



PARMA
SUMMER SCHOOL

26 – 28 SEPTEMBER 2023, Parma

Innovative food products

**Risk Communication: Towards an
audience oriented approach
The EUChooseSafeFood Campaign**

Domagoj Vrbos, Team Leader, Communication Unit, EFSA



Evidence-based risk communication

Legislation

6.5.2019 L 231/3

I
(Legislative act)

REGULATIONS

REGULATION (EU) 2019/1381 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMANT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 20 June 2019 on the transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain and amending Regulations (EC) No 178/2002, (EC) No 1825/2003, (EC) No 1831/2003, (EC) No 2003/2003, (EC) No 1925/2004, (EC) No 1331/2008, (EU) 2015/2283 and Directive 2001/18/EC (Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMANT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 43(2), Article 114 and Article 168(4)(b) thereof,

After transmitting the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee (1),

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions (2),

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure (3),

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council (4) lays down the general principles and requirements of food law so as to form a common basis for measures governing food law at both Union and national level. It provides, inter alia, that food law is to be based on risk analysis, except where this is not appropriate to the circumstances or the nature of the measure.
- (2) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 defines risk analysis as a process consisting of three interconnected components: risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication. For the purposes of risk assessment at Union level, it establishes the European Food Safety Authority (the 'Authority'), as the responsible Union risk assessment body in matters relating to food and food safety.
- (3) Risk communication is an essential part of the risk analysis process. The REIT evaluation of the general food law (Regulation (EC) No 178/2002) of 2018 (Fitness Check of the General Food Law) found that risk communication is not considered to be effective enough overall. This has an impact on consumers' confidence in the outcome of the risk analysis process.

(1) OJ C 486, 6.12.2018, p. 138.
(2) OJ C 441, 21.12.2018, p. 223.
(3) Position of the European Parliament of 17 April 2019 (not yet published in the Official Journal) and the decision of the Council of 13 June 2019.
(4) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety (OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1).

EFSA Strategy 2027

Science Safe food Sustainability

Adopted at the Management Board meeting held in virtual modality on 24 June 2021
For EFSA's Management Board
SIGNED:
Raymond O'Rourke
Chair of the Management Board

European Food Safety Authority

Strategy

Evidence

EFSA Journal

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

APPROVED: 21 March 2021
doi: 10.29001/efsa.2021.6574

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,
Clare Rogers, Domagoj Vrboš, Georgina Zamandini and Anthony Smith

Abstract
This report assesses peer-reviewed and grey literature on risk communication concepts and practices, as requested by the European Commission to support the implementation of a 'General Plan for Risk Communication', i.e. an integrated framework for EU food safety risk assessors and risk managers at Union and national level, as required by the revised EU General Food Law Regulation. We conducted a scoping review of social research studies and official reports in relation to risk communication in the following areas: understanding and awareness of risk analysis roles and tasks, reducing misunderstanding of the different meaning of the terms 'hazard' and 'risk', tackling misinformation and disinformation, enhancing confidence in EU food safety, taking account of risk perceptions, key factors in trade-offs about risks, audience segmentation and tools, channels and mechanisms for coordinated risk communications. We structured our findings as follows: i) definitions of key concepts, ii) audience analysis and information requirements, iii) risk profiling, models and mechanisms, iv) contributions to communication strategies. We make several recommendations for consideration by the Commission, both in terms of actions to support the design and implementation of the general plan, and research needs that we consider crucial to further inform appropriate risk communication in the EU. EFSA carried out a targeted consultation of experts and a public consultation open to all interested parties including the general public, in preparing and finalising this report.
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Keywords: risk communication, risk perceptions, trust, audience analysis, risk profiling, misinformation, disinformation

Requestor: European Commission
Question number: EFSA-Q-2020-00213
Correspondence: socialscience@efsa.europa.eu

EFSA Journal 2021;19(6):6574

EFSA Journal

EDITORIAL

APPROVED: 1 February 2021
doi: 10.29001/efsa.2021.e190201

Future directions for risk communications at EFSA

Anthony Smith, Domagoj Vrboš, Jacopo Alabaso, Arthur Healy, James Ramsay and
Barbara Gallani

Abstract
This editorial proposes directions for the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to meet its current and future obligations as a source of public information and communication on food-related risks in the EU. These directions are intended to guide EFSA's communications through changes driven by new legal obligations, a new organisational strategy cycle and social and technological evolution. This editorial summarises the rationales for shifts in some cases already underway towards embedding audience analysis throughout our risk communication practices, rolling out partnership approaches for producing and delivering public information and greater digital prowess and social media integration. It describes the main audience clusters for EU food safety risk communication, related content strategies and the technical and professional skills required to pursue them.

