbara indicated that perhaps people should be invited to not overreact to news from newspapers. Anthony agreed stating that journalists should be aided in doing "a better job", e.g., checking more than one source of information when publishing a news.

*Action: EFSA to share link to DRV finder (multimedia tool) presented during the meeting.*

*Action: EFSA to make DRV finder available in Greek.*

*Action: EFSA to circulate EU insights report on chemical mixtures under embargo.*

## **14. AOB**

Barbara thanked all participants for the fruitful discussion, EFSA staff for the organisation and contributions, and reminded everyone that the next meeting will be in Berlin on 21-22 October 2019. Suzan Fiack confirmed that organisation will start soon in collaboration with EFSA and recommended that a session on social science will be included in the topics for discussion.