

Management Board meeting
14 October 2021

Audience-driven approach to risk communication

Barbara Gallani

Communication, Engagement and Cooperation
Department

Trusted science for safe food


What does the
literature say?

EFSA JOURNAL

Open Access

Scientific Report |  Open Access |   

Technical assistance in the field of risk communication

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) , Laura Maxim, Mario Mazzocchi, Stephan Van den Broucke, Fabiana Zollo, Tobin Robinson, Claire Rogers, Domagoj Vrbos, Giorgia Zamariola, Anthony Smith



What do we want to do
based on **our**
experience?

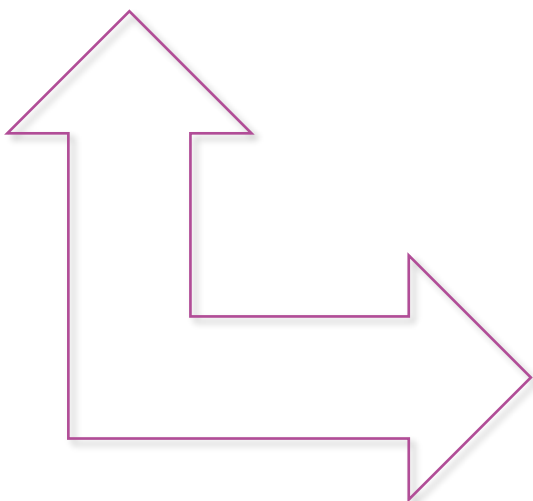
EFSA JOURNAL

Open Access

Editorial |  Open Access |   

Future directions for risk communications at EFSA

Anthony Smith , Domagoj Vrbos, Jacopo Alabiso, Arthur Healy, James Ramsay, Barbara Gallani,





Strategic Objective 1 | Deliver trustworthy assessment and communication of risks from farm to fork

Expected Operational Result 1.2.1 | An **audience-first approach** ensures quality throughout risk communication

Responds to **multiple provisions of the Transparency Regulation** > fostering public understanding, being clear and accesible, taking risk perceptions into account et al.





"Generic" trust

Trusts everyone

"Concerned"
Trusts market
and themselves

"Relaxed"
Trusts systems
in place and
authorities

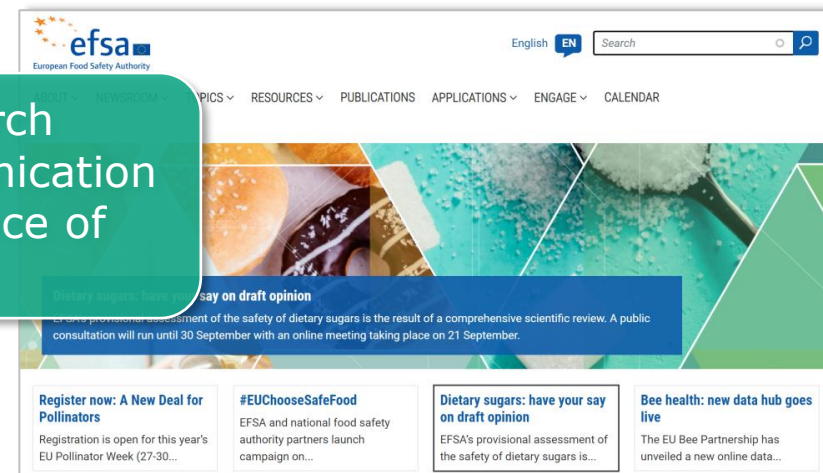
"Concerned"
Mistrusts
markets and
authorities

Which topics concern Europeans most?

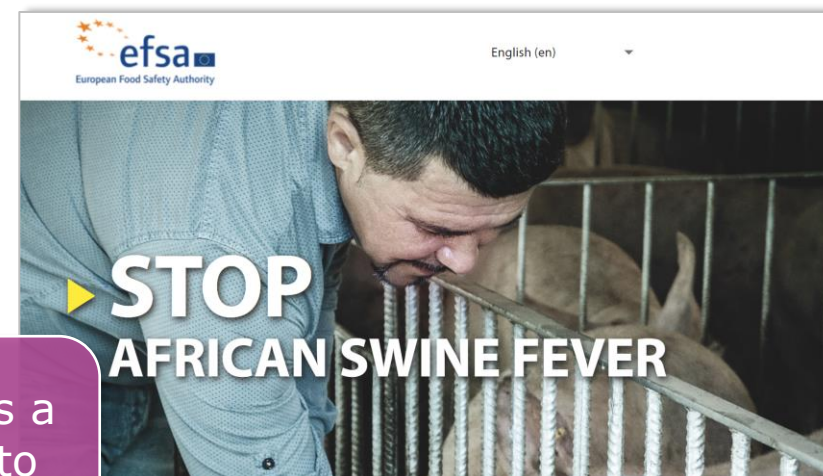
- PESTICIDE RESIDUES
- ADDITIVES
- ANIMAL DISEASES
- ANTIBIOTICS, HORMONES OR STEROIDS
- FOOD HYGIENE
- BACTERIA POISONING