Introduction
This reflection paper arises from a strengthened science-based approach to communication, which took root at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) over 2015-2020. It proposes directions for EFSA to evolve as a trustworthy and inclusive source of public information and communication on food-related risks in the European Union (EU). This thinking is needed to guide us through changes

Declarations of interest: The declarations of interest of all scientific experts active in EFSA's work are available at <https://ec.europa.eu/efsa/en/about-us/research>.

Acknowledgements: The authors wish to thank Fabiana Zollo (Università Ca' Foscari, Venice), and EFSA Working Group on Social Research Methods and Advice members as final reviewers, and EFSA staff Flavia Fornagari, Sharon Mori, Simon Terry, Victoria Villamar and Bernhard Ust for their advice and support.

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Suggested citation: Smith A, Vrboš D, Alabaso J, Healy A, Ramsay J and Gallani B. 2021. Editorial: Future directions for risk communications at EFSA. EFSA Journal 2021;19(2):e190201, 6 pp. <https://doi.org/10.29001/efsa.2021.e190201>

ISSN: 1831-4732

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The EFSA Journal is a publication of the European Food Safety Authority, a European agency funded by the European Union.

Experience

Audience-first approach

1

Understanding who our audiences are and their characteristics

2

Involving target audiences in product testing and improvement

3

Tailoring our communication products and tools to their information needs

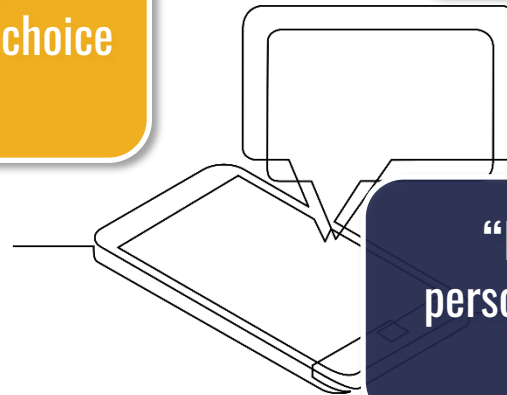
First step Audience research



“Society” track to inform communication planning and the choice of topics



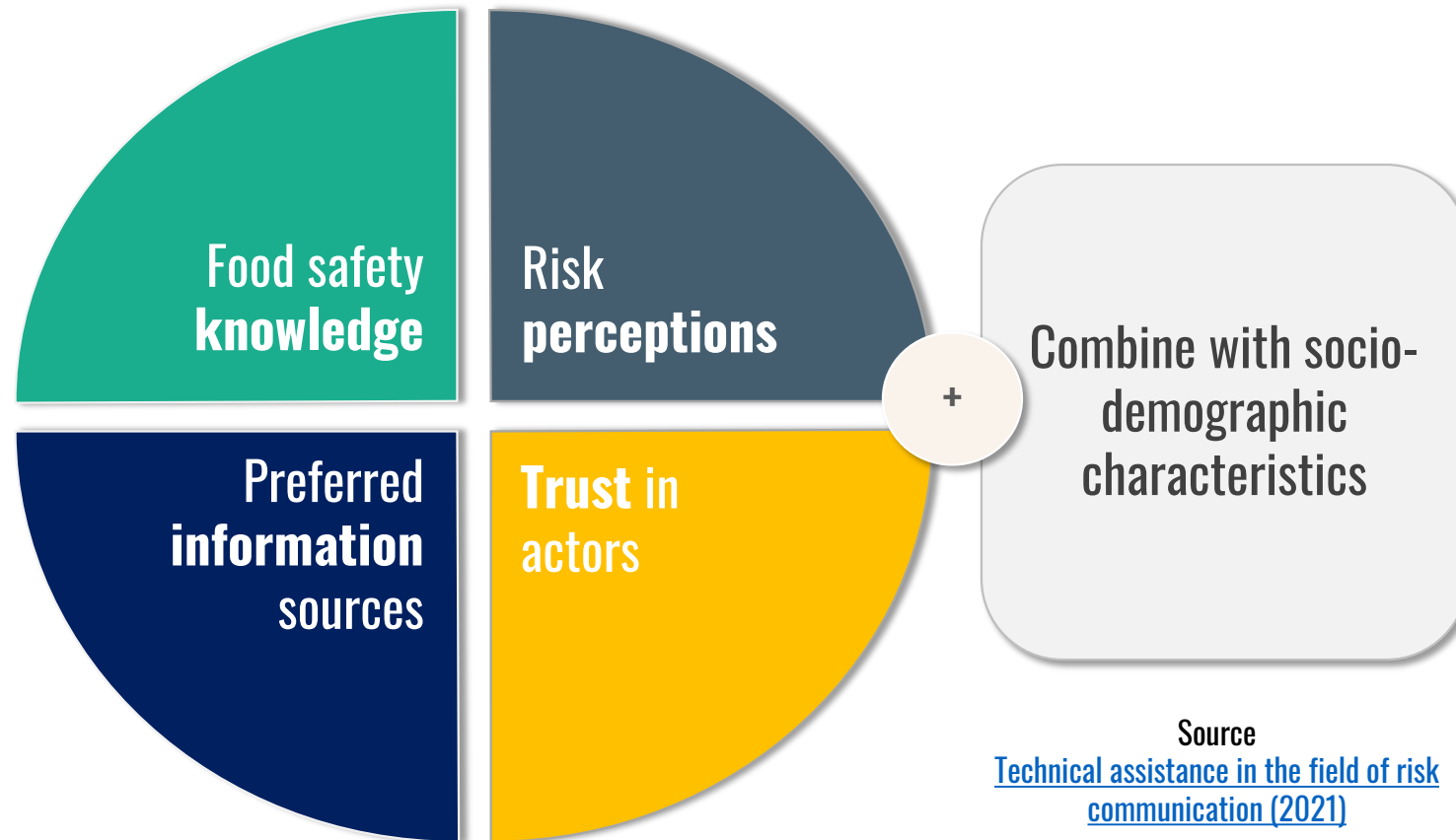
“Ecosystem” track to explore a specific topic or an audience among EFSA customers, partners or stakeholders



