

European Food Information Council

Dr. Robert Fitzhenry

Food Safety and Risk Communication Manager

- EUFIC (<http://www.eufic.org>) is a non-profit organisation which provides science-based information on food safety and quality and health and nutrition to the media, health and nutrition professionals, educators and opinion leaders, in a way that promotes consumer understanding. In response to the public's increasing need for credible, science-based information on the nutritional quality and safety of foods, EUFIC's mission is to enhance the public's understanding of such issues and to raise consumers' awareness of the active role they play in safe food handling and choosing a well-balanced and healthy diet.
- Research, communication and dissemination partner in EU projects
- Member companies from Food Industry
- Annual report available at <http://www.eufic.org>

Partner in FP6, FP7 programmes

- **CHANCE** (Low cost technologies and traditional ingredients for the production of affordable, nutritionally correct foods improving health in population groups at risk of poverty)
- **FLABEL** (Food Labelling to Advance Better Education for Life)
- **EURRECA** (European Micronutrient Recommendations Aligned)
- **EATWELL** (Interventions to Promote Healthy Eating Habits: Evaluations and Recommendation)
- **Food4Me** (Strategies for personalised nutrition)
- **IDEFICS** (Identification and prevention of Dietary- and lifestyle-induced health Effects In Children and infantS)
- **Nu-AGE** (New dietary strategies addressing the specific needs of elderly population for an healthy ageing in Europe)



Partner in FP6, FP7 programmes

- **Agrifoodresults** (European initiative for a better use of the results of agri-food research)
- **FoodRisC** (Perceptions and communication of food risks/benefits across Europe)



Member of Stakeholder Advisory Board:

- **BRAFO** (Benefit Risk Analysis of Foods)
- **Habeat** (Children's food Habits)

