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MEMBER NEWSLETTER



Tackling Adolescent Obesity



Tackling Childhood Obesity
Conference in Brussels



The future of the Common
Agricultural Policy After 2020



EC draft Legislation
on Transfat Regulation



'Single Use Plastics Directive'
Proposal Adopted by the EP



Towards a EU Legislation for
Vegans and Vegetarians?



EU Projects & Events

Dear Members,

In our November Newsletter, we bring to you a description of the new Erasmus+ Project that SAFE is coordinating to tackle Adolescent Obesity and promote inclusion through nutrition trainings for disadvantaged youth. SAFE also participated in a Conference in Brussels to encourage further thinking on Childhood Obesity, of which we provide you with a summary.

We also share our position and concerns on the debates over the reform of the next Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for 2021-2027, and the actions that SAFE will undertake to promote sustainable food & farming systems.

Additionally, we would like to share with you some good news, as a new EU draft Regulation on Trans-fatty acids used in food has been published. In this issue of the Member Newsletter, we will describe our thoughts on the recent adoption of the 'Single-Use Plastics Directive' by the European Parliament.

We also summarize the actions of SAFE's Vegan & Vegetarian Working Group to call for clearer definitions of vegan concepts, and present you the ongoing citizens' initiative demanding mandatory food labelling for food suitable for Vegans and Vegetarians.

Finally, as usual, we will present current EU projects and events, including SAFE's future activities.

We look forward to hearing your comments and thoughts about this newsletter and invite you to follow SAFE's activities on Twitter [@SafeFoodEurope](#) and on our [Facebook page](#).

Enjoy reading. Best wishes,

Floriana Cimmarusti
Secretary General of SAFE



SAFE's Action to Tackle Adolescent Obesity: Erasmus+ Project

On October 26th, SAFE held the 1st Transnational Meeting gathering all ten partner organisations involved in its project "[Tackling Adolescent Obesity and promoting inclusion through nutrition trainings for disadvantaged youth](#)" (TAO Project). This meeting was intended to provide involved partners with all the necessary information for the implementation of the project and to offer them the opportunity to meet each other and discuss about the project.

CONTEXT

Most recently, SAFE was selected to be part of the **European Commission's Erasmus + Programme** which aims to provide financial support for the implementation of European Actions in the fields of Education, Training, Youth and Social inclusion.

Through this Programme, SAFE had the opportunity to launch the above-mentioned "TAO Project", which is being implemented from September 2018 to February 2021 and gathers ten partners from five different Member States: Belgium, Italy, Greece, Poland and Germany.

Among the partners forming the Consortium, there are four Non-Governmental Organisations (including an obese patients' national association and a pan-European expert group on Childhood overweight and obesity), one University, one Children's Hospital and three schools.

PROJECT GOALS

The main goal of this project is to create a comprehensive nutrition training for teenagers, which will address nutrition fundamentals, health risks related to inadequate nutrition, bullying and discrimination.

Through this nutrition training, the partners wish to raise awareness regarding obesity-related problems in adolescents and their families and increase the dialogue on that matter as well as promote inclusion in the school environment.

In fact, providing students with this nutrition training should contribute to having educators who are better trained on the issue of adolescent obesity, and to minimising the effect of parents' socio-economic status on adolescent obesity.

PROJECT KEY ACTIVITIES

For that purpose, the training will be based on the use of 3 evidence-based educational materials which the partners will create through close collaboration:

- **Student Training Handbook:** providing the students with key information about healthy diets & lifestyle;
- **Teacher's Training Handbook:** providing the teachers with guidance to conduct the nutrition training and create "safe-zones" where students may communicate freely at school;
- **Online e-Learning Platform:** providing users and training participants with a platform through which they can exchange about the training & educational materials, as well as ensuring the widest possible access to the training and materials.

Once these three intellectual outputs are created (in English) and approved by all the involved partners, they will be translated into French, Greek and Italian to be tested as part of pilot trainings in the partner schools.

Then, the students participating in the testing phase will be encouraged to team up and create group projects. These projects will be aimed at making the school environment more inclusive towards pupils with obesity-related issues, as well as promoting healthy lifestyle.

Following this "competition", five students per partner school will be selected to participate in a mobility experience in Brussels during which they will be offered the opportunity to present their group projects to other participants and EU representatives.

