



EFSA Communications Strategy: 2010 – 2013 perspective

**EFSA Management Board Meeting
Brussels, 21 October 2010**

- Process and milestones
- Review of EFSA's Communications Strategy: key findings
- EFSA Communications Strategy: 2010-2013 perspective

Review of EFSA's Communications strategy: key milestones

- **8 October 2009** - preliminary discussion and validation by MB of overall approach and timeline for review of EFSA Communications Strategy
- **February 2010** – report target audience research
- **18 March 2010** – draft Communications strategy 2010-2013 endorsed by MB for public consultation
- **5 May – 5 July 2010** – public consultation
- **June 2010** – Eurobarometer 2010 – fieldwork
- **20/21 October 2010** – final strategy to Management Board

Review of EFSA's Communications Strategy: process

- Review of 2006 EFSA Communications strategy informed by:
 - Analysis of results achieved (outputs and uptake, eg media, web...)
 - Research:
 - Qualitative : key target audience research on EFSA image
 - Quantitative: Eubarometer on food-related concerns
 - Targeted consultation: Scientific Committee, Advisory Forum and WG on Communications, Advisory Group on Risk Communications, Stakeholder Consultative Platform
 - Internal consultation
 - Public consultation

EFSA Communications: what have we achieved? (2006/09)

- Increase in visibility and uptake of EFSA communications

	2006	2009	
Media coverage (articles/month)	400	750	} x2
Visits to website (visits/month)	100.000	200.000	
e-Newsletter subscribers	12.500	> 24.000	

Growing media interest



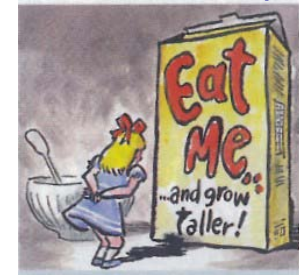
ANSA

Salute: biberon al bisfenolo; EFSA, confermata dose tollerabile

EFSA: plus de 75% des poulets abattus dans l'UE contaminés par des bactéries



The proof of the pudding



Fleischwirtschaft International

EFSA; GMO guidelines with NGOs

EFSA reports fewer pesticide residues are now found in food in the EU

afz allgemeine fleischer zeitung

Bakterien immer öfter resistent; EFSA

untersucht Erreger in der Nutztierhaltung

- Wirken Antibiotika noch?

REUTERS

EFSA sees risks to children from lead in food

Food e-news



FDA SHOULD COPY EFSA FOR HEALTH CLAIMS, SAYS SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

Efsa guidance on safety of botanicals



Hogyan lehet cafatokból hússzeletet készíteni?

Learnings from target audience research: Communications

- EFSA is seen as good communicator with "massive output"
- Holistic view of "communications", ie from scientific opinions, to reports, meetings, presentations, reports, website, press releases etc... all is "communications"
- Coherence with risk managers is improving
- Right tools in place:
 - e.g. EFSA website = core of all EFSA communications

Some opportunities & future expectations
regarding communications:

- Need for simpler, clearer messages
 - from opinions...to meetings, presentations...and final communications

- Strengthen public outreach, in cooperation with Member States

Increase relevance: explain EFSA

How EFSA works From theory to practice

Scientific experts



Evaluation, assessment, advice



In theory



Identify the hazard:
What is the cause?



Characterise the hazard:
What are the potential health consequences?



Assess exposure:
Who is exposed and at what levels?



Assess the risk:
What level of risk does the hazard pose?

In practice

Illegal use of melamine in milk powder.



May damage the kidneys, depending on dose.



