

**INTERIM REPORT in accordance with Article 2 of the Annex II to the  
Contract between The European Community and The European Food Safety  
Authority (EFSA)  
“Obligations regarding information and financial and narrative reports”**

**For the implementation of the operation entitled: *Progress towards accession:  
Strengthening the food safety systems in Turkey and Croatia***

### **Introduction**

The overall objective of the programme is to prepare Turkey and Croatia for participation in all activities of EFSA involving Member States.

The aim is therefore:

- To prepare the competent bodies in Turkey and Croatia, which are active in the field relating to the work carried out by EFSA, for their future participation in EFSA networks.
- To contribute to the creation of communication and information exchange systems enabling future participation of Turkey and Croatia in the EFSA networks.
- To transfer knowledge on methodologies used in the fields in the remit of EFSA, in particular on risk assessment and data collection.
- To support Turkey and Croatia in their communication activities linked to risk assessment.

These immediate objectives will be met by the participation of the competent authorities and institutions from Turkey and Croatia in a *Structured Forum for Partnership*.

Within EFSA, the External Relations Unit is coordinating the implementation of the programme.

An important feature of the Programme at EFSA is the exchange of expertise. EFSA invites national experts from Turkey and Croatia to participate in a variety of activities held throughout Europe where knowledge on food safety and related issues can be discussed.

### **EFSA Meetings**

Experts from Turkey and Croatia are invited as observers to the regular meetings of EFSA, such as meetings of the Management Board and the Advisory Forum. Working Groups, specifically the Working Group on Communications and the Working Group

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on IT, the Task Force on Crisis Communication Requirements and other project groups. Experts from Turkey and Croatia are also invited to scientific seminars and colloquia, attended by scientific experts from the EU Member States and abroad.

### **Risk-related events**

EFSA organises conferences, seminars and workshops on Risk Analysis, Risk Assessment and Risk Communication in which representatives of Bulgaria and Romania participate.

### **Forward look for 2007**

For 2007, the focus will be on in depth workshops and seminars in the various areas of EFSA's expertise (see below). These seminars and workshops will be organised as a part of the programme, and the exchange of experts from Turkey and Croatia to EFSA will continue as it does today, with Turkish and Croatian experts expected to attend 30 or more EFSA expert group meetings during 2007. The topics of the seminars were chosen after the meetings between the EFSA Steering Committee and the Turkish authorities and stakeholders the 30/31 January 2007 and the EFSA Steering Committee and the Croatian authorities and stakeholders the 13/14 February 2007. See below the meetings and seminars which took place in 2006 and has been agreed on for 2007::

### **Calendar Pre-Accession meetings/seminars 2006/2007:**

#### **Meeting between the EFSA Steering Committee and the Croatian authorities to discuss the Programme**

- 6 July 2006 in Parma

5 representatives from the Croatian Food Safety authorities met the EFSA Steering Committee in Parma and had a first discussion on the Programme. It was agreed that the Croatian experts would be invited to EFSA working group meetings and colloquia and a first plan for seminars and meetings was discussed.

#### **Meeting between EFSA and the Turkish authorities to discuss the Programme**

- 21 July in Ankara

2 representatives from EFSA met 25 representatives for the Turkish Food Safety authorities in Ankara. There was a first discussion on the Programme. It was agreed that the Turkish experts would be invited to EFSA working group meetings and colloquia and a first plan for seminars and meetings was discussed

### **EFSA's work on 'Communication'**

\*Focus on risk communications

\*Contacts to media

\*Publication tools (website, newsletters, brochures, and scientific reports)

- 5/6 December 2006 in Osijek, Croatia

30 experts from the Croatian authorities to part in the seminar and there was a very good discussion on risk communication and exchange of views with the 2 speakers from EFSA Communication department.

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### **Meeting between the EFSA Steering Committee and the Turkish authorities and stakeholders to discuss and decide on the seminars for 2007**

- 30/31 January 2007 in Ankara

45 representatives from the Turkish authorities and stakeholders discussed the topics for seminars for 2007 and after presentations from EFSA on the work of EFSA a draft plan was put together. The plan was then send for consultation and finally agreed 1 week later.

### **Meeting between the EFSA Steering Committee and the Croatian authorities and stakeholders to discuss and decide on the seminars for 2007**

- 13/14 February 2007 in Zagreb

40 representatives from the Croatians authorities and stakeholders discussed the topics for seminars for 2007 and after presentations from EFSA on the work of EFSA a draft plan was put together. The plan was then send for consultation and finally agreed 10 days later.

