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NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS AND CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN FOOD STANDARD SETTING (CL 2008/4-EURO, PART A)

1. STATUS OF THE NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM

(I) STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF OFFICIAL SERVICES RESPONSIBLE FOR FOOD CONTROL

ARMENIA

The Armenian food safety system tends to be reorganized from multiple agencies system into integrated food safety system with the leading role of the **Ministry of Agriculture**.

The main mandate for implementation of food control falls into the following three institutions:

1. Ministry of Agriculture with its Food Safety and Veterinary State Inspectorate (FSVSI) and Plant Quarantine and Land Management State Inspectorate (PQLMSI);
2. Ministry of Health with its State Hygienic and Anti-Epidemiological Inspectorate (SHA EI);
3. Ministry of Economy with its National Institute of Standards (NIS).

According to recently adopted Government Decree "On recognition of the authorized bodies for implementation of state control over food and food additives safety at all stages of production and circulation" (No. 557-N, 05.06.2008), the Ministry of Agriculture is recognized as an authorized body for state control over food safety. At the same time, the Ministry of Health is recognized as an authorized body for state control over sanitary and hygienic requirements for employees who are in direct contact with food at all stages of foodstuffs and food additives production and circulation. Besides, Ministry of Health is recognized also as an authorized body for state control over advertising of medical properties of the foodstuff and foodstuff intended for particular purposes.

AUSTRIA

Structure and status of the Austrian food safety system is documented in detail in the FVO Country Profile of Austria on Food and Feed System, Animal Health and Animal Welfare and Plant Health http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/country_profiles/cp_austria.pdf

DENMARK

The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration (DVFA) under the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries has the responsibility for the food control in Denmark. DVFA consists of a head office and 3 Regional Veterinary and Food Administrations (RVFA). The 3 RVFA has a total of 10 control and enforcement offices who perform the control of food and veterinary matters.

ESTONIA

Responsibilities of different ministries (including responsibilities for drafting legislative acts) and their subordinate bodies are described in *the Government of the Republic Act*.

According to the above-mentioned *Act* the responsibilities of the Ministry of Agriculture include drafting of legislative acts in phytosanitary, animal nutrition and veterinary fields, as well as in the whole food sector, and the coordination of implementation of these acts. According to general principle, the ministry is responsible for analysing the current situation, planning of development and formation of policies in areas mentioned above as well as in some other areas. The ministry drafts the legislative acts, develops plans and other documents as necessary. Day to day inspection is done by subordinate bodies. At the same time the subordinate bodies are included in the process of development of legislative acts to ensure the use of practical experiences in the drafting process and hence more effective implementation of the acts. Meetings and round tables are held on a case by case basis to discuss specific issues between different institutions responsible for food safety if needed.

The foodstuffs sector in Estonia is regulated by the national *Food Act*, secondary legislative acts of this *Act* and directly applicable regulations of the European Community. *Food Act* and secondary legislative acts of this *Act* are based on relevant EU legislation. National rules are applied in the absence of Community harmonization.

Until 1 July 2007 the official control tasks in the foodstuffs sector was divided between the Veterinary and Food Board, the Health Protection Inspectorate and the Consumer Protection Board.

Since 1 July 2007 the food control system in Estonia was changed and the whole food control is under the responsibility of Veterinary and Food Board, including several former responsibilities of Health Protection Inspectorate. The Consumer Protection Board maintained the possibility to carry out the control of labelling in the retail stage. The scope of their responsibilities is established with the *Food Act*.

Estonia has two levels inspection system. In general, all control authorities consist of central authority and local units which are in direct administrative subordination to the central authorities. There is on-line command system between central authority and local units of it. Usually the central authority is responsible for co-ordination and supervision of work of inspectors of local units. The local district units (15) respond directly to the head office.

Concerning border inspection, the Veterinary and Food Board is responsible for veterinary border inspections of animals and foodstuffs of animal origin imported from third countries. In general, food of non-animal origin is checked in the place of destination of consignment in the course of day-to-day control. If there is a reasonable doubt of possible importation of non-conforming food of non-animal origin, the Tax and Custom Board has rights to perform control of those foodstuffs at the place of importation.

The Veterinary and Food Board is subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Consumer Protection Board to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications.

For the purposes of increasing awareness on food safety among consumers and other specified groups Estonia has carried out several information campaigns intended to the consumers in a range of themes concerning food safety during last years. We also provide information about food safety issues on web-sites.

FINLAND

Finland has four-levels of administration for food safety system comprising ministries, central administrative level, regional level and local level.

From the beginning of the year 2008 all food safety issues were merged into one ministry: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The Ministry has an overall responsibility for the development of food legislation. The Ministry is also responsible for general planning and supervision of food control

The Finnish Food Safety Authority (Evira) started on 1 May 2006 and acts in the administrative sector of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Evira was established by joining together the National Food Agency, the National Food and Veterinary Research Institute and the Plant Production Inspection Centre as well as some executive tasks of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Evira is the central competent authority of food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health and plant production. Evira is responsible nationally for directing, planning and carrying out control of the whole

sector. Evira is also responsible for scientific risk assessment and scientific research which form the basis for correct targeting of Evira's control activities and successful risk management. Evira's laboratory operations support the "from farm to fork" principle. Evira also acts as a national reference laboratory of animal diseases, of residues in foodstuffs of animal origin and of feed. The Food Act also assigns Evira some specific tasks, e.g. direct supervision of large scale slaughterhouses and of integrated meat and fish plants, food control where special expertise is required, assessment of Guidance to Good Hygiene Practice as well as management of communication of consumer and risk information. Evira is the National Contact Point for RASFF and the National Focal Point for EFSA.

Evira comprises three departments: Control Department, Research Department and Administrative Department. Quality assurance, internal audit, communications, Zoonosis Centre and three key processes (animal health and welfare, food safety, plant production and health) operate directly under the control of the Director General. Risk assessment and meat inspection operate under the control of the Deputy Director General.

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry concludes with Evira an annual service level agreement including specific objectives and deliverables. Evira draws up a multi-annual national food control programme, covering the entire food chain. This control programme must be reviewed as necessary, but at least once in every three years. Evira has responsibility for the preparation of the single integrated multi-annual control plan in accordance with the Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. Evira participates in preparing the general national plan for environmental health. Evira also draws up an annual food control plan related to its own control activities under the national food control program.

Evira is empowered under the Food Act to take direct administrative coercive measures against operators where the municipality has not taken sufficient actions to prevent serious health hazards.

Regional administration consists of six State Provincial Offices managed jointly by seven Ministries with the Ministry of the Interior taking primary responsibility. The State Provincial Offices are responsible for planning, steering and monitoring food and veterinary control and monitoring compliance with food law and other legislation concerning animal health and welfare as well as veterinary services in their respective regions. The Food Act also assigns them tasks related to auditing of the municipal food control authorities and evaluation of the control plans of the municipal authorities and checking compliance with these plans. Evira concludes an annual service level agreement with each State Provincial Office.

At the local level the municipalities must ensure that food control is undertaken within their respective areas. The major task of the municipal food control authorities is to take care of the practicalities of food control. The work includes performing inspections, advising business enterprises and approving plans regarding in-house control. Municipal control authorities take care of the control of intra-community trade of foodstuffs of animal origin. Food control at the municipal level is part of environmental health work. Municipal food control authorities exercise power on their respective territories. The municipalities enjoy an extensive degree of self-administration.

Each municipality must draw up a municipal food control plan as part of its environmental health control plan, taking into account the national food control programme. Municipalities are required to have a quality management system. Municipalities receive funding from the State for food control as a contribution to their activities. In addition the Food Act imposes an obligation on municipalities to collect fees from business operators for certain types of inspection activities.

Finland is divided into 415 municipalities. The Ministry of the Interior monitors their operations and ensures that municipal autonomy is taken into account in the preparation of relevant legislation. Each municipality is required to conduct food control jointly with other municipalities or federations of municipalities covering an area large enough for the control to be appropriately organised. Currently there are some 200 municipal food control units. The Finnish Government decided in 2003 to begin a process of merging municipal food control authorities to reach 50-85 control units. This process is still underway.

Finnish customs, under the auspices of the Ministry of Finance, is the competent authority for food and plant health control at import. The customs authorities consist of the National Board of Customs, five customs districts and the Customs Laboratory. The customs check at import point (specifically in the importer's warehouse) food of non-animal origin that have not yet been placed on the market. In case of non-compliance, the necessary measures can be directed at the entire consignment before it reaches any consumer by the customs offices. According to the Finnish Food Act the customs authorities are also competent market

control authorities concerning foodstuff of non-animal origin in internal market. The control is carried according to the national control plan made in co-operation with Evira and the sampling is done at the places of destination.

The Customs Laboratory carries out physical, chemical and microbiological analyses and GMO analyses for food chain control. Domestic products are also analysed on the bases of research contracts between the National Board of Customs and Evira.

Evira is responsible for import controls of animals and food of animal origin at the border inspection points. One fulltime border inspection veterinarian covers the border inspection point at Helsinki port and another at Helsinki airport. For the rest of the country municipal veterinarians are authorised by Evira for border inspection work.

A new laboratory strategy is being prepared. The principal laboratory services are currently provided by the Evira, the Customs Laboratory and local laboratories. There are 47 approved official laboratories in Finland, all of which are accredited to ISO 17025 by the Finnish Accreditation Service FINAS.

FRANCE

No change.

France has conducted a general review of its public policies and a reorganization of its administration. The consequences for the national food control system will probably only be available for presentation at the next CCEURO.

GEORGIA

National Service of Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection; Department of Vine and Wine.

HUNGARY

The Central Agriculture Service (CAS) had been established by the 274/2006. (XII. 23.) Government Decree on 1 January 2007. The Government brought together all institutions dealing with food and feed control in the new organisation. It facilitates joint and coordinated actions and information transfer and utilisation. By the 138/2007 (VI. 18) Government Decree all food control activities were mandated to the CAS from 1 November 2007.

IRELAND

No change.

LATVIA

The Food and Veterinary Service (hereinafter in the text referred to as FVS) is a governmental, state administrative institution supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture, which ensures and performs state surveillance and control functions stipulated by and on the bases of the normative acts. The legal bases of FVS status is provided by „The Regulations of Food and Veterinary Service” - paragraph 3 of provision No 142 by the Cabinet of Ministers from 22.02.2005.