“Personal” track to focus on personalising user experience across digital tools

Audience data can help the segmentation

Target audience



Source
[Technical assistance in the field of risk communication \(2021\)](#)

Example EUChooseSafeFood Campaign



Increase **awareness** of the EU
food safety system



Encourage **engagement**



Trigger **critical thinking**

Audiences co-designing the content

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. online focus groups held for **#EUChooseSafeFood**



EU Choose Safe Food 3 years and running

2022
10 countries

Ringrazia le api
per la biodiversità.
Ringrazia gli scienziati
per la sicurezza.



Una scienza affidabile per un'alimentazione sicura

2021
9 countries

Trying something new?
That's adventurous.



Trusted science for safe food

Checking
it's safe?
That's science.

Zdrav prigrizek?
To je vir zadovoljstva.



Zaupanja vredna znanost
za varno hrano



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA KMETIJSTVO,
GOZDARSTVO IN PREHRANO



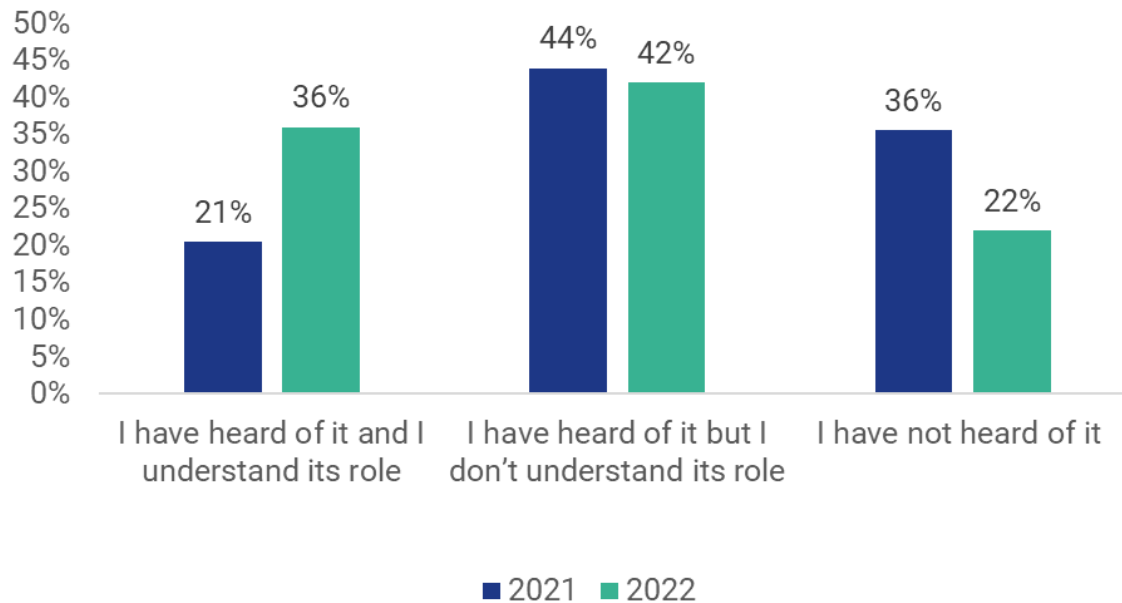
REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA ZDRAVJE

Označevanje rokov
uporabnosti za manj
odpadne hrane?