**Relationship to stakeholders – TURKEY** (consumer organisations, NGO's, industry). EFSA operates through strong links with stakeholder groups and these play an important role in building the confidence of stakeholders in the EU food supply

- 15/16 March 2007 in Turkey

48 experts (28 from the stakeholders and 20 from the authorities met to hear speeches from EFSA on our work with the stakeholders and also a speech by the Food authority in Bulgaria on their work including the change of being now Member State. A group work on the view by the authorities and the stakeholders on the existing consultation of stakeholders in Turkey and on wishes for the future took place and a very fruitful discussion followed.

**Handling Crises - CROATIA** including a Crises exercise, information on RASFF and speeches by experts from the Member States on specific crises and how they had been handled. Also information on the Rapid Alert system.

- 29/30 March in Croatia

**GMO - CROATIA** Provide an overview of how GMO risk assessment is carried out in the EU and inform about the close collaboration between EFSA and the EU Member States, including reports from 2 MS on their experience

- 19/20April in Croatia

**GMO - TURKEY** Provide an overview of how GMO risk assessment is carried out in the EU and inform about the close collaboration between EFSA and the EU Member States, including reports from 2 MS on their experience

- 8/9 May in Turkey

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- July 5/6 in Croatia

**The EFSA Advisory Forum - CROATIA** (The Advisory Forum is the main formal interface between EFSA and the national bodies therefore this programme will give special consideration to the role of Member States in the Advisory Forum and the work of the AF working groups plus information on the scientific networks.

- 6/7 September 2007 in Croatia

**Handling Crises - TURKEY** including a Crises exercise and speeches by experts from the Member States on specific crises and how they had been handled.

- 17/18 September in Turkey

### **Data collection and analysis - PARMA**

Information on data collection and analysis activities in EFSA (e.g. Zoonoses and food consumption data) and of data collection procedures and experiences in 2 MS. This seminar will also be an opportunity to bring EFSA experts on data analysis and modelling to provide hands-on training to smaller group.

- Parma – 3/4 October 2007 Turkish and Croatian experts

**The EFSA Advisory Forum - TURKEY** (The Advisory Forum is the main formal interface between EFSA and the national bodies therefore this programme will give special consideration to the role of Member States in the Advisory Forum and in addition information about the structure of Food Safety in 2 newer MS

- 11/12 October in Turkey

### **The 9 EFSA Panels and their tasks – PARMA**

EFSA representatives will present the work of the 9 EFSA Panels in 2 separate seminars, using as much as possible case studies (scientific opinions that were delivered). The Panels dealing with authorisations of regulated substances will present the details of their guidance to Industry on what information on applications needs to be submitted. Together with colleagues from communication and possibly representatives from Risk Management this will be an excellent opportunity to discuss the challenges of the interface of risk assessment / management / communication.

- Parma 16/17 October and 14/15 November - *Turkish and Croatian experts*

### **The EU Institutions working on Food Safety – BRUSSELS**

The Commission and the European Parliament will explain what they are doing in the area of Food Safety and EFSA will explain how we co-operate with the EU Institutions in Brussels and about the legal aspects of the EU Food safety legislation

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- Winter 2007 in Brussels *Turkish and Croatian experts*

### **EFSA Staff involvement**

The implementation of the EFSA Pre-Accession Programme is carried out on the basis of using existing staff resources in EFSA. EFSA will employ a END from one of the candidate countries and employ 2 assistant coordinators, 1 in Turkey and 1 in Croatia. The implementation of the project is managed by a project co-ordinator and a project manager assisted by a Steering Committee, and as required throughout the project, by EFSA staff from the scientific, legal, communications and ER departments. The EFSA External Relations Unit manages the implementation of the Pre-Accession Programme, and other EU-funded programmes.

### **Budget Implementation**

The EFSA Pre-Accession programme is externally funded by the EU budget earmarked for enlargement and as such EFSA cooperates with DG ENLARGE in the Commission on budget matters.

### **Effects of the programme**

The Turkish and Croatian administrators and experts are participating as observers in the expert groups listed in the grid attached, as well as to the Advisory Forum working groups on Communications and IT and take part in all EFSA conferences and colloquies. In this way links have been established, communication and information exchange systems have been established, knowledge has been and is being transferred and the participation is widely spread and closely monitored.

*Finn Sheye 20.03.2007*