The managing body of the FVS is the director general, who in the meanwhile is the Chief State Food and Veterinary Officer.

The aim of the activities performed by the service is to organize and perform the state surveillance over food circulation and veterinary.

Food and veterinary service in order to reach the stated aims and to complete the entrusted tasks has established a complex, mutually coordinated system of structures, which in its activities ensures comprehensive, professional and effective state surveillance over food circulation and veterinary.

The structure of FVS (see Annex) are made by:

The central body and its structural units (administration, departments, units, sectors);

FVS territorial structural units (TSU) (The regional divisions and the division of Riga city Food and Veterinary Service) – 27;

Specialized structural units:

- Sanitary border control with its control posts;
- National Diagnostics Centre (NDC) with territorial structural units;

- Food centre.

The service has 2 level state surveillance and control structures:

Level 1:

The central body of FVS (its structural units),

The central bodies of the Sanitary border control, Food centre and NDC,

The structures at this level organize and coordinate the above mentioned surveillance and control, develop the methods and systems of obtaining surveillance and control data, the methods and systems of their accumulation and analyses, summarize and analyze the results of the surveillance, performs the necessary corrections in the state surveillance mechanism and performs its optimization;

Level 2:

The inspectors of territorial structural units of the service (TSU) ensure direct state surveillance and control of the surveillance objects, by performing planned and extraordinary controls in accordance with surveillance programs and methodology elaborated by the Central body of FVS,

The control posts of sanitary border control,

NDC laboratories and NDC territorial laboratories.

The ministry of Agriculture is responsible for policies in phytosanitary and veterinary fields, the whole food sector and drafting of legislative acts in areas mentioned above as well as in some other areas.

Food sector in Latvia is regulated by the national Food Law.

POLAND

The competences in the area of food control in Poland are divided between two bodies of state administration: *the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development* (responsible for the policy co-ordination in the area of animal health, quality of animal origin food, imports of animals and animal origin food, feedingstuffs, residues of veterinary medicines, plant health and plant protection, animal welfare and presenting the relevant legislation to the Parliament) and *the Ministry of Health* (responsible for the co-ordination of food safety aspects, the transposition of Community legislation in the areas of general food hygiene, pesticide residues, contaminants, import controls of food of non-animal origin and presenting relevant legislation to the Parliament).

Co-operation and information exchange between the ministries is governed by co-operation agreements.

The ministries manage and supervise, within the scope of their competences, designated authorities carrying out official control appointed in the *Act of 25th August, 2006 on food safety and nutrition* (Official Journal 2006, No. 171, Item 1225): the Sanitary Inspection, the Veterinary Inspection and other authorities in the scope of relevant competences (the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection, the Plant Health and Seed Inspection, the Trade Inspection). The Act describes requirements and procedures essential for food safety assurance according to the *Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 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* and defines the rules of co-operation between the relevant bodies.

Having in mind integrated approach to the official food control and consistency of application of control procedures, particular control official authorities co-operate with each other in compliance with signed bilateral and multilateral agreements on co-operation and co-ordination of control activities.

Sanitary Inspection. The tasks, the scope of activity and the organisation of the Sanitary Inspection are set out in the *Act on State Sanitary Inspection of 14th March 1985* (Official Journal 2006, No. 122, Item 851, with amendments).

The Sanitary Inspection carries out public health tasks by supervising disease control, food and nutrition safety, environmental hygiene, health promotion and other issues related to public health. In particular it is responsible for fulfilling tasks as follows: official control of foodstuffs hygiene, pesticide residues in food, contaminants, import of food of non-animal origin, materials and articles intended to come into contact with

food, food additives, GMO in food, food supplements and novel food. Moreover the Sanitary Inspection provides the national contact point for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) established according to the EC General Food Law to exchange information with the European Commission.

The Inspection is managed by the Chief Sanitary Inspector appointed by the Prime Minister on the proposal of the Minister of Health. The activities mentioned above are discharged at regional level by 16 Voivodship Sanitary and Epidemiological Stations, 318 Poviats Sanitary and Epidemiological Stations and 10 Border Sanitary and Epidemiological Stations.

The Veterinary Inspection is headed by the Chief Veterinary Officer appointed by the Prime Minister on the proposal of the Minister of the Agriculture and Rural Development. The Veterinary Inspection operates under *the Act of 29 January, 2004 on Veterinary Inspection* (Official Journal 2004, No. 121, Item 842, with amendments).

The Veterinary Inspection is operationally divided into General Veterinary Inspectorate, 16 Voivodship Veterinary Inspectorates, 304 Poviats Veterinary Inspectorates and 10 Border Veterinary Inspectorates.

The tasks of the Veterinary Inspection include prevention of and fight against animal diseases and supervision of health aspects of foodstuffs of animal origin, and in particular:

1. examination of slaughtered animals and their meat, meat of game and other animals intended for human consumption,
2. border veterinary control,
3. supervision of safety of animal origin foodstuffs, including veterinary conditions of production, processing, storing, transporting and retail sale,
4. supervision of animals and animal origin products trade,
5. supervision of producing, marketing and using of feedingstuffs,
6. supervision of usage of pharmaceuticals and medical substances intended for animals,
7. control of the occurrences of chemical and biological, medicinal and radiation contamination residue in animal tissue, foodstuffs of animal origin and feedingstuffs,
8. supervision of health of animals intended for breeding and of health and quality aspects of biological material,
9. supervision of compliance with regulations on animal welfare,
10. control of compliance with rules for animal identification and registration, diagnostic laboratory research conducted by veterinary hygiene institutions.

The national contact sub-point for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) is located in the Main Veterinary Inspectorate.

Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection started its activity on 1 January 2003 under the *Act of December 21, 2000 on Commercial Quality of Agricultural and Food Products* (Official Journal 2005, No. 187, it. 1577). It was created on the basis of two inspection bodies: *Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection /CIS/* and *Inspection for Purchasing and Processing of Agricultural Products /ISiPAR/*.

The Inspection is responsible to the Minister competent for agricultural markets.

The Inspection is managed by the Chief Inspector (appointed by the Prime Minister on the proposal of the Minister of the Agriculture and Rural Development), and 16 Voivodship Inspectors of Agricultural and Food Quality.

The Chief Inspector coordinates and supervises all activities of the Inspection with the support of the Main Inspectorate.

Tasks of the Inspection are as follows:

1. Supervision of commercial quality of agricultural and food products, in particular:
 - commercial quality control of agricultural and food products during production and marketing, including exported agricultural and food products,
 - commercial quality control of imported agricultural and food products (the list of imported agricultural and food products and their minimum quantities subjected to commercial quality control is set by the Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Official Journal 2002 No. 230, item 1933 with further amendments),
 - issuing certificates on commercial quality of agricultural and food products.

2. Inspection of agricultural and food products labelled, with registered protected geographical indications, protected designations of origin or certificates of specific character.
3. Inspection of agricultural and food products storage and transport conditions.
4. Co-operation with paying agencies (Agricultural Market Agency, Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture) in the scope of the Common Agricultural Policy.
5. Gathering and processing information on agricultural market situation.
6. Co-operation with other inspections bodies (Veterinary Inspection, Sanitary Inspection, Trade Inspection, State Plant Health and Seed Inspection Service), customs offices and local governmental units.
7. Co-operation with or participation in international organisations working in the area of commercial quality and international marketing of agricultural and food products (**FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission - acting as Codex Contact Point for Poland**, United Nations/Economic Commission for Europe - acting as the Polish Secretariat for co-operation with Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – cooperation within the OECD Scheme on Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables).
8. Conducting trainings in the scope of provisions and commercial quality requirements, setting quality classes and methods of analyses of agricultural and food products.
9. Co-operation with foreign official inspection services on commercial quality of agricultural and food products.

Additionally, the Inspection has competences for carrying out control in the following areas: fruit and vegetables market and hop market, genetically modified organisms (GMO), wine products, organic farming, fertilisers and fertilisation, store houses and surplus stocks of agricultural products.

Proper realization of the above mentioned activities is assured by analytical activities carried by Inspection's laboratories. Analyses of agricultural and food products are conducted in 11 official Inspections' laboratories – Central Laboratory and 10 specialised laboratories at the national level in the structure of the Main Inspectorate.

Methods of analyses used by our laboratories comply with the EU methods. Determination of methods of analyses and sampling methods in legal acts which are in force, assures that control procedures in each body of the Inspection are uniformed.

All Inspection's laboratories are accredited by PCA (Polish Centre for Accreditation) according to PN-EN ISO/IEC 17025. The accreditation scope covers 144 selected analytical, instrumental and microbiological methods related to certain groups of products such as: milk and milk products, juices and their concentrates, beer, cereals and cereal products, oils and vegetable fats, vegetable products, drinks and mineral waters.

To uphold high quality level on every stage of performing tasks, according to the PN-EN ISO 9001:2001 standard, quality management system has been implemented in the Inspection.

The Inspection is the first official food control body in Poland which in 2005 gained conformity certificate on the ISO 9001:2000 standard. In May 2008, the British Standards Institution, Management Systems (CEMA) - certification body - confirmed that quality management system implemented in the Inspection fulfils requirements set by the ISO 9001:2001 standard by issuing the Quality Management System Certificate valid till July 2011.

The Plant Health and Seed Inspection operates under the *Act on Plant Health of 18th December, 2003* (Official Journal 2004 No. 11, Item 94) and the *Act on Seeds of 26th June, 2003* (Official Journal 2003 No. 137, Item 1299). The Plant Health and Seed Inspection is managed by the Chief Inspector appointed by the Prime Minister on the proposal of the Minister of the Agriculture and Rural Development. At regional level, there are 16 Voivodship Inspectorates, 269 field units and 12 border inspection points.

The main objectives of the Plant Health and Seed Inspection are control of plant health and the marketing and use of pesticides, control of conditions of plants and plant products storage, control on existence and spreading of pests and in particular:

1. evaluation of how plants are threatened by pests,
2. notifying plant protection authorities in exporting countries of holding or destroying sick plants, plant products or objects,

3. examination of samples of plants, plant products, soil and grounds to state the presence or the absence of pest organisms.

The Trade Inspection is responsible to the Chairman of Competition and Consumer Protection Office. The Trade Inspection operates under the *Act on the Trade Inspection of 15th December 2000* (Official Journal 2001, No. 4, Item 25 as amended).