After the testing phase, the 3 educational materials will be made accessible to all students and teachers of the partner schools. Moreover, in order to reach more schools and implement the project at a larger scale, the materials will be translated into other EU languages.

Finally, the project's results and intellectual outputs will be made accessible on the "Erasmus + Project Results Platform" and on the project's collaborative e-Learning Platform.

SAFE and involved partners are very enthusiastic about this project and we invite all of SAFE's Members to collaborate to achieve the widest possible dissemination.

"Tackling Childhood Obesity in the EU: Halting the Rise through Prevention and Closer Collaboration"



On October 30th, SAFE participated in a Conference organised by Public Policy Exchange in Brussels regarding "Tackling Childhood Obesity in the EU: Halting the Rise through Prevention and Closer Collaboration". The main objective of this event was to debate and incite forward thinking on the topic.

SUMMARY REPORT

A few days after the first transnational meeting, SAFE attended a Symposium aimed at identifying the best means to tackle Childhood Obesity through prevention and closer collaboration.

First, Mr Attila Balogh, Head of Sector at the European commission's DG SANTE was invited to present EU Action on Nutrition and Physical Activity. As part of his presentation, he stressed the importance of the Member States' actions and implementation of good practices.

Second, Mr Nikolai Pushkarev, Food, Drink & Agriculture Policy Coordinator at the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), offered some constructive criticisms regarding the Member States' lack of progress on this issue and the inefficiency of the current EU Action Plan. As part of his presentation, he suggested 3 ideas for the next Action Plan, such as focusing on inspiring effective policies.

Then, Dr. Janas Harrington, Senior Lecturer at the School of Public Health of University College of Cork, highlighted the effect of socioeconomic status on obesity and existing factors of obesogenic food environments.

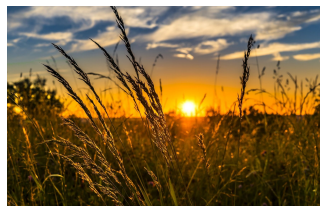
Ms Emma Calvert, Food Policy Officer at BEUC (Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs), made some criticisms about the EU Pledge regarding Nutrition. For example, she underlined the gap between authorised diet marketing and actual recommended diet. She then presented BEUC's actions towards a better restriction of unhealthy food marketing.

Finally, Ms Floriana Cimmarusti, SAFE's Secretary General, insisted on the importance to train consumers, and particularly children and adolescents, to make healthy food choices. For that purpose, she presented the above-mentioned "TAO Project".

SAFE'S POSITION

For SAFE, this symposium was a great opportunity to inform relevant stakeholders about the TAO Project and increase/expand its network to enable "Associate Partners" to participate in the project on a voluntary basis. For example, the "Associate Partners" may be involved in creating the Intellectual Outputs by providing content, in translating and assessing the educational materials as well as finding as many schools interested in conducting the training within the EU as possible.

Indeed, the more experts on obesity are involved in the TAO Project, the more effective and impactful it will be. For that purpose, SAFE is also currently looking for national organisations working on the issue of obesity while drafting several chapters of the Student Training Handbook.



The Future of the Common Agricultural Policy: Main issues & perspectives for improvement

On 1 June 2018, the European Commission presented its proposals for the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Key aspects of the new CAP proposals include its simplification and modernisation, its new delivery model and its higher ambition on environmental and climate action. However, the Commission's proposals present a range of challenges and concerns that need to be addressed in order to achieve safer and more sustainable food systems.

INTRODUCTION

On 1 June 2018, the European Commission presented its proposals for the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). With 170 million hectares of European lands being cultivated each year, and with the CAP representing one of the largest shares of expenditure within the EU budget, the **impact of this policy** on a European and global environmental level is considerable. In this regard, the CAP is of vital importance to develop renewed perspectives towards **food consumption** and to **design sustainable food systems** on a large scale.

With the cumulative effects of **recent crises** throughout Europe, the **CAP budget framework** has undergone notable **transformations**. The European Commission's proposals pose many **challenges**, but they could also provide interesting **opportunities** to create renewed momentum for the design and implementation of sustainable food systems.

STATE OF PLAY

Aside from the overall intent to **simplify and modernise** the policy, the European Commission has set **nine main objectives** for the CAP in its proposals, four of which are particularly related to **consumer protection, food safety and the environment** (climate change action, environmental care, preservation of landscapes and biodiversity, protecting food and health quality).