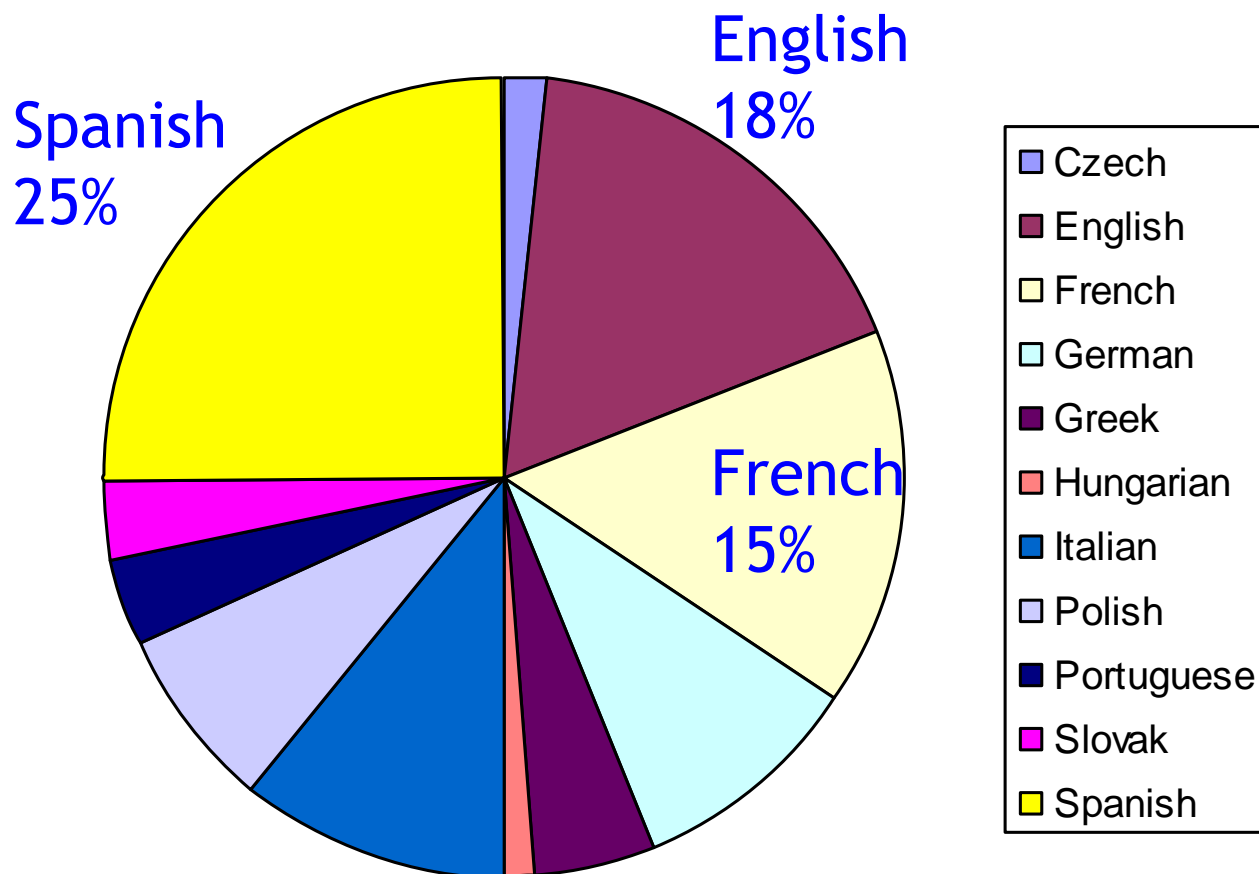


Communication Channels

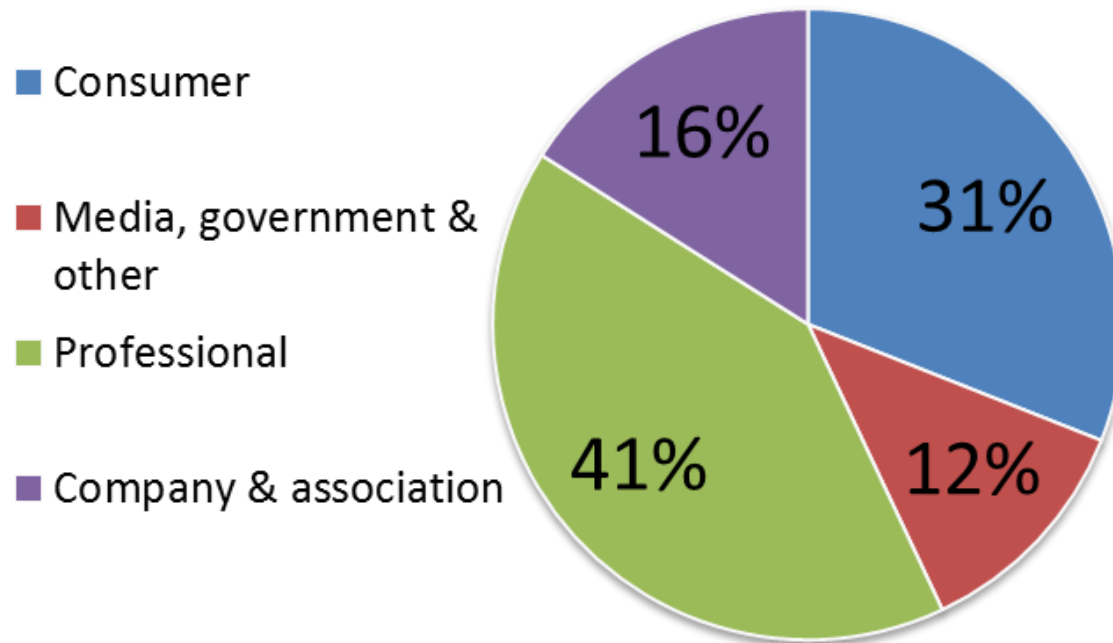
- www.eufic.org
 - Used for external communication
 - Used to communicate to members
 - Extranet
 - Issues matrix
- Content - both www.eufic.org and print
 - FAQ
 - Latest Science
 - Food Today
 - EUFIC Reviews
 - Podcasts and Webinars
- SAB, peer reviewed articles, EFSA and FSA documents, member expertise

www.eufic.org is available in 11 EU languages

Languages used to access eufic.org in 2010



Website visitor profile



Consumer: 31%
•Student: 17%
•Consumer: 13%
•Consumer organisation: 1%

Media, government & other: 12%
•Media: 4%
•Government: 4%
•Other: 4%

Professional: 41%
•Health professional: 23%
•Scientists: 11%
•Educators: 6%
•Library: 1%