The Trade Inspection structural consists of the Main Inspectorate of Trade Inspection, 16 Voivodship Inspectorates of Trade Inspection and 34 of their units.

In relation to food the Trade Inspection carries out:

1. control of products in retail sale taking into account their labelling and misleading,
2. control of legal compliance and reliability of operators engaged in business activities in the area of production, trade and services,
3. mediation in disputes between consumers and operators to protect consumer interests and rights,
4. consumer counselling.

SERBIA

Both Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM) and Ministry of Health (MH) have overall responsibility for food safety in the Republic of Serbia.

Within the MAFWM: the Veterinary Directorate (VD), the Plant Protection Directorate (PPD) and the Sector for Inspection Supervision (SIS), have overall responsibility for animal health, animal welfare, feed, food safety, seed, plant health, plant protection products and residues.

These administrative bodies have policy-making and legislative drafting functions and are also responsible for the co-ordination with the EU and other international organizations within the scope of their competences.

The framework law in the veterinary field in the Republic of Serbia is the Law on Veterinary Matters (Official Gazette of RS No 91/2005) which regulates animal health protection from diseases, protection from animal infectious diseases transmissible to humans; veterinary sanitary inspections and control of food and feed safety, veterinary protection and improvement of the environment and nature; compensation and expenses on animal health protection; organisation and carrying out of activities in the field of veterinary medicine and other issues in the veterinary field.

The framework law in the phytosanitary field in the Republic of Serbia is the Law on Plant Protection (Official Gazette of FRY No 24/1998, 26/1998), which regulates plant protection from harmful organisms, registration and control plant protection products, fertilisers and phytosanitary inspection and other issues in the phytosanitary field.

The framework laws in the field of safety of foodstuffs and items of general use is Law on Health Safety of Food And Items of General Use (OG SFRY No. 53/91) - which regulates general criteria for food safety of all foodstuffs, and Law on Sanitary Surveillance of Foodstuffs and Items of General Use (OG FRY No. 48/77, 29/88 and OG RS No. 44/91, 53/93, 67/93, 48/94)

Control system for food (Internal market):

The Sector for Sanitary Surveillance (SSS) is responsible for the inspection of foodstuffs of animal and non-animal origin in the processing, distribution (storage, wholesale, retail), restaurants, catering and green markets sectors. The VD is responsible for the inspection of food of animal origin in the production, processing, distribution (storage, wholesale, retail) and green markets sectors.

The Competent Authorities (CAs) for food of animal origin are the MAFWM – Veterinary Directorate (VD) and the MH – Sector for Sanitary Surveillance (SSS) in accordance with their legal bases (partial overlapping);

The SIS within the MAFWM is responsible for the control of the quality of agricultural products of plant origin at processing facilities, warehouses and on the market.

The PPD within the MAFWM is responsible for the control of foodstuff plant origin (primary agricultural products), simple processed food and control of plant protection products and residues in the foodstuff of plant origin (partially overlapping with MH).

Control system for imports of food of animal origin:

The CAs for imports of food of animal origin are the MAFWM - Veterinary Directorate and the MOH - Sector for Sanitary Surveillance within their legal bases (overlapping);

Customs services cannot release consignments of food of animal origin without two positive decisions being issued by both authorities.

Control system for imports of food of plant origin:

The CA for food safety control of food of plant origin at import is the Border Sanitary Inspection within the SSS in the MH and border Phytosanotary inspection within the MAFWM.

Control system for plant protection products:

The CAs for pesticides control are the PPD within the MAFWM; the Department for Management of Chemicals – of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Spatial planning (MESP)

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

The responsibility of official food controls in the Slovak Republic is shared by two ministries, the Ministry of Agriculture (MA) and the Ministry of Health (MH). MA is responsible for plant health, animal health, animal welfare, feedstuffs and food safety. Responsibility of MH relates to food safety in catering sector, foodstuffs intended for particular nutritional uses, baby food, drinking and natural mineral water.

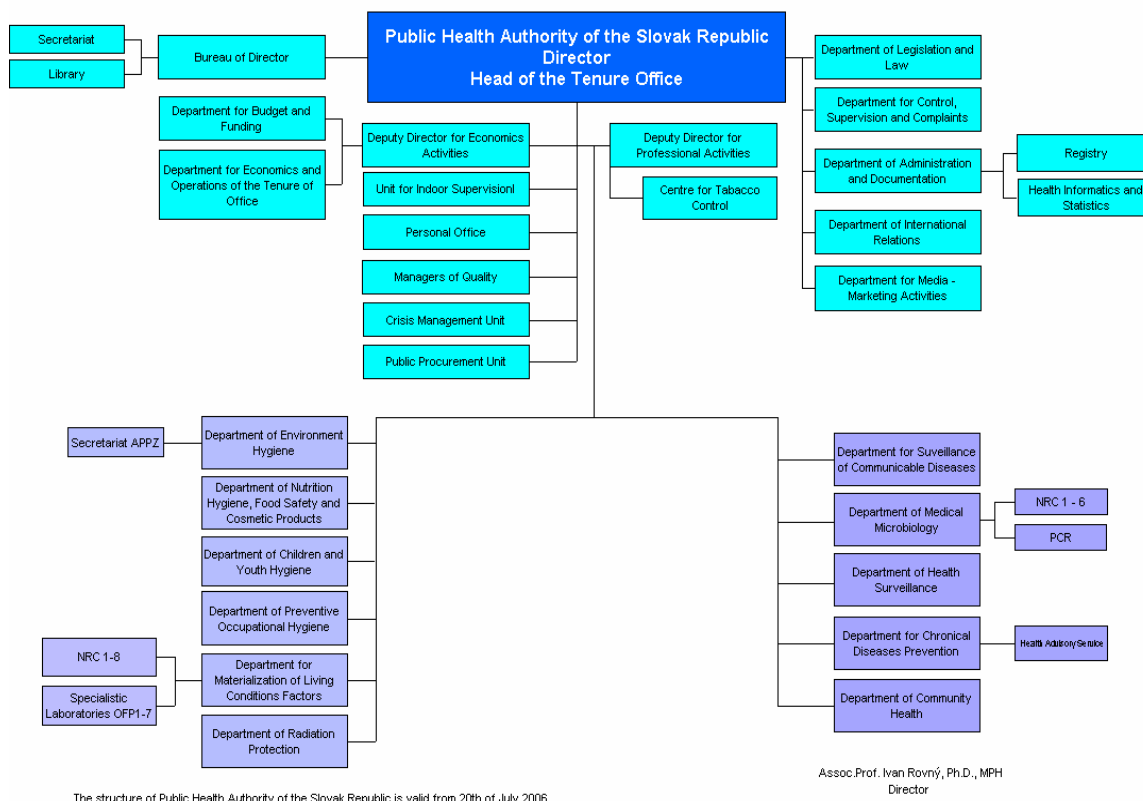
Two control bodies State Veterinary and Food Administrations - SVFA and The Central Controlling and Testing Institute in Agriculture - CCTIA, operate under the MA. What about task of SVFA on the regional level, the official control is organised through eight Regional Veterinary and Food Administrations (RVFA), 40 District Veterinary and Food Administrations (DVFA). There are official laboratories in the 4 State Veterinary and Food Institutes, which are responsible for laboratory testing of the official food control. These laboratories are accredited according ISO 17025 by the Slovak National Accreditation Service and they are used as national reference laboratories.

The Central Controlling and Testing Institute in Agriculture - CCTIA, which operated under MA is responsible for plant health, plant protection, soil and ecological agriculture. CCTIA has also set up centres away from its registered office, in individual regions – in Zvolen and Košice, as well as testing stations run by the Institute to address tasks relating to different disciplines, with a focus on control and testing activities. The laboratories of CCTIA are also accredited according ISO 17025 by the Slovak National Accreditation Service and they are used as national reference laboratories.

The Public Health Authority PHA is the competent authority of MH for implementation of official controls on foodstuffs. Implementation of control on the regional level is carried out by 36 Regional Public Health Authorities.

In the Slovak Republic, there are two private companies to which some specific tasks for official controls have been delegated. Bell/Novaman Ltd. was empowered with tasks concerning specifications of agricultural products (i.e. geographical indications and designation of origin for products and foodstuffs) before their release into free circulation. Naturalis, Ltd. was empowered with tasks as regards organic farming including certification of related products.

The structure of Public Health Authority of the Slovak Republic



UNITED KINGDOM

The situation is unchanged since the last CCEURO meeting.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) was established in April 2000. The FSA is responsible for protecting consumer interests in relation to food safety and standards in the United Kingdom and leads on issues such as quality, composition (including additives and contaminants) and labelling of food, and the hygiene aspects of meat and milk production. The Agency is accountable to the UK Government through Health Ministers and through the equivalent devolved authorities in respect of the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Enforcement of food legislation, including the inspection and sampling of food at all stages of production, distribution, storage and sale, is generally the responsibility of local government. Under the Food Standards Act 1999, the Agency has statutory powers to strengthen influence over enforcement activity to ensure national priorities and objectives will be delivered. The Act also provides the Agency with powers to monitor and audit local authority food law enforcement services. These powers are put into effect through the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement. The Agreement came into effect fully on 1 April 2001. It sets standards of performance to ensure the effectiveness and consistency of food law enforcement and outlines the Agency's monitoring and audit schemes. The Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) is responsible for the co-ordination of the practical aspects of enforcement work and the Agency works closely with this organisation.

The Meat Hygiene Service has enforcement responsibility in relation to hygiene, inspection and welfare in licensed fresh meat, poultry meat and game establishments. In Northern Ireland, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) operates a centralised meat inspection service.

DEFRA (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), and equivalent organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, aim to help the farming and food industries operate as efficiently as possible. In England, Scotland and Wales, the departments operate an animal health and welfare strategy.

Other government departments have interests in various aspects of food law and standards. For example, the Health Departments are consulted and contribute where eating for health and infant feeding are concerned.