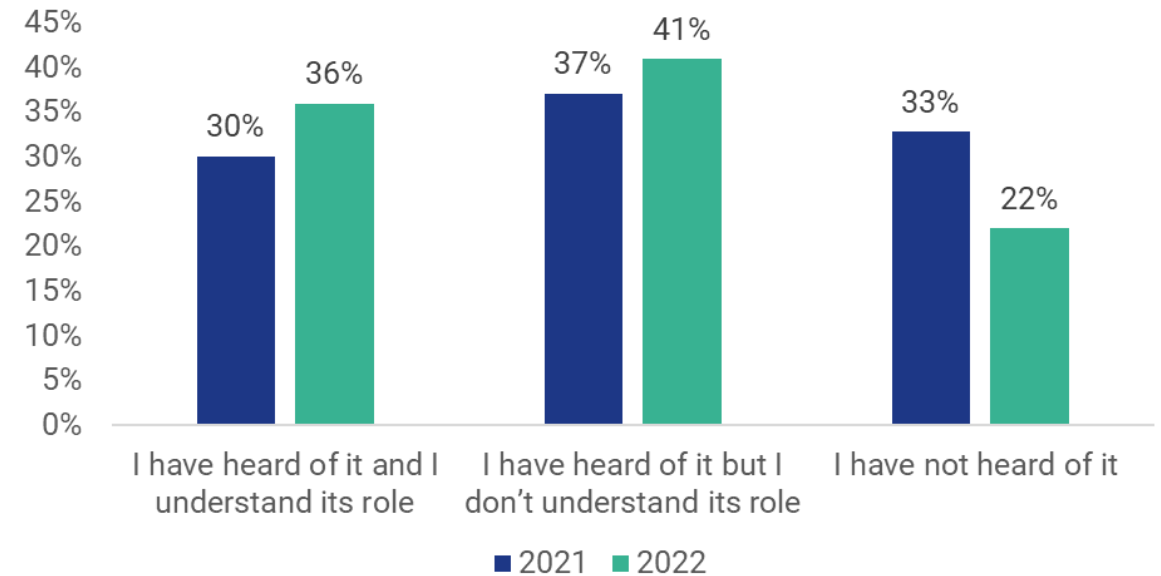
2023
17 countries

Remember the primary campaign objective?

Awareness of EFSA




Awareness of National Food Safety Agency



Target audiences evolve over time

...while we explore content for new audiences in continuing countries

New countries
Women, young mothers and parents



PERSONALITY
Likes reading, flexitarian, sometimes anxious about her health, likes going for long walks with her children and their dog.

Analytical

Empathetic

Anxious

SHORT BIO
Marta holds a master's degree in finance. She works for a big corporation, and lives in a house in the suburbs, so she enjoys the opportunity of working from home. She shares responsibilities rather equally with her husband. She prepares evening meals for the family, while her partner cooks during the weekends. She is a vegetarian due to animal welfare reasons, she prefers to consume natural products.

HOBBIES
Reading
Outdoors
Animals

MARTA
Auditor

PROFILE
Gender : Female
Age : 38
Address : Ljubljana, Slovenia
Married, she has a son (6 yrs) and a daughter (4 yrs)

Audience analysis continues annually to inform targeting in new countries...

Continuing countries
Men, young fathers and "foodies"



PERSONALITY
He is on the quiet side and thinks before saying. He goes to the gym regularly to stay in good shape. In his free time, he likes online gaming and watching volleyball. He used to play volleyball as a teenager.

Analytical

Organising

Introverted

SHORT BIO
He has been working for a few years in the physiotherapy clinic in a big city. At this moment he is working 80% to help his partner look after the baby. He cooks for the family 2- 3 times a week. He worries about all the ongoing crises such as the war in Ukraine and wants his baby to grow up in a safe and stable world.

HOBBIES
Fitness
Volleyball
Gaming

ARTE
Physiotherapist

PROFILE
Gender : Male
Age : 27
Address : Rijeka, Croatia
Unmarried, he lives with a partner and has a 6 months old baby

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