Hellenic Food Authority – Activities of the Greek Focal Point of EFSA

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Contents

- Basic elements of Food Safety and Risk analysis at EU level
- Bodies involved in Risk Analysis at EU and National level
- Collaboration of EFET with EFSA
Challenges for the food safety authorities

- **Rapid development of new technologies** (food processing and preservation)
- **Food chain** (diversity)
- **Nutrition** (new standards, new nutrition habits)
- **Emerging risks**
- **Higher consumer demand for their protection**

**Modern food control systems and food safety management**

1. Responsibility of the state → responsibility of all
2. Control of end-product → control from farm to fork
3. Precautionary principle, science-based

**Measures adopted by the Member States and the Community governing food and feed should generally be based on risk analysis in order to ensure the high level of health protection**

*(SPS, Reg. 178/2002)*
REGULATION (EC) 178/2002

1. General principles of food safety
   - Comprehensive and integrated approach (*farm to table*)
   - Traceability
   - Responsibility of manufacturers
   - Public consultation and information
   - Precautionary principle
   - Risk analysis

2. Establishment of EFSA
Risk Analysis

Risk assessment

Risk management

Risk communication
RISK ANALYSIS AT EU LEVEL

Separation between risk management and risk assessment
Risk Analysis at National Level

Various structures of risk assessment in MS.

Institutionally separation (e.g. Austria, Germany, France)

Not institutionally separation (e.g. Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Spain etc)

But procedures in order to ensure the basic principles of RA:

Transparency, independency and objectivity
Legal status of EFET

- Established in 1999 (Law 2741/1999)
- Authority governed by public law
- Management Board
Structure of EFET

Ministry of Health & Social Solidarity

Management Board

Scientific Council on Food Safety

National Council on Food Safety Policy

Central Service

8 Regional Directorates
Regional Directorates of EFET

1. Attica (Athens)\(^1\)
2. Central Greece\(^2\)
3. Central Macedonia (Thessaloniki)
4. Crete (Iraklio)
5. East Macedonia & Thraki (Komotini)
6. Epirus (Ioannina)
7. Ionian Islands
8. North Aegean (Mitilini)
9. Peloponnese
10. South Aegean
11. Thessaly (Larisa)
12. West Greece (Patra)
13. West Macedonia

1: Active
2: Non Active
Activities of EFET

- Central Competent Authority for official controls after primary production
- Food safety involved in the preparation, processing, manufacturing, packaging, storing, distributing, handling, offering for sale or supply of foodstuffs.
- Risk analysis
  - Risk management – official control
  - Risk assessment – science
  - Risk communication – consumers and Food Business
- Co-ordination of the local authorities of food control and the improvement of their effectiveness.
- Monitoring of the food parameters that may pose an adverse effect on public health (foodborne microorganisms, presence of GMO, dioxins, etc)
- Quality and safety standards of foods
- Quality and safety standards for GMP, GHP and HACCP
- Training FBOs and inspectors
## EFET and its collaboration with the EU institutions and EFSA on Food Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>European Commission</strong></th>
<th><strong>EFSA</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Competent authority with the Ministry of Rural Development and Food for the organisation of official controls (Reg. 882/2004)</td>
<td>• Member of the Advisory Forum (2003)</td>
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<td>• Participating in the Regulatory Committees</td>
<td>• Focal Point (2007)</td>
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<td>• Participating in Working Groups (microbiological criteria, zoonoses, food additives etc)</td>
<td>• National Meetings &amp; WGs</td>
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<td>• Contact point of the addition of vitamins and minerals</td>
<td>• Other Networks</td>
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<td>• National contact point of RASFF</td>
<td>• Joint Conferences</td>
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<td>• National contact point of the Codex Alimentarius</td>
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**EFET and its collaboration with EFSA on Food Safety**

Advisory Forum
EFET’s involvement in the Advisory Forum

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<th>Advisory Forum</th>
<th>EFET’s involvement</th>
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<td>• 27 EU Member States &amp; Observers</td>
<td>• <strong>Greek AF member:</strong> the President of the Hellenic Food Authority</td>
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<td><strong>Ensuring:</strong></td>
<td>• <strong>1(^{st}) meeting of the AF:</strong> 6(^{th}) March 2003:</td>
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<td>• Close collaboration between EFSA and MS</td>
<td>• <strong>2(^{nd}) meeting of the AF in Athens:</strong> 14(^{th}) May 2003</td>
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<td>• Avoidance of duplication of EFSA’s scientific studies</td>
<td>• <strong>34(^{th}) meeting of the AF in Athens:</strong> 25(^{th}) November 2009</td>
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<td>• Promotion of the European networking of organisations</td>
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<td><strong>Advising EFSA on:</strong></td>
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<td>• Scientific matters</td>
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<td>• Work programmes</td>
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<td>• Emerging risks</td>
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EFET and its collaboration with EFSA on Food Safety

Focal Point
Greek Focal Point

- The Hellenic Food Authority (EFET) is appointed as national Focal Point of Greece on technical and scientific matters.
- The agreement was signed by the President of EFET and the Executive Director of EFSA.
The role of Focal Points

**Advisory Forum**
- 27 EU Member States & Observers

Ensuring:
- Close collaboration between EFSA and MS
- Avoidance of duplication of EFSA’s scientific studies
- Promotion of the European networking of organisations

Advising EFSA:
- Scientific matters
- Setting priorities
- Work programmes
- Emerging risks

**Focal Points**
- 27 EU Member States & Observers

Support Advisory Forum:
- Establish and maintain national networks & exchange of scientific info
- Support (e.g. Article 36, EDB)
- Raising EFSA’s scientific visibility
1. Establish and maintain national networks and exchange scientific information
Establishment of national networks