(II) LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS ON FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY - INCLUDING IMPORT/EXPORT MATTERS¹ (UPDATE INFORMATION SINCE THE 25TH CCEURO)

ARMENIA

1. **Law on Food Safety** (HO-193-N, 27.11.2006) governs the relations with respect to the safety at stages of import, export, manufacture, processing, packaging, labeling, transport, storage and placing on the market of food, materials in contact with food and food additives, as well as at stages of trading and mass catering.
2. **Law on Veterinary Medicine** (HO-202-N, 24.10.05) regulates relationships in the field of veterinary between state authorized body responsible for veterinary and physical and legal entities acting on the territory of the Republic of Armenia.
3. **Law on Plant Quarantine and Plant Protection** (HO-209-N, 27.11.06) regulates relationships in the field of plant quarantine and plant protection between state authorized body of the Republic of Armenia and physical and legal entities acting on the territory of the Republic of Armenia.
4. **Law on Trade and Services** (HO-134-N, 24.11.2004) regulates state management basis for trade, catering and personal services on the territory of the Republic of Armenia, powers of state management and local self-government bodies in these fields. The Law regulates implementation of the activities in trade and services, as well as ensures protection of consumers' rights.
5. **Law on Ensuring Sanitary and Epidemiological Safety of the Population** (HO-43, 12.12.1992) defines legal, economic and organizational basis for ensuring sanitary and epidemiological safety of the population. It describes general requirements for production, transportation, storage and marketing for foodstuffs and primary production.
6. **Law on Protection of Consumers Rights** (HO-197, 26.06.2001) regulates relationship between consumers and producers (implementing agents, sellers) arisen during sale of products (implementation of works, provision of services). It defines consumers' rights for acquiring safety products of due quality, for receiving true information on products (works, services) and producers (implementing agents, sellers). The Law defines state and public protection of consumers' rights, as well as mechanisms for implementation of those rights.
7. **Law on Standardization** (HO-81-N, 26.05.2004) provides legal basis for the system of technical regulations and standards in Armenia.
8. **Law on Conformity Assessment** (HO-82-N, 26.05.2004) regulates conformity assessment and accreditation fields.
9. State control over food safety is implemented in a manner prescribed by the **Law on Organizing and Implementing Check-ups in the Republic of Armenia** (HO-60, 17.05.2000).
10. Custom Code (HO-83, 06.07.2000).

AUSTRIA

Codex Alimentarius Austriacus

Food safety and food quality have a long-standing tradition in Austria. In 1891 a scientific commission was founded in the Austro-Hungarian Empire which developed a collection of standards and product descriptions for a wide variety of foods, the Codex Alimentarius Austriacus. Although lacking legal force, the Austrian Food Code has been successfully used as a reference by the courts to determine standards of identity for specific foods. The present-day FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius has derived its name from the Austrian code.

Today's Austrian Codex commission is an advisory body for the Minister of Health, Family and Youth having its legal basis in the Austrian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Act of 2006. It undertakes the task of publishing the Austrian Food Code. Codex recommended standards may be higher than legal standards.

The work of the Austrian Codex Commission is supported by a number of subcommittees. The subcommittees cover food commodities, object commodities, organic farming, food inspection, contaminants and residues in food, food additives, flavourings and enzymes, food labelling, cosmetics and food contact materials. Rules of procedure govern the collaboration between the Commission and the subcommittees. In general, 2-3 commission sessions take place annually.

¹ Where appropriate: "Lessons learned" from any reform of the food control system (e.g. using the risk analysis framework, farm-to-fork approaches, policy, organizational and/or procedural changes).

The Austrian Codex Commission is characterised by its efforts towards consensus-building in a transparent way within representatives of society (Minister of Health, Family and Youth; Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management; Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour; Federal Ministry of Finance; Austrian Chamber of Labour; Austrian Federal Economic Chamber; Austrian Trade Union Federation; Austrian Chambers of Agriculture; Association for consumer information; Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety; scientists and experts nominated by social partners). The transparent decision-making process of Codex guarantees broad support of the recommendations.

National advisory body to FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius (“WECO”)

Alongside the Austrian Codex Commission the Austrian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Act of 2006 established a national advisory body to FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius for the information of the minister of Minister of Health, Family and Youth. Its main task is the coordination of national positions with regard to FAO/WHO international food standards. This is done using the expertise of the Austrian Codex subcommittees. Therefore, WECO shows a similar structure to that of the Austrian Codex Commission, notably regarding members which represent the civil society. However, it has its own terms of reference and Steering Committee. Consideration of consumer interests is ensured by representatives of the Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, of the “Österreichische Arbeiterkammer” (Chamber of Labour) and of the “Verein für Konsumenteninformation” (Association for Consumer Information) in WECO and in its Steering Committee.

DENMARK

The Danish food safety system is based on risk analysis where risk management is functionally separated. Export of foods is regulated in such a way that foods must be in compliance with Danish/EC legislation. If exported foods are not in compliance with such legislation it must be demonstrated to the Danish authorities that the food complies with the legislation in the importing country. Animal products must be imported via Border Inspection Control Posts. Control of all other products is the responsibility of the importer.

FINLAND

Current Finnish Food Act entered into force on 1 March 2006. The Food Act covers issues earlier covered by the Food Act, by the Act on Food Hygiene of Foodstuffs of Animal Origin and by parts of the Health Protection Act. The Food Act applies to food, to conditions in which food is handled and to food business operators and food control at all stages in the production, processing and distribution of food.

FRANCE

This issue relates to a domain harmonized by the European Community.

GEORGIA

There was adopted following laws and rules:

- Rules to Issue Hygienic Certificate of Food and Food Package;
- Public Health Law;
- There was conducted registration of Codex Alimentarius Standards by the National agency of Standards, Technical Regulations and Metrology of Georgia;

HUNGARY

The 2008 law defined the roles and responsibilities of all stake-holders of food chain.

IRELAND

Legislation and regulations on food safety and quality - including import/export matters² (update information since the 25th CCEURO).

POLAND

The area of food safety and quality is covered by the provisions of the *Act of 25th August, 2006 on food safety and nutrition* (Official Journal 2006, No. 171, Item 1225) which is harmonized with the EU legislation. The

² Where appropriate: “Lessons learned” from any reform of the food control system (e.g. using the risk analysis framework, farm-to-fork approaches, policy, organizational and/or procedural changes).

EU legislation has been implemented into the Polish law and key national food legislation has been reformed. National regulations in that area are applied when there is no relevant Community legislation.

SERBIA

The same legislations are still in force in the Republic of Serbia.

Note: Several Laws, including new Food Safety Law and related sub-laws (regulations) are drafted and waiting for legal review and/or further steps in adoption procedure.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Slovak Republic as a member of European Union has to obligatory implemented *acquis communautaire*. Regulations and Decision of EU legislation are directly applied in the Slovak Republic. European Directives and national requirements are transposed by the national legislation - acts and executive legislation to these acts:

1. Act No. 152/1995 Coll. on Foodstuff as amended by Act No.195/2007
2. Act No. 39/2007 Coll. on Veterinary Care
3. Act No. 355/2007 Coll. on Prevention, Protection and Promotion of Public Health and on amendment of some acts
4. Act No. No. 271/2005 on Feeding stuffs
5. Act No 597/ 2006 Coll. on Varieties and Seed
6. Act No 182/2005 on Wine Grooving and Winemaking
7. Act No 421/2004 on Organic Farming
8. Act No 184/2006 on the cultivation of genetically modified plants in agricultural production
9. Act No 193/2005 on plant health, as amended by Act No 295/2007.

The mentioned legislation is available on the relevant competent authorities' websites and on the website: <http://www.zbierka.sk>

UNITED KINGDOM

UK food law is generally harmonised with EU legislation.

The Food Safety Act 1990 came into force on 1 January 1991. It updated previous legislation and provided an extensive legal framework under which Ministers can draw up regulations in accordance with the powers given to them by the Act. This includes the power to implement EC food law in the UK.

The Food Standards Act 1999 established the Food Standards Agency and sets out its main objective of protecting public health in relation to food and the functions that it assumed in pursuit of that aim. The Act gave the Agency the powers necessary to enable it to act in the consumer's interest at any stage in the food production and supply chain.

(III) ESTABLISHMENT OF EQUIVALENCE OR OTHER TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS

ARMENIA

Armenia is WTO member since 5 February, 2003.

Armenia has free trade regimes with Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Belarus; and most-favoured-nation trade regimes with Argentina, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Cyprus, EU, Iran, India, Hungary, Lebanon, Poland, Romania, Syria, Switzerland, Vietnam and USA.

Under the terms of free trade agreements, tariff exemptions are extended to goods traded between Armenia and Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine. Excise taxes are charged at various rates on the import or production of some goods, including alcohol and tobacco.

DENMARK

Denmark is a member country of the European Community (EC). The EC has jurisdiction to establish legislation on the import of foodstuffs, which applies for all member countries of the EC.

The EC is negotiating equivalence agreements with Canada, New Zealand and USA to facilitate trade relations. The EC is negotiating other trade facilitating agreements with a number of other countries, e.g. Switzerland, China, Russia, South American countries, Mexico, Thailand, Vietnam.

Denmark and the other member countries of the EC have jurisdiction to negotiate requirements for export of foodstuffs to countries outside the EC. Denmark has as a large exporting country negotiated such requirements with a numerous of countries, e.g. USA, Japan, China, Canada, Switzerland, Taiwan, Russia, Singapore, Malaysia, Middle East countries.

FRANCE

This issue relates to a domain harmonized by the European Community.

HUNGARY

None.

IRELAND

None.

POLAND

This task is mostly realised by the co-operation within the European Community. At the Central Governmental level, Polish officials have regular contact with their colleagues from other EU Member States. They meet within various working groups of the EU Council as well as European Commission committees in Brussels where issues concerning food legislation and food trade are discussed and developed.

This objective is also fulfilled by co-operation with other food-relevant international organisations such as:

- Codex Alimentarius Commission which has elaborated and develop a collection of internationally recognized standards, codes of practice, guidelines and recommendations related to food, food production and food safety aimed at protecting health of the consumers and ensuring fair trade practices in the food trade,
- UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) Working Party for Agricultural Standards which develop global agricultural quality standards to facilitate international trade. The standards encourage high-quality production, improve profitability and protect consumer interests. UNECE standards cover a wide spectrum of agricultural products: fresh fruit and vegetables, dry and dried produce, seed potatoes, meat, cut flowers, eggs and egg products and they are used internationally by Governments, producers, traders, importers, exporters and international organizations,

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – co-operation through the OECD Scheme on Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables facilitates the adaptation of quality standards to present production, trade and marketing conditions, promotes uniform quality control procedures and disseminates quality assurance guidelines.