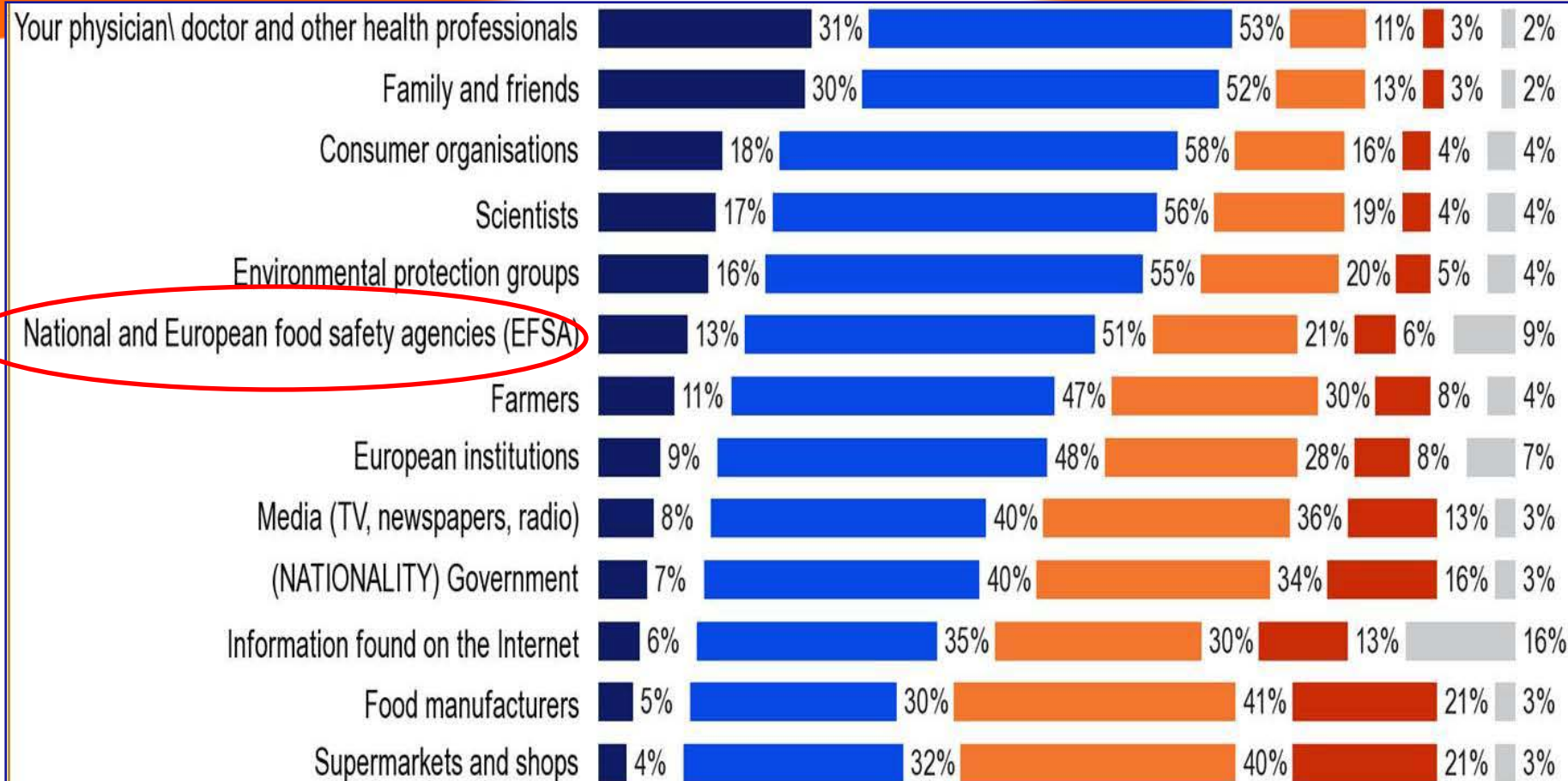
Looked at melamine in various food groups and the amount of chocolate and biscuits eaten in Europe.



At the time, no risk from contaminated chocolate and biscuits to adults. For children, only a risk in worst cases.



Who do consumers trust? (Eurobarometer, 2010)



■ Very confident
 ■ Fairly confident
 ■ Not very confident
 ■ Not very confident
 ■ Don't know

QF5 Suppose a serious food risk were found in a food you eat regularly such as fish, chicken or salad. How much confidence would you have in the following sources to give you accurate information about this risk?