- Past experience as National Contact Point of the Codex Alimentarius
- Enhancement of the national network (universities, research institutions)
- Timely exchange of information and forward requests:
  - Questionnaires received from EFSA
  - Open consultations
  - Call for data
  - Call for experts
- Communication via e-mail or the website
National network for exchange of information

EFSA

EFET – Greek FP EFSA

National FP EFSA - MS

National network
Communication activities

- Website: www.efet.gr
- E-mail: efsa@efet.gr
- Information on
  - What is EFSA
  - News by EFSA
  - Newsletters EFSA
  - Current projects Article 36
  - Call for experts
EFSA: Establishment & Mission

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) was established by the Regulation 178/2002. EFSA is an independent EU Authority, with its own legal personality, funded by the European Union. Its mission is to provide scientific advice and technical support in all areas related to food safety. It is an independent scientific pole of reference, which provides Community institutions and Member States (MS) scientific and technical advice to allow them make informed decisions about risk management, to achieve a high level of protection of the life and health of consumers.

Structure

The main instruments of the Authority are the Management Board, the Executive Director, the Advisory Forum, the Scientific Committees and the Scientific Panels.

The Management Board is responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient operation of the Authority, approving the work program, the Authority's financial regulation and ensuring that the Authority carries out its mission.

The Executive Director is the legal representative of the Authority and is responsible for its daily administration, the preparation work programs in consultation with the Commission, the implementation of work programs, the decisions adopted by the Governing Council, establishing and maintaining contact with the European Parliament.

The Advisory Forum ensures the effective operation of the various networks for gathering information and expertise on all areas related to food safety.
Exchange of Scientific Information

Information Exchange Platform
A tool to support the exchange of relevant scientific information between EFSA and Member States.

Type of documents:
- Opinions
- Statements
- Guidance documents
- Technical reports
EFET and its collaboration with EFSA on Food Safety

2. Support for the Article 36 and the Expert database
The role of EFET as Greek Focal Point for the Expert Database

- To inform Greek national networks about the Expert Database
- To motivate and support national experts to register
- To inform invited scientists on expected tasks
- Nominations for the Scientific Networks of EFSA in collaboration with Greek FP
Support of AF under Article 36 of Reg. 178/2002

Article 36 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002

EFSA “…shall promote the European networking of organisations operating in the fields within the Authority's mission…”

Regulation (EC) No 2230/2004: implementing rules and criteria

“must carry out scientific and technical support tasks in the fields within the mission of EFSA…”
“must be legal entities pursuing public interest objectives, and their organisational arrangements must include specific procedures and rules ensuring that any tasks entrusted to them by the Authority will be performed with independence and integrity”
“must possess a high level of scientific or technical expertise in one or several fields within the Authority’s mission,…”
“must have the capacity to operate in a network on scientific actions…and/or the capacity to perform efficiently the types of task … which may be entrusted to them by the Authority.”

List of organisations

• Permanent Representations of the MS to the EU designate organisations (filled-in questionnaire)
• EFSA’s Management Board adopts the list (defined criteria)
• Applicants need to be on the Art. 36 list
The role of EFET as Greek Focal Point for the Article 36

- To act as an interface between EFSA and the Article 36 organisations
- To stimulate Article 36 organisations to apply
- To review or propose for new designation for updates of the list
- To support the AF member in providing advice and ideas on scientific activities under Article 36
Article 36 List of Greek Organisations

1. Hellenic Food Authority (E.F.E.T)
2. General Chemical State Laboratory
3. National Agricultural Research Foundation-Institute of Technology of Agricultural Products
4. MS and Dioxin Analysis Lab, NCSR DEMOKRITOS
5. Institute of Food Hygiene
6. Food Industrial Research & Technology Development Company (ETAT S.A.)
7. Benaki Phytopathological Institute
8. Directorate of Plant Produce Protection, Department of Pesticides
9. University of Athens
   - Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology, Public Health Nutrition and Nutritional Epidemiology Unit, Medical School
   - Laboratory of Analytical Chemistry, Department of Chemistry
Article 36 List of Greek Organisations

10. University of Crete/Faculty of Medicine (Laboratory of Clinical Bacteriology, Parasitology, Zoonoses and Geographical Medicine/WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Training in Mediterranean Zoonoses)
11. Agricultural University of Athens
12. Department of Science of Dietetics-Nutrition, Harokopio University
13. NTUA, School of Chemical Engineering, Laboratory of Food Chemistry and Technology
14. Department of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology
15. Technological Educational Institute
16. University of Thessaly, Veterinary Faculty
Applications of Greek organisations

Source: SCO Unit of EFSA – data 2009
EFET and its collaboration with EFSA on Food Safety

3. Raising EFSA’s visibility
Raising EFSA’s visibility
Joint EFSA/EFET Conferences

- Strengthening the scientific cooperation between the EFSA and stakeholders at national level - EFET's role as National Focal Point of the EFSA (8 December 2008)
- Food Safety in Europe Cooperation between EFSA and the Member States (16 June 2009)
- Food safety and nutrition: from science to policy (26-27 November 2009)
- Scientific challenges and directions for policy making in nutrition (22 October 2010)
- Dietary Habits in Greece and Food Safety: How safe Greek consumers feel? (6 December 2011)
Follow-up

- Press Release with the conclusions of the conference
- Presentations and the conference brochure were uploaded to our site
- Dissemination of EFSA’s publications (work plan, annual report etc)
- An occasion for the universities to present their research activities/concerns (e.g. vitamin D).
Scientific Cooperation & Networking leads to a higher level of European consumer protection

Greece-Bulgaria 2007-2013:
Bulgarian Food Safety Agency, Regional Directorate in Blagoevgrad
Better food quality- a force for build the health and social welfare
Thank you for your attention

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