SERBIA

Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) 2006,

Free trade agreement with Russian Federation 1996

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Establishment of equivalence or other trade facilitation agreements with other governments in the European union is treated through the European Commission agreements. Slovak Republic as a member of European Union has not any other agreements.

UNITED KINGDOM

Officials from the FSA have regular contact with counterparts in other EU Member States in the various structures of the European Union, as well as bilaterally.

The FSA also has a large amount of bilateral contact with countries outside the EU, sharing information and experiences and hosting study visits.

(IV) IDENTIFIED NEED FOR CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING TO STRENGTHEN THE NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM

ARMENIA

Opportunities for the professional development of technicians and scientists (courses, professional societies) are limited or lacking. Several trainings were delivered within different assistance projects by donor organisations (FAO, EU Tacis) but professional development courses and re-fresher trainings provided on regular base are lacking. Personnel of the state institutions are not trained on the EU or Codex relevant legislation. Basically, only Heads of Departments participate in seminars and workshops or have been on business trips to the relevant services of other countries. No training or exchange programs for personnel are budgeted.

Besides, language is a serious barrier for communication. Most of specialists are Russian speaking, and this fact limits the process of identification of possible participants for most of international meetings and even for Electronic Working Groups. Thousand pages of professional literature should be translated into Armenian in order to be available to national specialists.

DENMARK

Danish Veterinary and Food Administration (DVFA) has a quality strategy for the food control. An important part of this is development of the competences of the inspectors. DVFA also has a Competence Strategy for all employees in DVFA. As examples of processes supporting the development of competences can be mentioned participation in courses, experience groups, meetings on specific subjects, two inspectors inspecting together, quality supervision of individual inspectors and yearly personal development talks. At this talk an individual competence plan is drawn up or revised.

FINLAND

The Food Act assigns Evira the food control where special expertise is required. In order to ensure an optimal use of the food control resources there is a need for training for demanding food control tasks at the local level. There is also an ongoing process of merging municipal food control authorities to units large enough for the control to be appropriately organised.

FRANCE

This issue relates to a domain harmonized by the European Community.

GEORGIA

Need for training:

- Methodology and procedures of risk assessment, risk management and risk communication, analyze of microbiological and chemical hazards;
- General principles for monitoring and control all chains of food producing;
- International legislation and control mechanisms of mineral water and table water;
- International legislation and control mechanisms of wine and other alcoholic beverages;
- Risk assessment, International agreements and control systems of Gen-modified organisms;
- product recall and traceability;
- Directives and regulations related to food safety and quality, especially requirements of food export/import matters (fruits, vegetables, honey, mineral water, wine, and citrus).

HUNGARY

An extensive training programme comprising of 24 workshops of 3-10 days had been organised during the 1st half of 2008.

IRELAND

None.

LATVIA

Due to the fact the one of FVS priorities is to ensure high level of competence of its employees, the FVS has always supported and promoted any measures that are aimed at skills and knowledge improvement of the employees. The policy of FVS stipulates continuous improvement of personnel qualification.

FVS training process consist of:

Primary training.

The head of TSU assigns two month training to new inspectors who have passed the selection procedure and have started working for FVS; the new employees receive the trainer and the training includes both: the theoretical and the practical stage. After the end of this period the new inspector passes the primary qualification exam.

The preparation and upgrading of the first qualification exam falls in the scope of responsibility of Food surveillance department and Veterinary surveillance department, but the organization of the exam falls into the competence of the Training division.

Mandatory professional training.

Each year FVS ensures mandatory professional training for the officers. The contents of the mandatory professional training falls into the scope of responsibility of Food surveillance department, Veterinary surveillance department, Information technology department, Quality management department, the administration of the Central office but its preparation and submitting to the director general for the confirmation is the responsibility of the Training division.

Additional professional training

Once in a year FVS ensures additional professional training for the senior state food officers and senior state veterinary officers. The contents of the mandatory professional training falls into the scope of responsibility of Food surveillance department, Veterinary surveillance department, Information technology department, Quality management department, the administration of the Central office but its preparation and submitting to the director general for the confirmation is the responsibility of the Training division. The participants receive the certificate for attending the additional professional training. Training division keeps the register of the certificates awarded.

Specific professional training

In case of necessity (for example, on changes in the normative regulations) there are specific professional training organized by Food surveillance department or Veterinary surveillance departments. The program development for such courses fall in the competence of the heads of respective structural units, but its preparation and submitting to the director general for the confirmation is the responsibility of the Training division. After completing the specific professional training the participants fill the questionnaires that are to be submitted in the Training division.

Besides ongoing training courses, FVS has identified additional actual needs for capacity building and training of food inspectors:

- To develop audit system of the establishments involved in the food circulation, training in audit principles and methods according to the Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council No 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules and the Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council No 854/2004 laying down specific rules for the organization of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption;
- To upgrade inspection system in slaughterhouses, training of food inspectors and official veterinarians in ante and post mortem inspection of animals and animal welfare at slaughterhouse.

SERBIA

Education, equipment of sanitary inspectors.

Implementation of HACCP Principles in Small Food Business Establishments;

Development of procedures and activities for awareness campaigns;

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

The national control system in the SR is in the line with *acquis communautaire*. This system is under control of European Commission, FVO – Food and Veterinary Office in Dublin. After every inspection performed by FVO the need for strengthen of the national control system is identify. Training is provided together with European Commission. SR has not any requirement for special capacity building and training needs to strengthen the national food control system.

UNITED KINGDOM

None identified, though the UK FSA routinely hosts study visits from other countries, including many developing countries, e.g. SENASA from Argentina, and officials from Turkey and Croatia.

(V) ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE AWARENESS ON FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY AMONG THE CONSUMERS AND OTHER SPECIFIED GROUPS

ARMENIA

There are some NGOS in Armenia dealing with consumers' rights protection, including issues related to food safety. one ngo has a web page (www.consumer.am), where consumers can find publications, legislation, necessary information on food safety and other related issues. ngos publish "consumer" monthly magazine, leaflets on food labelling, basic rights of consumers, etc., as well as they participate in drafting of relevant legislation. Besides, in 2003-2007 "Consumer's Right" program has been broadcasted on tv. there is a hot line in operation, as well as legal acts' expert available for consumer consultations.

DENMARK

Danish Veterinary and Food Administration (DFVA) initiates consumer campaigns to ensure that the labelling on pre-packaged foods is sound and correct in order not to mislead the consumers. Seasonal food safety campaigns for example in the summertime are carried out to remind consumers that perishable foods should be kept cool. Also campaigns on how to use pasteurised eggs when preparing dishes with raw eggs are carried out. Campaigns on campylobacter are carried out to inform the consumers on the risk and how to avoid getting ill. General information to the consumers on food safety and food quality is available on the DFVA website.

FINLAND

Evira is responsible for managing information provisions, communication about risks and consumer information nationally. Improvement of the production of information has been included in the annual service level agreement concluded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and Evira. Publications and electronic information systems have been improved from the consumers and producers point of view. In 2009 Evira is going to organise a project on consumers' ability to take advantage of the food information. This project will be carried out in cooperation with consumer and other relevant organisations. Improvement of information related to foodstuffs is also one of the objectives in the Finnish Consumer Policy Programme for the Years 2008-2011.

FRANCE

The National Food Council (CNA) and the National Consumer Council (CNC) are two forums of discussion and coordination where all stakeholders are represented.

In 2007 and 2008 the CNC addressed a number of topical issues, including food labelling and nutrition claims, food supplements, allergens and the labelling of GMOs.

The CNA has issued several advisory notes during this period : Advisory Note N° 58 of 12 July 2007 on "nutritional and health claims relating to food"; Advisory Note N° 59 of 7 February 2008 on "new legitimate factors of regulation of the international food trade"; Advisory Note N° 61 of 12 June 2008 on "the implementation of reform of identification labels of quality and origin of agricultural produce".

GEORGIA

Georgia is working to implement RASFF System.

HUNGARY

The Hungarian Food Safety Office (HFSO), in cooperation with CAS, regularly issues press releases and information notes on its Website about actual food safety issues. Further on, workshops and seminars are organised for discussing various food safety related problems.

IRELAND

On-going via various initiatives previously advised.

LATVIA

FVS has a different tools to increase consumers awareness on food safety issues and inform public on actual information and problems:

Home page of FVS – www.pvd.gov.lv

Brochures on food safety issues, for example, “Be aware what you buying” (on labeling of food products), “Food additives”, “Advices of FVS on consumption of fish” (dioxin and PCB problems), “How not to get sick by food” (on general hygiene), etc.

Regular press conferences on actual issues and surveillance results

Press releases on actualities, in case of emergencies, on surveillance results

Communication with mass media, participation in interviews, preparation of informative materials.

SERBIA

Still waiting for adoption of new principles and legislation relating to food safety and quality.

Education on food hygiene of employees in the field of food production and retail.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Enhancement of consumers' confidence to foods through effective communication is one of the strategic objectives of the Slovak Multi Annual National Control Plan. Five consumer associations are engaged in food issues: Consumer Institute, Association of Slovak Consumers, Association of Consumer Subjects of Slovakia (A3S), Slovak Association for Patients' and Consumers' rights and protection, and Food Consumers' Society. At the MA level, closely cooperation with non-governmental consumer organizations is linked-up. Joint working group of consumers' association's representatives and the representatives of control bodies was created in the beginning of 2007. The MA informs via mails, seminars or working parties all food consumers associations about food safety issues and activities carried out at national and international levels. Besides, all strategic materials related to food safety are published on the MA website. Also press information is released regularly by the Ministers (Health and Agriculture) and the Chief Director of official control authorities. In addition, Rapid Alert System notifications as well as notifications from official controls are exhibited on the SVFA website. The URL address: spotrebitel@svsrr.sk is available for consumers' complaints and questions.

In 2007 on the MA the Working Group for Trade has been created to facilitate understanding the legislation on food hygiene in retail and to help trade operators to remove hygiene defects, mainly in premises or commercial establishments. The group joins representatives of official control authorities, as well as of some trade associations and producing associations. The Guidance to ensure the hygiene system in retail was developed and published on the <http://www.land.gov.sk>.

Communication with other manufacturing associations, which represent food producers and processors, is maintained too.

All subjects are encouraged and invited to cooperate in legislation development through their comments.

Refer to occurrence of non compliances with legislation, the official control authorities as well as relevant Ministries communicate the issue with related associations of producers and carry out targeted controls.