“Strategic” research helps us inform communication planning and the choice of topics



“Targeted” research explores a specific topic or an audience to best frame the communication



Increased focus on **campaigns** means tailoring content to the information needs of our target audiences ...



... which includes **message testing** within the campaign development process:

e.g. 10 online focus groups held for **#EUChooseSafeFood**



Listen and adjust | Next stages of user involvement

2

How

Joint **4-year framework contract** launched with ENVI agencies

Why

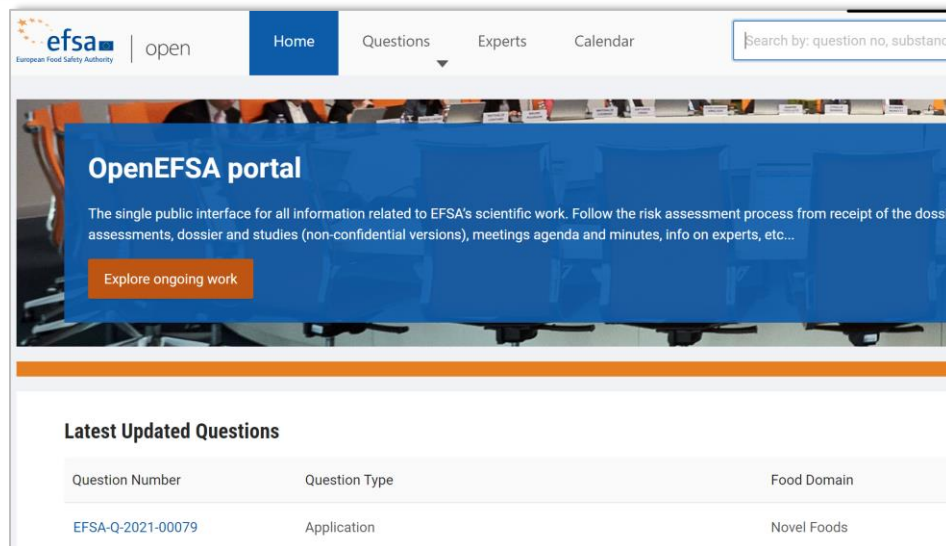
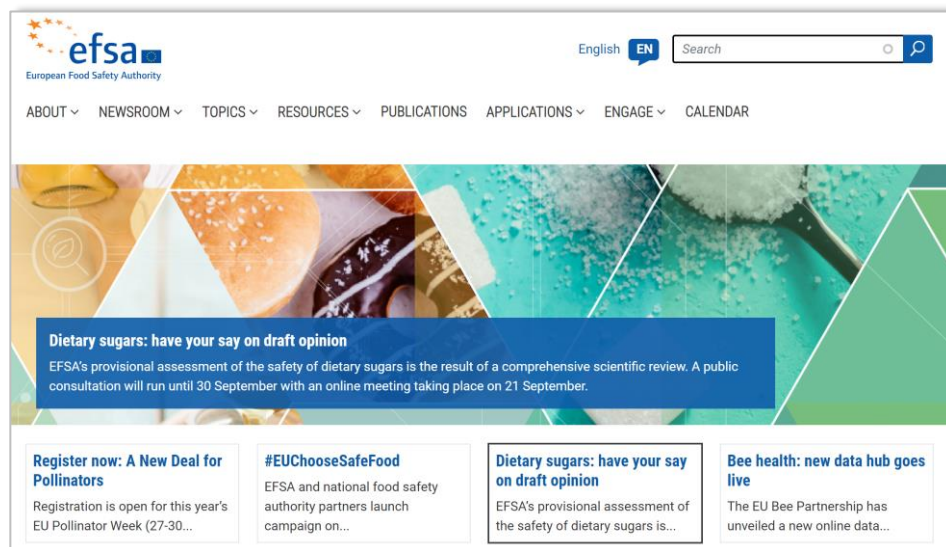
To **improve accessibility and usability**, with personalised experience according to audience

User research & Personalised journeys


What

User research **planning**: setting up the whole framework - Sept 21

User research **implementation** (starting Q1 22)



EFSA explains **draft scientific opinion on a tolerable upper intake level for dietary sugars**



Index

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ What is a Tolerable Upper Intake Level (UL)?
- ▶ What was EFSA asked to do?
- ▶ How did EFSA conduct its assessment?
- ▶ Risk for consumers
- ▶ Why was it not possible to establish a UL?
- ▶ Main sources of sugars in the diet
- ▶ Have your say - what happens now?