Company & association: 16%
•Company: 14%
•Association: 2%

Zoonoses - Monitoring

- EUFIC monitors Zoonoses
 - 2010 Eurobarometer study food-related risks surveyed 26,691 people
 - 37% of respondents associated food and eating with food safety
 - EU citizens feel the most confident about being able to personally take steps to avoid diet and health-related issues (e.g. high fat intakes and heart disease) and bacterial contamination (e.g. salmonella in eggs).
 - A more divided opinion is found with regard to possible **risks from animal infections or diseases which could be transmitted to humans**. 42% of respondents report being confident to be able to avoid these risks whereas a larger proportion (52%) claims not to be.
 - Media tracking
 - Identify concern related to zoonoses
 - Respond to acute concern
 - Guidelines on safe cooking and handling of food.
 - EFSA, CDC, FSAs documents
 - Updated guidelines, notifications, epidemiology and response/communication
- Aim to maintain trust in food safety from farm to fork.

Zoonoses - Communication

- Zoonoses related titles – wide range
- Food safety - Basic rules
 - <http://www.eufic.org/article/en/page/FTARCHIVE/artid/Food-safety-basic-rules/>
- The Community Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents, Antimicrobial Resistance and Foodborne Outbreaks in the European Union in 2005.
 - <http://www.eufic.org/page/en/show/latest-science-news/page/LS/ftid/foodborne-outbreaks-zoonotic-agents-antimicrobial-resistance/>
- EFSA recommendations on the prevention and reduction of animal diseases transmissible to humans (zoonoses).
 - <http://www.eufic.org/page/en/show/latest-science-news/page/LS/ftid/zoonoses-animal-disease/>
- Should we be afraid to eat?
 - <http://www.eufic.org/article/en/page/FTARCHIVE/artid/afraid-to-eat-food-scares/>
- From Farm to Fork – series of articles
- Q&A on Avian Influenza: Is it safe to eat poultry meat and eggs?
 - <http://www.eufic.org/page/en/show/latest-science-news/page/FR/ftid/17/>
- Some Animal Diseases and their Possible Impact On Food Safety
 - <http://www.eufic.org/article/en/page/RARCHIVE/expid/review-animal-diseases/>

Zoonoses - Communication

- Information sources provide framework for our communication on Zoonoses.
- Update members and discuss at EUFIC food safety meetings
 - Members feedback using their expertise
 - EFSA
 - ECDC
 - FSAs
 - WHO

All useful
- EU projects – FoodRisC
- Stakeholder meetings – WHO (FERG)



**FP7 focused research project
Grant agreement no.: 245124**

Overview



Started June 01, 2010 (Duration – 36 months)

Co-ordinator: Prof. Patrick Wall, University College Dublin, Ireland.

The FoodRisC project has four major objectives:

- Describe key configurations of food risk and benefit relationships and the implications for communicators.
 - Explore the potential of new social media (e.g., blogs and social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter) and provide guidance on how risk communicators can best use these media for food risk and benefit communication.
 - Characterise the ways in which consumers attain, interpret, and utilise information to help target populations and tailor messages.
 - Propose a strategy and communication toolkit for the effective communication of coherent messages across EU Member States.
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- Consortium - from European organisations, research institutes and SMEs in ten Member States.
 - Advisory Board – 8 organisations of world renown in food risk/benefit communication (including EFSA, WHO and Google)

WHO's Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG)

- FERG established in November 2007
 - Expected duration 7+
- Enteric diseases
- Chemical causes
- Parasitic diseases
- Burden includes disability, morbidity and mortality

WHO's Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG)

- Communication of the data from FERG and the end goals seen as critical during stakeholder working groups.
 - EUFIC
- Tanja Kuchenmüller (WHO) evidence informed policy