UNITED KINGDOM

The UK FSA has established an Advisory Committee on Consumer Engagement in order to provide an external challenge to the Agency's activities in this area. The Committee reviews the conduct and analysis

of research, including which tools the Agency uses to engage with consumers. The FSA uses a variety of methods to obtain consumer views, including forum meetings and focus groups. It has three websites: www.eatwell.gov.uk www.salt.gov.uk www.food.gov.uk

(VI) ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

DENMARK

None.

FRANCE

Nothing to report.

IRELAND

No.

SERBIA

In the Law on health fitness of foodstuffs and items of general use there is obligation for producers to give guarantees with certificate for their food products that they are healthy, based on laboratory examinations. After the adoption of a Law on Food Safety, an Agency for Food will be established.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

The food control system in SR covers all part of food chain - from the stable to the table. Risk assessment and risk communication is provided in co-operation with European Food Safety Agency – EFSA. MA is a Focal Point for co-operation with EFSA and is responsible for scientific co-operation in the area of risk assessment on the national level.

UNITED KINGDOM

One of the FSA's core values is to "put the consumer first". The Agency's Chair formerly chaired the National Consumer Council. Besides the Board members with lay, public health and enforcement backgrounds, one Board member has a wide experience of representing consumers' interests.

2. NATIONAL CODEX CONTACT POINT AND OTHER NATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR CODEX MATTERS

(I) ACTIVITIES OF THE CODEX CONTACT POINT (UPDATE INFORMATION SINCE THE 25TH CCEURO) AND ANY INFORMATION ABOUT CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS (IF NOT YET NOTIFIED)

ARMENIA

A formal Codex Contact Point (CCP) is established in the Ministry of Agriculture of Armenia. As there is no National Codex Committee formed yet, the relations with all relevant stakeholders (including Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economy, as well as consumers' rights protection NGOs) are established due to personal contacts. All information sent to the Armenian Codex E-mail address is reviewed by the CCP and forwarded to interested parties. All books regarding Codex activities, including reports, Codex manuals both in English and in Russian, received from Codex office, are distributed among relevant stakeholders, and copies are kept in Codex office with the aim of establishing Codex library. Besides, any consultation regarding Codex Alimentarius activities is provided by the CCP to all interested parties and the requested information is presented.

With the Support of FAO's TCP/RER/3003 Food Safety Capacity Building Project, the equipment necessary for the functioning of the Codex Office was supplied to the CCP in mid July, 2008.

DENMARK

The activities of the Danish Codex Contact Point is coordination the Danish work in Codex and organize the involvement of other Danish authorities and NGO's.

ESTONIA

The Estonian Codex Contact Point is at the Veterinary and Food Department of the Ministry of Agriculture. The National Contact Point receives information from the Codex Alimentarius Commission and distributes it to the different organizations according to the distribution list. Estonian Contact Point also prepares the Estonian positions for Codex meetings.

Estonia started to participate in Codex work more actively during last years. Estonian experts have taken part in all EU coordination meetings, where EU's positions for Codex meetings were discussed. Also Estonian delegation has attended several Codex meetings (CAC, CCGP, CCMAS, CCPR, CCFFP, CCCF, CCFA, CCNFSU, TFAMR).

FINLAND

Secretary General of the Advisory Committee on Foodstuffs is the Finnish Codex Contact Point. The Contact Point distributes Codex documents to the national experts and coordinates the preparation of national positions.

see also 2(ii)

FRANCE

The French Codex Committee does not have/no longer has physical existence. It functions through electronic lists (one for each Codex committee). The transmittal of documents from Codex or those prepared by the French authorities in reply to Codex circular letters or resulting from participation in (and/or leadership of) ad hoc drafting groups, mandated by a Codex committee to advance ongoing work between meetings, is forwarded by the French contact point (installed at SGAE) to registered persons, according to the committees for which the correspondents (administrations, public establishments, scientific bodies, specialized professional associations and even private companies) have indicated an interest.

To the extent possible, before a meeting of each committee or on any other appropriate occasion, a meeting is organized at SGAE to canvass the opinions of all interested parties. The French position is drawn up, if necessary with interministerial arbitration, following the usual SGAE procedure.

No change in procedure since the 25th session.

HUNGARY

There are two national Codex Contact Points in Hungary:

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development being responsible for keeping contact, ensuring information flow with the EU Codex Secretariat, as well as for the participation in EU coordination working parties, for the updating of the national Codex website and managing and organizing the work of the National Codex Committee, while the Hungarian Food Safety Office had been assigned as national Codex Contact Point to FAO Codex Secretariat and responsible for the organisation of the CCMAS Sessions hosted by Hungary with effect of 1 July 2008.

The Contact details are:

Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Department of Food Chain Analysis

Kossuth tér 11, Budapest 1055 Hungary; T+36 1 301 4571 Fax: 301-4808 szollosir@fvm.hu

Hungarian Food Safety Office

Gyáli út 2-6, Budapest 1097 Hungary; T.: 368 8815/109, 439 0356, Fax: 387 9400

e-mail: HU_CodexCP@mebih.gov.hu

IRELAND

No change.

LATVIA

The Food department of the Ministry of Agriculture is the National Codex contact point in Latvia, which co-operates other state institutions and NGOs.

Latvian experts participate in the Codex Alimentarius Working Party in Brussel. Depending on the nominated priorities and on the financial reasons Latvian experts participate in Codex Alimentarius Commission sessions in the countries of the Europa.

POLAND

Poland is a member of the Codex Alimentarius commission since its creation (1963).

The Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection acting as the National Codex Contact Point coordinates all Codex activities in Poland.

Polish Codex Contact Point co-operates with c.a. 80 national partners. Among them there are almost 50 non-governmental bodies, consumer's and food industry associations, scientific institutes, universities and other parties with an interest in the subject matter.

The rules of proceeding in the area of Codex at the national level are set in The Internal Procedure of Proceeding within the Codex Works at the National Level (elaborated by the Codex Contact Point for Poland). The document was consulted with all relevant official authorities as well as with non-governmental organizations interested in Codex. Despite the fact that all Codex activities at the national level are supervised by the Codex Contact Point, the procedure appoints for each of the Codex Committees one governmental body (selected on the basis of the scope of its competences) which plays the role of a leader – final decision maker.

Polish Codex Contact Point fulfils 9 core functions of Codex Contact points set out in the Procedural Manual. Moreover it acts as the national link between co-operating governmental institutions and the EU Council Secretariat. Codex Contact Point co-ordinates the participation of Polish officials in the co-ordination meetings for the EC Member States within the Codex Alimentarius Working Party.

Prior to each Codex meeting which Polish delegates are going to participate in, detailed instruction for delegates is prepared with co-operation with all partners and when there is a need to discuss issues of special concerns for Poland, internal co-ordination meetings are being convened by the Codex Contact Point with representatives of all stakeholders concerned.

The Codex Contact Point for Poland has created well structured communication network with co-operating bodies. It is based on e-mail and website www.ijhars.gov.pl where every interested party may find detailed information on Codex Alimentarius, news, information about sessions and working papers but also reports of Polish delegates on their attendance in the meetings.

According to the decision made on the 30th Session of FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission (2-7 July 2007 in Rome), Poland is the host country of the 26th Session of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO). The Codex Contact Point for Poland was responsible for organization of the above mentioned meeting in Warsaw (7-10 October 2008).

SERBIA

Intensive cooperation with the relevant Ministries, election of delegates to participate in the CAC meetings, distribution of all CAC documents to the interested parties. Contact details are unchanged.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

MA on the base of agreement with MH delegated function of the National Codex Contact Point to the Food Research Institute (FRI), organisation under MA. The main tasks of MA are:

- ✓ transpose CA standards to the national legislation
- ✓ organise meetings of the National Codex Committee
- ✓ distribute information from EFSA, EK, OECD and TBT/SPS in all areas which is covered by Codex Committee too
- ✓ approved and comment statements prepared by experts
- ✓ approved participation of experts on the CA meetings

The main activities of FRI are:

- ✓ distribute all information and documents from CA to the Slovak stakeholders by e-mail, website and by journal
- ✓ translate some important CA documents to the Slovak language
- ✓ organise and provide comments for CA documents

- ✓ cooperate with consumer associations
- ✓ give consultations to the stakeholders
- ✓ provide lectures about CA in the universities
- ✓ carry on the library of CA documents which is available for everybody without payment

Since 25th CCEURO, its activities have followed up the rules as set in the Codex Procedural Manual. Last year, the links of the NCCP to the National Codex Committee have been strengthened resulting in better utilizing Codex standards in national decision making processes. Slovak stakeholders appreciate availability of information in Slovak language. FRI has provided translations of some Codex documents (fully or partially) into Slovak language. They have been published in magazine “Food Industry Trends” being issued quarterly, as well as located at the related website offshoot of the FRI <http://www.vup.sk>. Codex documents available in Slovak (linked to also the original documents at the Codex website) are divided into 7 parts:

- Overview of the Codex sessions and a guide for national delegates
- Information on previous Codex meetings (12 documents)
- EU membership in Codex Alimentarius Commission (4 documents)
- Scientific base for Codex decisions (12 documents)
- Codex standards and guidelines (20 documents)
- Codex Procedural Manual

Codex Training package

UNITED KINGDOM

The UK Codex Contact Point is an official of the Food Standards Agency who fulfils the 9 core functions of CCPs set out in the Codex Procedural Manual. The contact point continues within the EU and International Strategy Branch which co-ordinates all the UK’s Codex activities.

(II) STRUCTURE, COMPOSITION AND OPERATION OF A NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEE (OR EQUIVALENT OR SIMILAR STRUCTURE) OR PLANS FOR ITS ESTABLISHMENT (UPDATE INFORMATION SINCE THE 25TH CCEURO)

ARMENIA

With the establishment of formal Codex Contact Point (CCP), the steps are taking towards establishing National Codex Committee. Report has been produced under the National Programme for Implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Armenia, and the proposal of establishing the Committee on Food Safety Issues, which can serve also as the Codex National Committee, has been included in the Report. The Committee is to have an advisory role and should include representatives of state institutions and NGOs involved in food control activities in the country.

The issue of establishing Codex National Committee was included in the Project-document on activities to be implemented in 2008-2012 and presented to the Government of Armenia for consideration.