Independence of scientific advice: a dichotomy of views

- The majority of EU citizens think that public authorities take into account the most recent scientific advice (63%), they are quick to act when there is a health problem (63%) and they consider citizens' concerns (63%).
- There is a high level of trust of EU citizens in both scientists (73%) and national and European food safety agencies (64%) as sources of information on food risks.

But...

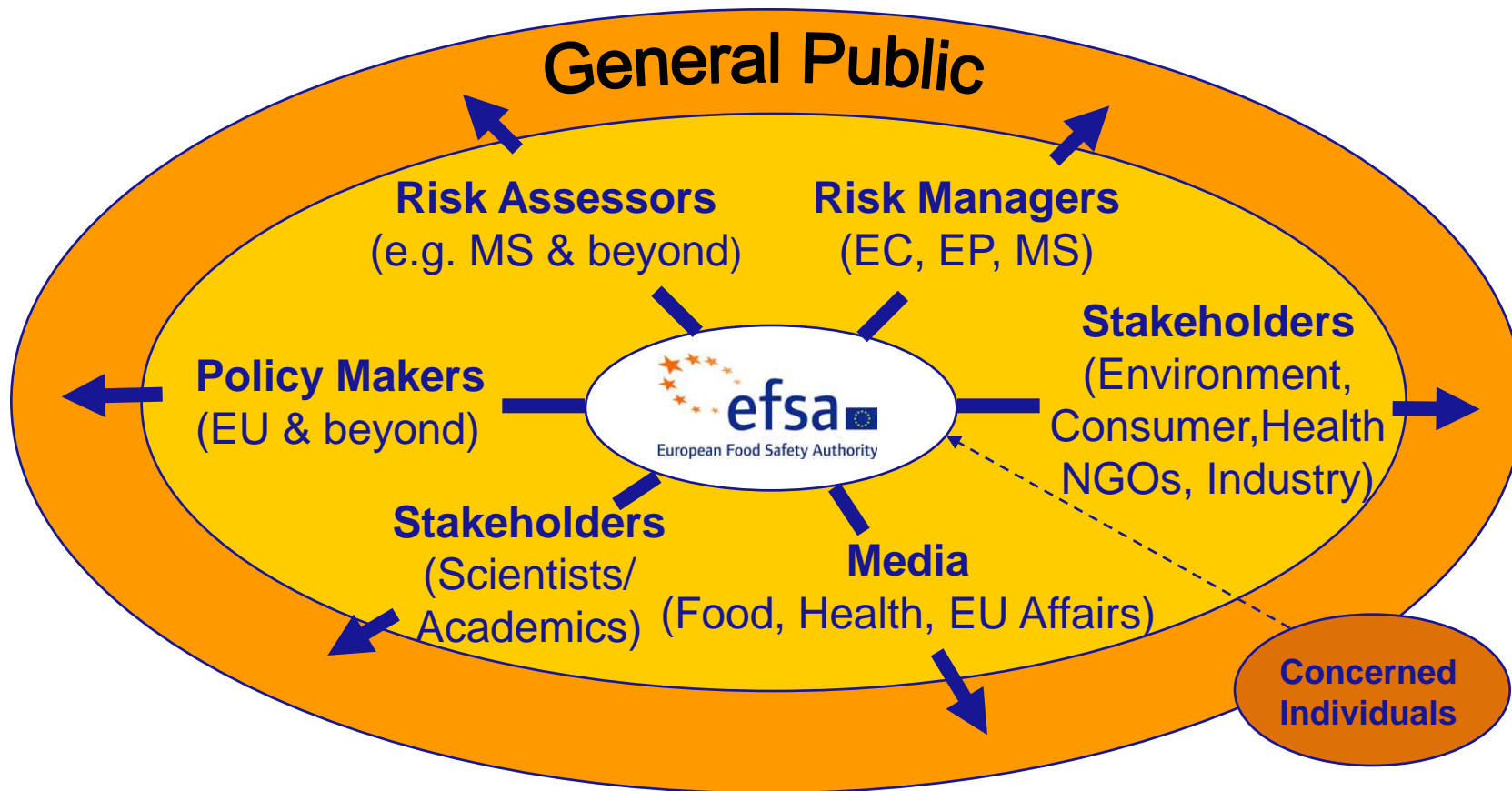
- Less than half of the EU citizens (47%) think that scientific advice on food related risks is independent of commercial or political interests