The latest **CAP reform** dates back to 2013 and was implemented in 2015. Currently, the CAP is structured into **two main funds**, also known as 'pillars':

- the **European Agreement Guarantee Fund (EAGF)**, or first pillar), which includes the market measures taken to tackle specific market situations and the direct payments to farmers;
- the **European Agreement Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)**, or second pillar), which is aimed at achieving balanced territorial development, and developing sustainable farming systems.

At the beginning of May 2018, the European Commission presented proposals for the next **EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)** for 2021-2027. The budget allocated to the new CAP represented €365 billion. Once the largest part of the EU budget, the CAP allocation has **steadily decreased** over the years: as it stands, it is expected to account for 28.5% of the total of the new MFF for 2021-2027. Concretely, the **budget cuts** appear to lead to a significant **transformation** of the CAP, which will impact each pillar in very different ways. While funding for the **first pillar will remain relatively stable** after 2020, and direct aid to farmers will undergo little change, the **EAFRD will be significantly reduced** (thus impacting investment in environmental matters), according to a briefing note presented by the Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the European Parliament to the AGR Committee in September 2018.

As far as implementation is concerned, the new CAP proposals present a **new delivery model**, whereby Member States are able to elaborate tailor-made measures (**Strategic Plans**) with dedicated national envelopes. To deliver on the nine CAP objectives, Member States will therefore have to design appropriate policies, which will then have to be assessed by the Commission. As David Baldock (Institute for European Environmental Policy) presented during the EAT Stockholm Food forum on 12 June 2018, these **new objectives** should allow for a **sharper focus on results** and a **more accountable framework**: Member States could then be held responsible for taking too few measures or for using inconsistent tools or performance indicators.

CONCERNS

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, it will be essential for the **European Commission** to provide clear **guidance and monitoring**, ensuring that the new CAP truly meets its environmental and food safety goals despite the numerous budget cuts. Aside from the evident consequences on the **quality of food produced** and the importance of **environmental standards**, the costs associated with **collective healthcare** systems will also be crucially impacted.

In this context, concerns are already being expressed regarding certain key aspects of the proposals. In response to the Commission's text, the **European Parliament** has already voiced **objections** to the new **EU budget** and to the cuts made to the EAFRD, as stated in the European Parliament resolution of 30 May 2018 on the 2021-2027 MFF.

Within the parliament, however, MEP's positions are divided. On the one hand, certain positions underline that the CAP has significant **potential**, however it is unclear how it could **live up to that potential**. On the other hand, a number of MEPs have expressed **concerns** over a range of **core issues** within the new CAP proposals.

Amongst these issues, one of the most recurrent is the concern of **renationalisation**, which is a product of the new delivery model. Multiple actors fear that the **shifting of responsibility** from the **EU level** to the **Member State level** could have extremely serious consequences, resulting in a lack of **accountability** at the EU level, a lack of **cohesion** throughout Europe, and a 'race to the bottom' regarding agricultural and environmental policy. In addition, a number of MEPs emphasised that the proposed Regulation must include a strong body EU provisions to prevent the **distortion of competition** and guarantee **non-discriminatory** treatment for all Community farmers throughout the EU. In order to ensure that such **subsidiarity** does not translate into a **renationalisation** of the CAP, therefore, it is crucial to strive for a better balance between the 'common' element within the CAP, and the promotion of a more **tailored policy**, allowing Member States to address context-specific issues.

Another crucial concern for both MEPs and experts is that **commitments** are not equivalent to **impact**. In this respect, it remains unclear how the Commission intends to **assess** proposed Member State Strategic Plans and **monitor** progress, and what the **quality assurances** are. In the specific context of **climate and environmental measures**, moreover, the fact that Member States can **transfer** a certain amount of funding from **one pillar to the other** means there is no guarantee that the financial costs for sustainable development and climate change previously supported within the second pillar will be borne by individual Member States. Ultimately, it becomes difficult to close the gap between formal pledges and current agricultural realities.

There are further reasons for concern on the environmental front, moreover, seeing as AGRI Committee Rapporteur Esther Herrenz Garcia states in her report from 29 October 2018 (2018/0216(COD)) that "the CAP plays an insignificant role in tackling food waste, and therefore that should not appear among the specific objectives" (p.48).

SAFE'S ACTIONS & POSITION

SAFE, together with Green Peace, HIS, Eurogroup Animal, WWF, EPHA, NABU, SLOW FOOD, EEB, European Heart network, IFOAM, Arche Noa, EUROPARC, PAN, and Friends of the Earth, is part of the **CAPNGO** group, which has been working on a **joint statement** regarding **civil society demands** on the future CAP.