Summary

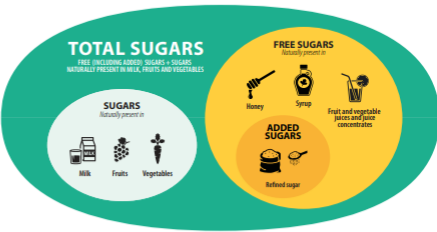
- ▶ EFSA was asked by five European countries to set a science-based Tolerable Upper Intake Level (UL) for dietary sugars from all sources.
- ▶ While it was not possible to set a UL, EFSA's scientists concluded that the intake of added and free sugars should be as low as possible.
- ▶ EFSA is publicly consulting on this draft opinion and welcomes new scientific insights that can contribute to its finalisation by the end of 2021.

Introduction

There are different kinds of sugars in our diet. Some are added to food, others are naturally present in foods like fruit, vegetables, honey and milk. Sugars are a source of energy. Some types of sugar (e.g. glucose) are needed by organs such as the heart and brain to function properly.

Sugar consumption is known to cause **dental caries**. Also, excess sugars in the diet are stored in the body, for example, as fat for later use. If these stores are not used, they can build up over time and lead to **health problems**.

Total sugars can be divided into **sub-categories**:



TOTAL SUGARS
FREE (INCLUDING ADDED) SUGARS + SUGARS NATURALLY PRESENT IN MILK, HONEY AND VEGETABLES

SUGARS
Milk, Fruits, Vegetables

FREE SUGARS
Honey, Syrup, Fruit and vegetable juices and concentrates

ADDED SUGARS
Refined sugar

Figure 1: Categories and sub-categories of dietary sugars


What is a Tolerable Upper Intake Level (UL)?

The UL is a dietary reference value ('DRV', – see box on the next page). It establishes the maximum level of long-term daily intake of a nutrient (e.g. sugars) from all sources that is judged unlikely to pose a risk of adverse health effects to humans.

If there are no, or insufficient, data on which to base a UL (i.e. no "threshold" can be identified), then a **safe level of intake** could be set. This requires the identification of a level of sugars intake up to which no adverse health effects are observed.

The UL is not a recommended level of intake. Rather, it is a scientifically-derived 'threshold' below which the risk of adverse health effects for the general population is negligible, but above which the intake is proven to be linked to adverse health effects, including disease.

Trusted science for safe food



European Food Safety Authority

Adding Plain Language Summaries (PLS) to our publication toolkit

Work ongoing with external contractor to be able to **implement PLS in a structured way across EFSA's scientific work as of 2022:**

- First PLS under new pilot approach planned (internal launch & assessment); **100 PLS published at end of pilot**
- Focus group with target audiences in 2022
- In the context of EFSA 2027, **PLS will become part of EFSA's communication "package"** with more prominence given to visual abstracts and summaries

- Introduction of the **Spanish website version in 2020** to complement EN, FR, DE and IT
- **Neural machine translation pilot in 2021** – identified **EC eTranslation** tool as feasible option for EFSA website
- Way forward > hybrid solution: NMT + Human translation (via CdT) of **website structure in additional languages by Q4 2021; remaining languages by end 2022;**
- Further investments in **translating the entire website content** as well as the scientific work (primary communication products) **in the context of EFSA 2027**

Improved accessibility as per TR provisions; in response to EU Ombudsman rec's on multilingualism



A unique tool in EFSA's communication toolbox

Social listening | Provides insights into online discourses, sentiment, audience interests

Social media always approach | One of our key communication channels to deliver accessible, clear and engaging content

Interaction | Engagement with audiences and sharing of interactive content on different social networks (e.g. campaign material tailored to Instagram)



Trustworthy **communication** of risks from farm to fork remains **our core work**

We are investing further to **maintain excellence in comms both in “peace” and “crisis” time**

New tools to understand emerging risks (e.g. **flash polls** with target audiences)

Expansion of **coordinated communication** activities with MS, EC and ENVI agencies

Revamp of the **crisis communication guidelines and new roadmap**



We intend to monitor three major components of the audience-first approach as part of EFSA 2027

**Satisfaction
with our
products**

**Leverage of
social science**

**Translation
outreach**