Perspectives

ESTIMATING THE GLOBAL BURDEN OF FOODBORNE DISEASES - A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

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3. Laboratory for Zoonoses and Environmental Microbiology, National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, Bilthoven, the Netherlands

- Scientists and policy makers have different needs and objectives
 - Bridge the gap

Zoonoses - Communication

Home - Multimedia Centre

Food Safety & Quality ▶

Food Technology ▶

Nutrition ▶

Health & Lifestyle ▶

Diet-Related Diseases ▶

Consumer Insights

Food for thought

EU initiatives

In the spotlight

Energy Balance

The World Health Organization exposes myths about foodborne disease



At the 6th World Congress of Science Journalists, epidemiologist Dr Claudia Stein from the World Health Organization explained why food safety matters and exposed eleven myths about foodborne diseases:

MYTHS ABOUT FOODBORNE DISEASES

1. Foodborne diseases are mostly a problem in developing countries
2. Foodborne diseases in rich countries are mostly travel-related
3. Our food is safe
4. Foodborne diseases are getting less & less frequent
5. It's imported foods from poor countries ('poor hygiene') that cause our foodborne diseases
6. Foodborne diseases are mild, self-limited and of short duration
7. As a vegetarian I am less likely to get foodborne diseases
8. Governments hold the sole responsibility for making food safer
9. Food security is more important than food safety
10. Food safety is a luxury that only rich countries can afford
11. We can never estimate the burden of foodborne diseases

Claudia Stein MD, MSc, PhD, FFPH is a German trained public health physician and epidemiologist with the World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva, which she has been serving since 1998, most recently in the Department of Food Safety, Zoonoses and Foodborne Diseases (FOS).

Full podcast



[Download full podcast](#)

This site complies with the HONcode standard for trustworthy health information: [verify here.](#)



Zoonoses – Communication Example

- Avian Influenza
- EFSA FAQ good guideline
 - <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/faqs/faqavianinfluenza.htm>
- DG health and consumers
 - http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dyna/influenza/index.cfm
- Further information
 - Eurobarometer 257
 - Europeans are well informed about avian influenza and have confidence in the actions of EU and national authorities to tackle it, but significant gaps in knowledge remain about the risks, according to a special Eurobarometer survey on avian influenza published today by the Commission and conducted in March and April. Most respondents (between 70% and 80% according to the type of measures) correctly identified specific surveillance, control and eradication measures taken to prevent and contain avian flu outbreaks, and 70% of respondents agree that EU public authorities are guided in their actions by genuine concern about the health of European citizens. However, the survey reveals that a significant percentage of Europeans remain unsure about certain basic facts about avian flu. For example, **28% do not know that avian flu cannot be transmitted through properly cooked eggs and poultry meat.**

Zoonoses – Communication Example

- Avian Influenza
- EUFIC documents aim to address fears related to food safety and zoonoses
 - Latest Science - Eurobarometer
 - <http://www.eufic.org/page/en/show/latest-science-news/page/LS/ftid/commission-eurobarometer-avian-flu/>
 - Q&A on Avian Influenza: Is it safe to eat poultry meat and eggs?
 - <http://www.eufic.org/page/en/show/latest-science-news/page/FR/ftid/17/>
 - FAQ – What is Avian Influenza? – Addresses cooking of pork and poultry as well as hygiene guidelines.
 - <http://www.eufic.org/page/en/page/FAQ/faqid/avian-influenza-H5N1-bird-flu/>
- Audience Impact?
 - Difficult to measure.
 - Track number of visitor sessions
- Impact on members – Issues matrix and meetings

Zoonoses – Communication Challenges

- Maintain trust in food safety from farm to fork.
- Zoonoses can be reported as a crisis leading to loss of trust and uncertainty.
 - Increase in perceived risk and uncertainty related to food safety
- Communicating technical reports to varied audience
- Communicating in a timely manner with a clear message
 - STEC Germany – epidemiology and source of outbreak?
- EUFIC monitoring social media response to STEC outbreak in Germany.
 - Greater understanding of perceived risks and communication channels