CAPNGO, through this joint statement, urges MEPs to amend a number of articles within the regulation proposals (as detailed in the list below):

1. Setting **clear and rigorous objectives** holding Member States **accountable**: making the **specific objectives meaningful** to properly address the current environmental and societal challenges, including negative impacts beyond Europe's borders.
2. Requiring Member States to **define targets in relation to the Impact** Indicators that reflect actual progress on the ground.
3. **Ring-fencing 70% of the CAP budget** for the specific objectives d, e, f and i, and **50%** for environmental interventions.
4. Ensuring a new **enhanced conditionality** and its enforcement.
5. **Improving governance** and ensuring the involvement of **health and environmental authorities and civil society**.

Aside from this joint statement, **lobbying and advocacy** work will be carried out individually by each organisation within the group, to submit specific **amendments** to the Commission's proposals. **SAFE's amendments**, closely aligned with the overarching position of the **CAPNGO** group, will be submitted to members of the AGRI and ENVI Committees, and will focus additionally on the **promotion of more sustainable agricultural practices**, which are less heavily based on **livestock farming**. Consequently, **SAFE's advocacy** work will aim to secure further funding for the promotion of **stock-free organic farming and permaculture**.

Finally, an EU Regulation Proposal on Trans-Fats!



Trans-fatty acids used by the food industry negatively affect our health. Following years of strong activism from NGOs, the European Commission launched a study and gathered the Advisory Group on the Food Chain and Animal and Plant Health to discuss the best manner to reduce trans-fatty acids intake among the EU population. Finally, in October 2018, the European Commission published a Regulation Proposal amending Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006, which would legally bind industries to limit industrially-produced trans-fatty acids in their products to 2 grams per 100 grams of fat. Industries would benefit from a two-year transitional period to adjust to the new Regulation.

WHAT ARE TRANS-FATTY ACIDS?

Trans-fatty acids (TFA) are a type of unsaturated fatty acid, which are naturally present in animal fat. Nonetheless, the main source of TFA in our diet, and the one posing a threat to our health, is industrially-produced TFA (IP-TFA) used by the food industry. IP-TFA are partially-hydrogenated oils used in processed foods. TFA have been linked to an increased risk of developing coronary heart diseases (CHDs). CHDs are the number one cause of mortality in the EU, with more than 660,000 deaths per year. Consequently, NGOs and European bodies, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), have been demanding that the European Commission takes action to reduce TFA intake in the EU population, particularly IP-TFA. IP-TFA are found in large quantities in processed foods and are the main culprit behind the increasing incidence of CHDs.

TFA, WHAT HAPPENED?

In 2011, in the context of the adoption of EU Regulation No 1169/2011 on the provision of Food Information to Consumers, the European Commission was asked to deliver a report on TFA. The report, published in March 2016, indicated that although TFA intake was decreasing in the EU, young and low-income populations still consumed high levels of it. The Commission, urged by NGOs, the WHO and the EFSA, launched an impact assessment study in 2016 and a public consultation in 2017 to determine the best manner to reduce TFA intake among the EU population. Finally, after years of waiting, the Advisory Group on the Food Chain and Animal and Plant Health gathered on the 21st of June 2018 to discuss options to tackle the health-threat posed by TFA. Based on the impact assessment and public consultation results, DG SANTE suggested that a legally-binding limit on IP-TFA would be the best option to reduce TFA intake in the European population.

CURRENT SITUATION

On the 4th of October 2018, a Draft Commission Regulation amending Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006 was published. The proposal suggests the implementation of a legally-binding maximum limit of 2 grams of IP-TFA per 100 grams of fat in all Member States, with a two-year transitional period for the industries. Indeed, after the 1st of April 2021, products which do not comply with the Regulation should be removed from the EU market. Additionally, the definitions of "fat" and "trans-fat" in Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006 should be modified to fit the definitions in Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1169/2011 on the provision of Food Information to Consumers.

Stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide feedback until the 1st of November 2018.

SAFE'S POSITION

SAFE welcomes the Commission's proposal to limit the maximum amount of IP-TFA present in food to 2 grams of IP-TFA per 100 grams of fat. SAFE is pleased by this decision and has strong hopes regarding its impact on EU population health. SAFE suggests that the two-year transitional period should be used by Member States to prepare their National Agencies in an efficient and effective manner, so they are ready to control the correct implementation of the new Regulation in their country.