- 67 comments received in total (10 contributions from external stakeholders)
 - 1 from DG SANCO (direct to EFSA)
 - 3 official members of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform:
 - FEFANA (EU)
 - Euro Coop (EU)
 - Copa-Cogeca (EU)
 - 2 Advisory Forum representatives
 - Italian Ministry of Health (IT)
 - Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety (NO)
 - 3 research institutions
 - INRAN - Istituto Nazionale di Ricerca per gli Alimenti e la Nutrizione (IT)
 - Istituto Superiore di Sanità (IT)
 - Safefood (IRE)
 - 1 other stakeholder
 - AESGP - Association of the European Self-Medication Industry (EU)

- Generally very positive
 - No respondent disagreed with any part of the draft strategy
 - Only additional suggestions made
- Findings in line with outcomes of target audience research
- All respondents expressed their support for and outlined the importance of EFSA's communications
- Need for simpler language, eg "well written but complex"
- Emphasis on developing proactive approach to the independence of EFSA's scientific processes and outputs
- Importance of stakeholder dialogue highlighted

- Review of EFSA's communications strategy confirms 2006 framework still appropriate today:
 - Mission
 - Objectives
 - Overall approach to communications outreach, ie close co-operation with national food safety agencies and stakeholder networks

Who does EFSA communicate with?



Who are the main users of EFSA's website ?

Visitors to EFSA's website	%
Industry representative	26.9
Scientific/Academic	24.1
Public authority representative	13.9
Job seeker or contractor looking for opportunities	12.7
Citizen interested in food issues	6.7
Student	4.1
Media professional	3
EFSA staff, Management Board, or Advisory Forum	1.8
NGO representative (consumer, environment etc.)	1.5
Other	5.5

⇒ *Website user survey confirms target audience approach*

Communications approach on track but 3 key opportunities going forward...

- Improve the simplicity and relevance of its communications for all target audiences
 - including immediate partners & customers
- Promote independence of EFSA scientific advice
- Expand EFSA's outreach to informed lay audiences
 - in co-operation with Member States, including shared understanding of priority targets

Key strategic priorities: 2010-2013

- **Simplicity and transparency:** increase relevance and understanding of EFSA communications for key target audiences and informed lay audiences, in co-operation with MS
 - **Independence:** augment proactive communications on the independence of EFSA's risk assessment advice
 - **Visibility and outreach:** enhance outreach, in the EU and beyond (increase awareness and recognition of EFSA)
 - **Coherence:** further increase... across EU and beyond
 - **Dialogue:** enhance dialogue with stakeholders and increase audience interactivity
- ⇒ Support by continuing to strengthen **capacity** for effective risk communications

Implement a thematic approach

Integrated communications plans:

- across all tools and channels
- themes reflecting both consumer concerns & public health priorities
- continuous “campaign” approach with key milestones (eg. zoonoses: annual report, baseline surveys, opinions of BIOHAZ, AHAW,...)
- covering all relevant aspects of EFSA’s work in an area
- opportunity to better coordinate with Member States



Implement thematic approach: benefits

- Increase impact & effectiveness
- More meaningful, relevant communications, ie help users better understand context & rationale for EFSA's work
- Facilitate dissemination of coherent messages
- Opportunity to strengthen co-operation with Member States
- More efficient/effective use of resources

Thank you for your attention!