AUSTRIA

Codex Alimentarius Austriacus

Food safety and food quality have a long-standing tradition in Austria. In 1891 a scientific commission was founded in the Austro-Hungarian Empire which developed a collection of standards and product descriptions for a wide variety of foods, the Codex Alimentarius Austriacus. Although lacking legal force, the Austrian Food Code has been successfully used as a reference by the courts to determine standards of identity for specific foods. The present-day FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius has derived its name from the Austrian code.

Today’s Austrian Codex commission is an advisory body for the Minister of Health, Family and Youth having its legal basis in the Austrian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Act of 2006. It undertakes the task of publishing the Austrian Food Code. Codex recommended standards may be higher than legal standards.

The work of the Austrian Codex Commission is supported by a number of subcommittees. The subcommittees cover food commodities, object commodities, organic farming, food inspection, contaminants and residues in food, food additives, flavourings and enzymes, food labelling, cosmetics and food contact materials. Rules of procedure govern the collaboration between the Commission and the subcommittees. In general, 2-3 commission sessions take place annually.

The Austrian Codex Commission is characterised by its efforts towards consensus-building in a transparent way within representatives of society (Minister of Health, Family and Youth; Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management; Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour; Federal Ministry of Finance; Austrian Chamber of Labour; Austrian Federal Economic Chamber; Austrian Trade Union Federation; Austrian Chambers of Agriculture; Association for consumer information; Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety; scientists and experts nominated by social partners). The transparent decision-making process of Codex guarantees broad support of the recommendations.

National advisory body to FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius (“WECO”)

Alongside the Austrian Codex Commission the Austrian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Act of 2006 established a national advisory body to FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius for the information of the Minister of Health, Family and Youth. Its main task is the coordination of national positions with regard to FAO/WHO international food standards. This is done using the expertise of the Austrian Codex subcommittees. Therefore, WECO shows a similar structure to that of the Austrian Codex Commission, notably regarding members which represent the civil society. However, it has its own terms of reference and Steering Committee. Consideration of consumer interests is ensured by representatives of the Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, of the “Österreichische Arbeiterkammer” (Chamber of Labour) and of the “Verein für Konsumenteninformation” (Association for consumer information) in WECO and in its Steering Committee.

DENMARK

The Danish Codex Committee consist of the following: Danish Dairy Board, Danish Meat Association, Danish Industry, Danish Agricultural Board, Danish Consumer Organization, Worker Union (food and drink workers). Chairman and secretary of the committee is appointed from the staff of the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration. All Codex documents are circulated for comments. Meetings are held in accordance with the needs.

FINLAND

In conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry operates the Advisory Committee on Foodstuffs. The Advisory Committee on Foodstuffs is more than 50 years old institution and it has always been regulated by the legislation. Current Government Decree on the Advisory Committee on Foodstuffs is from the year 2001. The Government sets the Advisory Committee on Foodstuffs for three-year terms (current term 2007-2010). Members of the Committee represent food control and food law, food industry, food trade and catering sector, consumer issues and primary production. Task of the Committee is to handle matters relating to food safety and quality as a cooperative body. The committee is responsible for the national coordination of the international cooperation in the food sector and Finland’s contribution to the work of the Codex Alimentarius.

The Advisory Committee on Foodstuffs is the Finnish National Codex Committee and the Secretary General of the Advisory Committee is the Finnish Codex Contact Point.

Under the Advisory Committee of Foodstuffs are several sub-committees for specified issues (like food additives, contaminants, food labelling, food hygiene, residues of veterinary drugs in food etc.). In these sub-committees are representatives of all relevant authorities and NGOs. National positions for Codex meetings are prepared in cooperation with these sub-committees.

FRANCE

Cf. 2-(i) above.

GEORGIA

There is not National Codex Committee in Georgia. National Service of Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection is ready to establish National Codex Committee.

HUNGARY

The National Codex Committee has 15 members representing ministries, control authorities, consumer and industry bodies, scientific institutes, non-governmental organisations. The Committee meets once/twice a year. The annual meeting is the forum where its members and chairs of national Codex sub-committees (22) are presenting the activities of their respective field of work. The Secretariat of the National Codex

Committee is hosted and managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (mandated by government regulation).

IRELAND

No change.

POLAND

The National Codex Committee was not established. All relevant Codex activities within Poland are coordinated by the Codex Contact Point.

SERBIA

National Codex Committee is in the process of establishment. In this process representatives from the Ministry on health, Ministry on Agriculture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Trade, WHO Country Office Serbia, Institute of Public Health of Serbia are included.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

In 1994 there has been established the Slovak Codex Committee. As a member of the European Union Slovak experts have to take part in the meeting in the working group in the European Council, European Commission, EFSA and OECD. Therefore in 2007 the structure of National Codex Committee has been restructured and refined gradually to meet the actual needs of the country. Under the MA 25 national experts working groups with about 250 experts were created. These experts come from research, control, government, industry, consumer group and trade. The head of expert working group, in the area covered by Codex Committee, is a member of National Codex Committee. The main task of working group is preparing all statements and positions for CA, EFSA and EK. Those experts are appointed to attend the relevant sessions of Codex Alimentarius as well as sessions of the European institutions and the EFSA bodies. Cooperation among the NCCP, members of expert groups, Ministries and the NCCP proceeds mostly by e-mail. All of them receive the relevant Codex documents which are distributed from the NCCP immediately after receiving. The experts watch international events and utilize/transfer the knowledge within the national environment. The mentioned structure of groups allows mutual foreknowledge and alternation of expert on sessions. As regards drafting positions, the opinion from different points of view - scientific, practice, legislative, control and producing areas can be useful.

All inevitable administration services are provided by the NCCP. The comments to Codex and/or European documents are usually gathered at the food and nutrition safety department of the Ministry of Agriculture for their verification and final approval. Since January 2008, all e-mails addressed to the NCCP are branched and directed in two addresses – the NCCP (FRI) and the Food and Nutrition Safety Department (Ministry) – that contributes to knowledge and enables flexible and transparent cooperation.

The scientific expert groups operate in the following issues:

General principles (incl. CAC, CC GP and CC EURO)

Food additives

Feed additives

Pesticide residues

Food contaminants

Food hygiene

Foods derived from biotechnology

Nutrition food for special dietary uses

Antimicrobial resistance

Food labelling

Methods of analysis and sampling

Plant protection

Animal health and welfare protection

Veterinary drug residues
Systems of food certification, import and export
Milk and dairy products
Fresh fruits and vegetables
Processed fruits and vegetables
Meat hygiene
Fish and fish products
Fats and oils
Sugars
Natural mineral waters
Cocoa and chocolate products
Quick frozen foods

Ministry of Agriculture transposes CA standards to the national legislation, organizes meetings of national expert representatives in CA meetings, distributes information from EFSA, EC, OECD and TBT/SPS in all areas which are covered by Codex Committee, approves (or adjusts) the comment statements and positions prepared by expert and approves attending of experts on the CA meetings. The Department of Foreign Affairs of MA ensures some particular agenda with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, e. g. competence for voting on CAC chair and vice-chairs posts or official notification for attending on CAC.

UNITED KINGDOM

A National Codex Consultative Committee is well established in the UK for every sub-committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. These committees meet before every Codex committee session and in advance of EC coordination meetings. Members include other government departments, non-governmental bodies, consumer and industry bodies and other parties with an interest in the subject matter. They are updated regularly and their views are taken into consideration when agreeing the UK position on a given subject.

(III) PARTICIPATION IN CODEX COMMITTEES (UPDATE INFORMATION SINCE THE 25TH CCEURO)

ARMENIA

With financial support of the Codex Trust Fund, Armenia has participated at CACs since 2006 and is going to be represented at the 26th CCEURO. Unfortunately, no candidate from Armenia has participated at the Subsidiary Commissions Meetings.

AUSTRIA

Austrian delegates participated from 2006 to 2008 in CAC, CCGP, CCMMP, CCFL, CCFC, CCFA, CCNFSDU, CCFICS, CCFH, CCMAS, CCPR, CCRVDF, CCFFP, CCNMW, CCEURO, TFBT, TFAR.

DENMARK

Denmark participates in the following Codex Committees: CAC, CCGP, CCEURO, CCMMP, CCCF, CCAF, CCRVDF, CCFFP, CCTFAMR, CCFH, CCPR, CCFL, CCNFSDU, CCFICS.

FINLAND

Finland participates in most of the Codex committees.

FRANCE

All committees.

GEORGIA

- Codex Contact Point of Georgia was attended Second Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods the Hague, the Netherlands 31 March - 4 April 2008.

- Deputy ministry of agriculture of Georgia was attended 8th Session, Lugano, Switzerland 11-15 February 2008.

HUNGARY

Hungary participates at EU Codex coordination work and sends a delegate to Codex Committee Sessions whenever it is possible.

IRELAND

Ireland routinely attends all Codex Committee / Task Force sessions except CC-FFV, TF-PFV, & TF-FJ.

POLAND

Totally in term 2000 – July 2008 Poland were represented in 85 Codex meetings by 186 delegates:

In 2000 – 14 sessions of the following committees: CCS, CCFICS, CCMMP, CCFAC, CCRVDF, CCGP, CCPR, CCFL, CCFFP, CCNFSU, CCPFV, CCEURO, CCFFV and CCNMW,

in 2001 – 9 sessions of the committees and task forces: CCFO, CCMAS, CCFAC, Ad Hoc AF, CCPR, CCGP, CCFL, CAC and CCNFSU,

in 2002 – 8 meetings of the committees: CCFAC, CCGP, CCFL, CCPR, CCFFP, CCEURO, CCNFSU and CCMAS,

in 2003 – 10 sessions of the following committees and task forces: CCFO, CAC, CCRVDF, CCFAC, Ad Hoc AF, CCPR, CCGP, CAC, CCNFSU and CCGP,

in 2004 – 9 sessions of the committees: CCMAS, CCFAC, CCGP, CAC, CCEURO, CCRVDF, CCNFSU, CCGP and CCFICS,

in 2005 – 9 sessions of the following committees: CCFO, CCMAS, CCGP, CCPR, CCFA, CCFL, CCFFV, CAC and CCNFSU,

in 2006 – 9 sessions of the committees: CCGP, CCFA, CCMAS, CAC, CCFFP, CCFFV, CCPFV, CCNFSU and CCFH,

in 2007 – 10 sessions of the committees: CCEURO, CCFO, CCMAS, CCGP, CCCF, CCFA, CCFL, CAC, CCNFSU, and CCFICS,

from January to July 2008 – 7 sessions of the committees: CCNMW, CCFFP, CCMAS, CCCF, CCFA, CCFL and CAC.