Proposal for a Directive to Reduce Single-Use Plastics

The European Parliament has recently adopted the proposal for the 'Single-Use Plastics Directive' put forward by the European Commission earlier this year. The proposal was adopted on 24 October 2018, by 571 votes to 53 (34 abstentions), with MEPs adding certain amendments. As part of SAFE's work in the area of food packaging, SAFE has been closely following the process during the past months.

PROPOSAL BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Within the framework of the European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy published in January 2018, the European Commission put forward a legislative proposal seeking to address the issue of single-use plastics in May 2018. The proposal focuses on the top 10 single-use plastics items found on beaches within the European Union as well as on fishing gear.

Most of marine plastic litter originates from land-based sources. Thereby, current food systems and food consumption trends significantly contribute to the manufacture and use of single-use plastic items such as straws, cutlery, coffee cups and stirrers, beverage bottles and food containers.

The proposal introduces a differentiated approach for the items concerned. Measures can be summarised as follows:

- to reduce consumption (for food containers and beverage cups);
- to ban products (cotton bud sticks; cutlery, plates, stirrers and straws; sticks for balloons);
- to demand product design requirements (for beverage containers and bottles, caps and lids would need to remain attached to the bottle);
- to put forward marking requirements (for balloons; wet wipes; and sanitary towels);
- to introduce extended produced responsibility requirements (for food containers; cups for beverages; balloons; packets and wrappers; beverage containers and bottles; tobacco product filters; wet wipes; lightweight plastic carrier bags; and fishing gear);
- to determine a separate collection objective (for beverage bottles, set at 90 %);
- to raise awareness (for food containers; cups for beverages; balloons; packets and wrappers; beverage containers and bottles; tobacco product filters; wet wipes; sanitary towels; lightweight plastic carrier bags; and fishing gear).

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: AMENDMENTS AND VOTE

In the European Parliament, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) is responsible for the proposal. The report, drafted by rapporteur Frédérique Ries (ALDE, BE) was adopted on 10 October 2018 by the ENVI committee. It introduces the following changes to the Commission proposal:

- widening the scope of market restrictions to include very lightweight plastic carrier bags, products made of oxo-degradable plastic, and expanded polystyrene food and drinks packaging used to contain food that is intended for immediate consumption from the receptacle without further preparation;

- strengthening requirements on consumption reduction, to be met four years after transposition of the Directive, to be 'ambitious and sustained' and to include national quantitative targets; in addition, requirements would be extended to cigarette filters waste, to be reduced by 50 % by 2025 and 80 % by 2030;
- setting minimum recycled content of 35 % for drink bottles, to be met by 2025;
- extending labelling requirements to cigarette filters, some packets and wrappers, and drinks cups;
- modifying definitions, in particular for single-use plastic products and for food containers covered by the consumption reduction target;
- on fishing gear, setting a minimum collection rate of 50 % and a recycling target of 15 %, both to be met by 2025; and
- requiring the Commission to review the directive five years after its transposition, setting if appropriate binding quantitative consumption reduction targets at EU level.

The ENVI report was subsequently submitted for vote in the European Parliament plenary at the end of October. The European Parliament adopted the proposal including the suggested amendments on 24 October 2018, by 571 votes to 53, with 34 abstentions.

Next Steps

In compliance with the Co-Decision Procedure of the European Union, the proposal is now being transferred to the European Council for the first reading. The European Parliament will enter into negotiations with the Council once EU ministers will have set their own position on the file. The proposal is among the priorities of the Austrian presidency.

SAFE's POSITION

SAFE has been closely following the legislation process during the past months, in particular on the basis of SAFE's ongoing activities in the area of food packaging under the framework of the LIFE Programme of the European Commission.

SAFE fully supports the sustainability and circular economy ambitions set out by the Directive proposal. SAFE particularly welcomes the market restrictions envisaged for cutlery, plates, stirrers and straws, as well as the intended consumption reduction for food containers and beverage cups.

In light of the envisaged measures concerning the promotion of recycling systems and recycled plastic content in food-contact materials (FCM), SAFE however deems it necessary to accentuate the risk of exposure to hazardous substances through FCM. Especially with regards to FCM manufactured from recycled plastic, research has demonstrated the abundance of hazardous and potentially hazardous substances such as brominated flame retardants, heavy metals, phthalates and endocrine disruptors in a variety of products. Although the legal framework which is currently in place should not allow for such substances to enter the food system, investigations show that practice is not compliant with FCM regulations. The origin of the identified hazardous substances is often unknown, with findings pointing to cross-contamination during waste management, faulty sorting machines throughout the recycling process, and prior misuse of the product by consumers.

Taking into account the measures set out by the proposed Directive, an increase in the manufacture and use of recycled plastic FCM throughout the EU is to be expected. SAFE urges policy makers to recognize recycled plastic in FCM as a high-risk issue and to promote sustainable, risk-free alternatives for FCM instead of only encouraging the use of recycled plastic content.

Towards an EU Legislation for Vegans & Vegetarians?



EU Law remains blurry regarding the definition of food suitable for Vegans and Vegetarians. This lack of clear legislation allows for misleading packaging and food labelling throughout Europe. For the few past years, SAFE has advocated for a definition to be included in the future Implementing Acts of the European Commission. Additionally, the EC has registered a European Citizens' Initiative demanding mandatory food labelling for Vegans and Vegetarians.

STATE OF PLAY

The absence of clear harmonized labeling laws for vegan and vegetarian food currently makes it difficult to distinguish whether the nature and characteristics of foods suit vegetarian and vegan consumers, potentially misleading and confusing them when choosing products.

However, Art. 36 (3) (b) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 for Food Information to Consumers from 25 October 2011 clearly states that 'the Commission shall adopt implementing acts on the application of the requirements for food information related to suitability of a food for vegetarians and vegans'. Seven years later, consumers still await an implementing act on this matter.

There is currently no definition of the terms "vegan" and "vegetarian" in EU law. This lack of unambiguous legislation allows for misleading packaging and deceptive product labelling. The situation is thus preventing consumers from making informed decision about the food they wish to eat. An implementing act from the European Commission would at least provide basic concepts and definitions allowing companies and consumers to better use and identify vegetarian and vegan labelling.

THE VEGAN & VEGETARIAN WORKING GROUP ACTIONS

To assist the EU institutions in their work on said legislation, SAFE has set up a Vegan & Vegetarian Working Group (VWVG) to create a common vision encompassing clear definitions of what is vegan and vegetarian food.

First launched in June 2015, the VWVG gathers Safe Food Advocacy Europe members working on issues related to veganism and vegetarianism with the objective of setting up a legal definition of vegetarians and vegans at the European level. Legal definitions would also make sure that consumers are not misled about the nature and characteristics of their food, especially concerning the use of animals. The VWVG worked on the creation of a proposal for a European Standard for vegan & vegetarian products which would enable Member States to adopt similar labelling patterns for vegan & vegetarian products.

Since its creation, the VVWG organised several international meetings from 2015 to 2017 to set up common standards and definitions for veganism and food suitable for vegans and vegetarians. The outcomes of those meetings have been expressed in a European common standard as well as a position paper, sent to several Members of the European Parliament (MEPs Claude Turmes (Greens/EFA), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Eleonora Evi (EFDD), Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D), Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP)) and to the DG SANTE of the European Commission to encourage stakeholders and relevant decision-makers to fully achieve a clearer vegan & vegetarian legislation.

In a response to a letter addressed to four commissioners by the VVWG in February 2017, Commissioner Andriukaitis stated that measures related to this matter were one of the priorities of the European Commission, but also mentioned that the EC could not commit to a certain content or date for such measures. SAFE is expecting the legislation proposal in 2019.

A CURRENTLY ONGOING EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE

On 12 November 2018, the European Commission registered a European Citizens' Initiative titled "Mandatory food labelling Non-Vegetarian / Vegetarian / Vegan". The initiative states that "Vegetarians and vegans struggle across the EU to identify suitable food. We must study the ingredients list of a food product to determine if it is fit for purchase with a hyper-awareness of ambiguous ingredients that could either be plant or animal based". The organisers call on the European Commission to propose mandatory pictorial labels on all food products indicating whether they are non-vegetarian, vegetarian, or vegan. The campaign was started by Madeleine Kay who is Young European of the Year 2018.

The registration of the initiative on 12 November 2018 kicked off a one-year process of collection of signatures for support. Should the initiative receive one million statements of support within one year, from at least seven different EU Member States, the European Commission will have to react within three months. The Commission can decide to either follow the request or not, and in both instances would be required to explain its reasoning.