Since the 25th CCEURO 26 Polish experts attended 16 sessions of the following Codex Committees: CCFO, CCMAS (twice), CCGP, CCCF (twice), CCFA (twice), CCFL (twice), CAC (twice), CCNFSU, CCFICS, CCNMW and CCFFP.

In term 2004 – 2006 Polish attendance in 3 Codex meetings (CCRVDF in 2004, CCFAC in 2005 and CCFH in 2006) was supported by the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for enhanced participation in Codex.

SERBIA

2008 - DELEGATES SUPPORTED BY CODEX TRUST FUND:

Dr. Aleksandra MAKAJ

25th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe, Vilnius, Lithuania (15-18 January 2007)

Slobodan SIBALIC

FAO/WHO Seminar: “Strengthening Knowledge of Codex Procedures and Risk Analysis”, Vilnius, Lithuania, (14 January 2007)

25th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe, Vilnius, Lithuania (15-18 January 2007)

Prof. Dr. Ivan STANKOVIC

39th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives, Beijing, China (24 to 28 April 2007),

Prof. Dr. Ivan STANKOVIC and Mary PUSKARICA

FAO/WHO Training Seminar on Codex Alimentarius Procedures, Warsaw, Poland (1-3 October 2007)

Prof. Dr. Ivan STANKOVIC

29th Session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses, Bad Neuenahr, Germany, (12 to 16 November 2007),

2008 - DELEGATES SUPPORTED BY CODEX TRUST FUND:

Prof. Dr. Ivan STANKOVIC

40th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives, Beijing, China (21 to 25 April 2008),

2007 - DELEGATES SUPPORTED BY GOVERNMENT OF SERBIA:

Slobodan SIBALIC

24th Session of the Codex Committee On General Principles, Paris, France, (2-6 April 2007),

Slobodan SIBALIC

30th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Rome, Italy, (2-7 July 2007),

2008 - DELEGATES SUPPORTED BY GOVERNMENT OF SERBIA:

Tatjana Radicevic, Svetlana Nol and Predrag Vukcevic

29th Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling, Budapest, Hungary, (10-14 March 2008),

Jasmina Vlastic

2nd Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods, The Hague, Netherlands, (31 March to 4 April 2008),

Nenad Vujovic, Aleksandar Milojevic and Nebojsa Ristic

31st Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling, Ottawa, Canada, (28 April to 2 May 2008),

Slobodan SIBALIC

31th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Geneva, Switzerland, (30 June - 4 July 2008).

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Since the 25th CC EURO the SR took part in

- a) all coordination WG CA (including task forces) meetings (Council of the EU)
- b) the following Codex Committee Sessions:

2007: 25th Session of the CC EURO

28th Session of the CC MAS

24th Session of the CCGP

35th Session of the CCFL

29th Session of the CC NFSDU

30th Session of the CAC

2008: 29th Session of the CC MAS

31th Session of the CAC

Selection of CA meetings which Slovakia contemplates to attend is based on importance for national economy in line with the interests of the country.

UNITED KINGDOM

UK FSA is an active participant at most Codex Committee meetings, working alongside the European Commission and EU Presidency delegations to harmonise matters.

3. PARTICIPATION OF CONSUMERS IN STANDARDS SETTING

(I) CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN CODEX RELATED ACTIVITIES AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL (UPDATE INFORMATION SINCE THE 25TH CCEURO)

ARMENIA

Armenian two Consumer's NGOs are affiliate members of the Consumers International.

AUSTRIA

Active representation of consumer interests in all subcommittees of the Austrian Codex Alimentarius by representatives of the Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, the "Österreichische Arbeiterkammer" (Austrian Chamber of Labour) and the "Verein für Konsumenteninformation" (Association for consumer information).

DENMARK

Consumer Organizations in Denmark participates in the activities described above under (ii).

ESTONIA

In Estonia there is one main consumer NGO, The Estonian Consumer Union (*Eesti Tarbijakaitsealiit*), but they have not participated in the national Codex work so far.

We have also co-operation with the Estonian Coeliac Society, who shared the views of the Association of European Coeliac Societies (AOECS), in the CCFNSDU during the finalization of Codex Standard for Foods for Special Dietary Use for Persons Intolerant to Gluten.

FINLAND

In Finland are two consumer NGOs participating in the Codex process at the national level: The Finnish Consumers' Association (Suomen Kuluttajaliitto ry) and The Consumers (Kuluttajat-Konsumenterna ry).

In the Advisory Committee of Foodstuffs (National Codex Committee) are representatives of the consumer organisations. Under the Advisory Committee of Foodstuffs are several sub-committees for specified issues. In these sub-committees are also representatives of the consumer organisations. National positions for Codex meetings are prepared in cooperation with these sub-committees. Representatives of the Finnish consumer organisations have not participated in the Codex meetings.

FRANCE

Selected meetings.

GEORGIA

Consumers do not participate in Codex related activities in Georgia.

HUNGARY

Governmental and non-governmental bodies are members of the National Codex Committee.

IRELAND

No change.

LATVIA

In Latvia consumer NGOs are not very active. They have not participated in the national Codex work so far. Due to the lack of capacity of NGOs.

POLAND

The national positions for the Codex meetings are co-ordinated through the Polish Codex Contact Point (managed by Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection) after consultations with experts from the industry and other bodies which are involved in Codex Alimentarius issues. Consumers and consumer organisations wishing to co-operate have the possibility to comment on all Codex issues and it is the role of the Government to prepare the final Polish position for Codex meetings.

SERBIA

Representatives of consumers are members of the Serbian national committees and they actively participate in the elaboration of national technical regulations according to CODEX documents. Some CODEX standards are directly implemented into national technical regulations.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

In generally, the Ministry of Economy covers consumer politics in the SR. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health practise the consumer politics concerning health and consumer protection, each in area of its own competence.

In the SR 5 consumer associations are engaged in food issues: Consumer Institute, Association of Slovak Consumers, Association of Consumer Subjects of Slovakia (A3S), Slovak Association for Patients and Consumers rights and protection as well as Food Consumers Society. Two of them, Association of Slovak Consumers and Association of Consumer Subjects of Slovakia, are members of the Consumer International - NGO with official status with FAO. The fact ensures direct representation of consumers' concerns over CA.

At the national level, the NCCP website gives actual news about Codex works. Furthermore, consumers are informed on main Codex outputs regularly (e.g. from Codex committees sessions) in magazine "Food Industry Trends" issuing by the Food Research Institute and on the <http://www.vup.sk>. The MA website www.land.gov.sk also provides basic information on CA and gives direct link to NCCP for detailed information.

The MA, Department of Food Safety and Nutrition, arranged contacts with all of the above named national consumer institutions.

UNITED KINGDOM

Consumer participation in Codex related activities is well established in the UK through the National Codex Consultative Committee (NCCC) mechanism. In addition, the FSA carries out numerous formal consultations, inviting the views of the food industry, consumers and others on topics ranging from proposed changes in regulations to new food policy initiatives, examples of which can be found at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/consultations/>

(II) ACTIVITIES AIMED AT INCREASING CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN FOOD STANDARDS SETTING (UPDATE INFORMATION SINCE THE 25TH CCEURO)**ARMENIA**

Consumer's NGOs participate in drafting of relevant legislation. NGOs actively cooperate with both national and international organizations. There is good cooperation established between consumers' NGOs and state institutions (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Economy, National Institute of Standards, Ministry of Health). Representatives from consumers NGOs and state institutions jointly participate at international conferences and trainings (for example, ISO DEVCO/COPOLCO Conference in Vienna, training organized by FAO in Lithuania, etc.).

DENMARK

No special activities have been carried out.

FRANCE

All draft national and European texts are submitted to the CNC. (Cf. A1.v) : EC draft regulation on general and nutritional labelling, draft decree on oils, manuals on good hygiene practices, use of the term "natural", draft EC regulations on additives, enzymes and flavourings.

GEORGIA

There is not any plan to increase consumer's participation in food standards setting.

HUNGARY

Activities aimed at increasing consumer participation in food standards setting (update information since the 25th CCEURO).

IRELA**ND**

No change.

POLAND

In Poland, there is well established internal mechanism for consumer participation in standard setting which includes communication thorough the website of the Codex Contact Point for Poland: www.ijhars.gov.pl.

There are about 50 non-governmental organisations related to food and nutrition issues that are involved in the drafting of national food acts within the Codex.

Received working documents are forwarded electronically to the all interested stakeholders.

Poland acknowledges that involvement of consumers in setting of standards needs to be generally encouraged. Our intention is to improve education of consumers, dissemination of relevant information about Codex Alimentarius and better co-operation with consumer organizations. It was realised by the Codex Contact Point in the following ways:

- making 3 surveys on defining issues of special concerns for Poland covered by Codex, on usefulness of National Codex Contact Point website and on difficulties encountered in the use or application of Codex Standards and related texts at the national level and in the opinion making process. Feedback received from the co-operating bodies helped to improve co-operation on the line Codex Contact Point – interested organisations,
- preparation and distribution of information brochures and publishing articles in specialized magazines presenting the structure and the scope of activities of Codex Alimentarius and Codex Contact Point for Poland,
- distribution of invitations to the FAO/WHO Regional Workshop on Codex Alimentarius, which was organized in collaboration with the Governments of Switzerland and Poland in Warsaw in term 1st – 3rd October, 2007.

SERBIA

By preparing information and distributing relevant documents and requesting their participation in food standards setting

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Last year, the MA invited food consumer associations to attend a workshop on mutual collaboration. Slovak delegate for CAC and CCEURO informed about Codex activities and drew attention of participants to possibility to comment drafts of international food standards and other texts. The Food Consumer Association invited the MA on workshop aimed at improvement of consumers´ representative´s access to food legislation development and enforcement. The actual status was analyzed and a new proposal for collaboration was discussed. In February 2008, under the auspices of the MA, the Food Consumer Association arranged the Conference on food safety, quality and official control status. An international conference “Quality and food safety” is planned in September 2008. A paper on CA issues in the food quality and safety will be presented too.

UNITED KINGDOM

Continued support for NCCC meetings and facilitation.