Further information can be found [here](#).



EU Projects

There are currently a number of open calls for EU projects in the fields of food safety, agriculture, sustainable development, education, and the environment.

HORIZON 2020 remains the most significant EU Research and Innovation programme, with nearly €80 billion of funding to be allocated over 7 years (2014-2020). Calls for proposals cover a range of sectors, including food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research, and the bioeconomy.

Forthcoming and open calls for Horizon 2020 can be found [here](#).

Since 27 October 2018, open calls can be found on:

- Blue Growth [H2020-BG-2018-2020](#) (including a call on [Sustainable solutions for bio-based plastics on land and sea](#));
- Sustainable Food Security [H2020-SFS-2018-2020](#) (including calls on [improving animal welfare](#) and [development of alternative to pesticide use](#));
- Rural Renaissance [H2020-RUR-2018-2020](#), (including calls regarding [the development of modern rural policies on long-term visions and societal engagement](#), or [Circular bio-based business models for rural communities](#));
- Greening the Economy in Line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [H2020-SC5-2018-2019-2020](#).

ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME 2019: The 2019 Erasmus + Call for proposals has been published and applications to new calls are open now. The European Commission has issued a [Programme Guide](#) providing participating organisations and individuals with a comprehensive list of opportunities supported by the Erasmus + programme, particularly in the fields of education and training, youth, and sport.

The 2019 Call for proposals can be found [here](#).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION - Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety: The European Commission makes direct financial contributions in the form of grants in support of projects or organisations which further the interests of the EU or contribute to the implementation of an EU programme or policy.

Current calls for proposals can be found [here](#).

EU Events

Delivering on the Circular Economy: Fostering Sustainable Development in the EU
Date & Time: 27th November 2018, 10:00am - 4:30pm
Venue: Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre

Following the recent changes brought to the policy framework, this symposium offers an opportunity to evaluate the implementation of the Circular Economy Package on national levels, the development of waste reduction policies, and discuss the implementation of effective strategies in order to meet the Commission's ambitions in creating a circular economy. Moreover, it will highlight the importance of multi-level governance and discuss the role of various stakeholders. Finally, best practice and initiatives from across Europe will be shared.

More information on this event can be found [here](#).

Food packaging and the environment: Towards the end of single-use packaging?**Date & Time:** Tuesday, 27th November 2018 12:00pm - 14:00pm**Venue:** EURACTIV Network Office Boulevard Charlemagne 1, 1041 Brussels - EURACTIV

Plastic plays a significant role in food packaging as it serves to meet product safety and quality requirements. However, some types of packaging remain difficult to recycle for a number of technological and practical reasons and are prone to littering. In light of the ongoing policy discussions on single-use plastics, this workshop offers opportunities to discuss the improvement of the sustainability of food packaging. Further information are available [here](#).

Addressing Dangerous Diets: Changing our Understanding of and Response to Eating Disorders**Date & Time:** 29th November 2018, 10:15am - 4:30pm**Venue:** Central London

There are 1.25 million individuals suffering from eating disorders in the UK, 89% of whom are female (Beating Eating Disorders 2018). 50% of eating disorder sufferers experience anorexia or bulimia, however a large number also experience conditions causing over-eating and the emotional consumption of food (NHS England 2018). There is significant over demand for NHS services, and those suffering from eating disorders can wait up to 182 days before receiving treatment. 30% of those seen by GPs for eating disorders are not referred for mental health support, and over half of these patients rate the support they receive as 'poor' or 'very poor' (NHS England 2016).

Despite new policies, there remain challenges to overcome. This timely symposium therefore offers a forum for both practitioners and policy makers to consider key issues within the treatment of those experiencing eating disorders.

Further information about the event can be found [here](#).

Food Safety in the EU: Maintaining High Standards and Ensuring Transparency of Information**Date & Time:** 29th January 2019, 10:00am - 4:30pm**Venue:** Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre

The food and drinks industry constitutes the largest manufacturing sector in the EU. Protecting the health of European citizens whilst enabling the food industry to operate in the best possible conditions is of paramount importance for the European institutions.

In light of recent developments, this international symposium provides an opportunity for food safety experts, government agencies, food industry representatives and other key stakeholders to discuss the latest European regulatory updates regarding food safety, agriculture policy, transparent information to consumers including allergen, animals and plants health.

Further information about the event can be found [here](#).

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